



Eaglesvale Senior School Cautionary and Grievance Procedure

Policy for the Resolution of Grievances Between Parents (Guardians) and School Staff Members

INTRODUCTION

The School has laid down terms and conditions as per the enrolment contract between the parent/ guardian and the School.

In addition there are various school policies and rules including the school Code of Conduct for students, that parents are expected to be familiar with.

Eaglesvale School has a laid down Vision Mission and Values statement which guides the operation of all activities within the School.

As an Association of Trust School (ATS) member, Eaglesvale is guided by the Vision Mission and Values of ATS especially in respect of a parent's behavior in relation to any aspect of a parent's relationship with the school.

We adhere to recognized guidelines as to the behavior of parents with teachers or coaches of sporting or cultural teams.

It is expected that both parties of the enrolment contract i.e. the parent and the school will maintain cordial relations with each other and should any dispute arise then the parties will endeavor to settle such dispute amicably and in a clam manner without outward displays of anger.

The School has to deal with the facts of any matter and is simply unable to deal with parents who exhibit outward displays of great anger indicating that emotions are not under control. The School in actual fact will refuse to deal with such parents until they are in a suitable frame of mind.

If this is not possible then all future dealing will be through the School lawyers.

It is expressly understood that either of the parties to the enrolment contract will NOT engage in any discussion concerning such matters using social media platforms. Such discussion on social media may be construed as defamatory.

Should the behavior of parents be regarded as unacceptable and unlikely to change after caution from the School Authorities then it is understood that the School has every right to cancel the enrolment contract with the parent.

We affirm that "a quality education benefits enormously from the establishment of a constructive relationship between parents, learners and educators" and commit to applying principals of good practice, policy, and procedure in building and maintaining relationships with the parents of our students.

This policy informs the formal and informal procedures in place to address issues that may arise relating to the function of the school.

Informal Resolution

Where issues, such as miscommunication or minor irritations, have been raised and require a solution but do not appear to have potentially serious consequences, informal resolution is recommended:

1. All parties involved should speak to one another with the purpose of finding an amicable, mutually acceptable solution to the problem.
2. Detailed notes should be made during meetings or phone calls, and parents should be written to following a meeting or phone call to confirm the outcome of the meeting and any agreed-upon next steps.

Where issues cannot be solved informally, formal resolution involving the school's Head or Executive, depending on the nature of the issue, should take place.

Formal Resolution: Conciliation

Where issues cannot be solved by means of the informal resolution process, a formal resolution through conciliation is recommended:

1. The complaint should be submitted via e-mail to the staff member in question and the Principal or School Operations Manager, depending on the nature of the complaint, of the school. This complaint should include the date of the occurrence, the people involved, the issue, as well as a statement of action taken to resolve the grievance informally previously.
2. The Head or Executive member should investigate the complaint, including interviewing the parent and the involved staff. In the case that the Head or Executive Member is the subject of the complaint, a fellow school leader should lead the investigation.
3. A meeting should be convened by the investigator with the complaining party to communicate the outcome of the investigation and any agreed-upon next steps.
4. Detailed notes should be made during the meeting, and parents should be written to following a meeting to confirm the outcome of the meeting and any agreed-upon next steps.

Where issues cannot be solved through conciliation, a formal hearing should take place.

Formal Resolution: Hearing

Where issues cannot be solved by means of the conciliation process, a formal resolution through a hearing is recommended:

1. Evidence of previous attempts to informally resolve or resolve via conciliation must be documented before a hearing can be called.
2. The hearing will be conducted including an impartial chair, who may be appointed from outside Eaglesvale Schools, as well as the complainant, accused member of staff, and any relevant witnesses. The chair cannot have been involved with previous attempts to resolve this grievance.
3. Any person called to the hearing is guaranteed a fair hearing, and is thus entitled to question witnesses or statements made at the hearing. In the case of a minor, a parent or other nominated adult should be present.
4. Legal representation of Eaglesvale Schools or the parent should not be present in this hearing. However, both parties can consult with their advisors before and after any meeting or hearing.

The decision to resolve via a hearing is very significant and may result in severe consequences for the staff members involved. This process should therefore be approached with caution and avoided whenever informal resolution or conciliation can be used.

Cautionary Procedure for Parents

Where a parent's behavior "negatively affects your Child's or other children's progress at the School, the well-being of School Staff, or brings the School into disrepute" (See Eaglesvale Schools Term and Conditions, Sections 21(f), 29, 46 (d)), the following is recommended:

1. A meeting between the Head, Executive Member, and the parent in question to discuss the issue and an informal resolution to the issue.
2. A written warning via formal letter to the parent, which includes a description of the behavior that has not been resolved via informal resolution, reference to the relevant contract clauses, and a statement that the negative behavior should cease immediately to avoid cancellation of enrolment.
3. A formal hearing, if the written warning is unsuccessful to bring about cessation of the negative behavior, similar to that described in the section above.
4. Cancellation of the parent contract and the enrolment of the parent's child at Eaglesvale Schools.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Academic Team, the School Management Team, and the Human Resource department of Eaglesvale Schools.

Based on the recommendations within "Building and Protecting Relationships with Parents: A Guide for Heads of Independent Schools" provided by the Independent Schools Association of South Africa.