



Vexatious Complaints Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear framework for identifying and managing vexatious complaints at Thomas Johnson Lower School. This policy aims to ensure that genuine concerns are addressed while protecting staff and resources from unreasonable demands.

2. Definition of Vexatious Complaints

A vexatious complaint is defined as a complaint that is:

- Repeated: The same issue has been raised multiple times without new evidence or justification.
- Unreasonable: The complaint is made with the intention to harass or intimidate staff or disrupt the school's operations.
- Malicious: The complaint is based on false information or is made with the intent to cause harm to the school or its staff.
- Obsessive: The complainant pursues the complaint in a way that is disproportionate to the issue raised.

3. Policy Statement

Thomas Johnson Lower School is committed to addressing all complaints fairly and impartially. However, we recognise that some complaints may be vexatious and can hinder the effective operation of the school. This policy outlines the procedures for identifying and managing vexatious complaints.

4. Procedures for Managing Vexatious Complaints

4.1 Identification of Vexatious Complaints

The following criteria will be used to assess whether a complaint is vexatious:

- The frequency of the complaints.
- The nature of the complaints (e.g., abusive language, threats).
- The lack of evidence supporting the complaint.
- The intent behind the complaint.

4.2 Initial Assessment

Upon receiving a complaint, the Headteacher or designated staff member will conduct an initial assessment to determine if the complaint is vexatious. This assessment will include:

- Reviewing the complaint details.
- Considering the complainant's history of complaints.
- Consulting relevant staff members.

4.3 Decision and Notification

If a complaint is deemed vexatious, the complainant will be notified in writing within 10 school days. The notification will include:

The reasons for the decision.

- The evidence considered.
- Information on how to appeal the decision.

4.4 Appeal Process

Complainants have the right to appeal the decision regarding vexatious complaints. The appeal must be submitted in writing within 10 school days of receiving the notification. The appeal will be reviewed by a panel consisting of at least three members, none of whom were involved in the original assessment.

4.5 Record Keeping

All records related to vexatious complaints will be maintained confidentially. The school will keep a log of all vexatious complaints, including:

- The nature of the complaint.
- The outcome of the assessment.
- Any actions taken as a result.

5. Support for Staff

Staff members who are subject to vexatious complaints will receive support from the school leadership. This may include:

- Access to counselling services.
- Training on managing difficult interactions.
- Regular check-ins with school leadership.

6. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Feedback from staff and parents will be considered during the review process.

Conclusion

By implementing this Vexatious Complaints Policy, Thomas Johnson Lower School aims to create a respectful and productive environment for all stakeholders while ensuring that genuine concerns are addressed appropriately.