



(511) Communication Procedure



Communication

(Grievance, Mediation) Procedure (511)

Date Approved	Mar 2014	Date of next Review	Mar 2018
Approved By	Director of Teaching and Learning		
Custodian	Director of Teaching and Learning		
Relating documents and Forms	510 Grievance & Communication Policy 512 Grievance Procedure 513 Complaint Resolution Procedure 514 Mediation Procedure.		
References and Legislation	Freedom of Information Act 1982 Privacy Act 2014		

(511) Communication (Grievance, Mediation) Procedure

Content

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 Purpose

This Policy aims to facilitate the smooth functioning of the school and to assist students, staff and parents to work successfully together. The guidelines complement the regular, informal communications that already take place between members of the school community.

Lorien Novalis School is committed to good communications and the efficient and fair resolution of grievances and complaints. The school acknowledges the right of teachers, parents and students to make complaints and to have their complaints handled by the school. The school understands that complainants can provide useful feedback and will endeavour to resolve genuine complaints in a positive and constructive manner.

The purpose of this policy is to provide processes for the effective management and resolution of grievances and complaints within the school and to define the procedure to be used in the acknowledgement, recording, tracking and resolution of complaints.

1.2 Grievances/complaints that can be dealt with under this policy and procedures.

Grievances/complaints that can be dealt with under this policy and procedures are any staff, parent or student grievances or complaints, except those listed in 2.1 below, relating to any decision, act or omission by a member of the school community, which is alleged to be wrong, mistaken, unjust or discriminatory.

2. Responsibility for implementation of the Procedure

As specified in section 3.1.4

3. Procedure Framework

3.1 Communication about Education



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3.1.1 Communication between the Teachers and Students

In the classroom and throughout all school activities, there is an expectation that the communication from the teacher to the student is clear, caring and with well understood boundaries. In addition, teachers are expected to be sensitive to and able to act upon individual and group needs, both inside and outside the classroom.

3.1.1.1 Students are expected to behave respectfully and to communicate clearly to all adults at the school. If and when an infringement occurs, students are guided to understand the full consequences of their actions and given the opportunity to redress any harm done.

3.1.1.2 Teachers exercise authority in the classroom in different ways as the children journey through the school. The three approaches to authority; imitation, guidance and respect for expertise, provide a context for communication in the school context.

3.1.2 Communication between the Teachers and Parents Class Meetings

Teachers will generally hold a class meeting one evening each term. These class meetings will have a clear agenda. Topics may include a report on curriculum, discussion on developmental stages of children, class dynamics and events in the life of the class. The class meeting should also provide an opportunity for parents to share experiences and support for their children through their class life together. Class teachers may also provide regular class news bulletins throughout the term, to provide information on class activities.

3.1.3 Parent Teacher Interviews

Once or twice per year parent teacher interviews are conducted to exchange information about the progress and qualities of each child. These are always undertaken with the interests of the child as the focus.

3.1.4 Communicating a concern with a class teacher

If parents have a concern with their child and/or their child's education in any way, the first step is to speak directly with their class teacher.



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3.1.4.1 Individual meetings are to be convened at mutually convenient times. If a specific issue is to be discussed, lead-time needs to be provided so that there is an opportunity for both the teacher and the parent/s to give prior thought to the matter.

3.1.4.2 Parents may request a meeting with their teacher either in person, via a note, or by ringing the office and requesting a message be passed on to the teacher.

3.1.4.3 At no time will aggressive or disrespectful language be acceptable in any communication between a parent and teacher. An interview may be terminated and re-scheduled for another time if required.

3.1.4.4 Parents are to communicate clearly about the nature of the matter and its urgency. This may often be best clarified in writing prior to any meeting between the teacher and parent. This enables the teacher to prioritise meetings and be fully prepared with all the necessary information for the meeting.

3.1.4.5 If a parent is dissatisfied with a previous communication, the process is to direct your enquiry to the Faculty Coordinator.

Early Childhood -	Vivien Sievers
Primary School-	Vivien Sievers
High School -	Leanne Clarke

For greater school issues such as Steiner Education, school development, great curricular questions, then you may wish to speak directly to the Faculty Coordinators or,

Head of School. Norman Sievers

For financial questions or enquires, please contact Alison Sonter at the front desk. She will direct your enquiry to the appropriate person.

For grievances or complaints that you feel haven't or cannot be dealt with effectively through the above channels then these issues need to be directed to the Head of School. The resolution of these issues *may* then be passed on to the College of Teachers.

Final resolution of issues that cannot be resolved through these regular processes will be handed to the Lorien Novalis School Ombudsman Committee.

It is very important that good channels of communication are maintained with open and honest dialogue. This cannot be achieved by the school staff alone. Parents and staff need to work effectively together for a positive outcome for the children.



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3.1.5 Written Correspondence

Written correspondence addressed to a particular staff member is to be directed unopened to them. In order to ensure confidentiality for the children, parents and the teacher involved, please mark the envelope 'confidential'

3.1.6 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is essential for children, families and all staff members in all areas of school communications. Written letters are preferred to ensure sealed correspondence is delivered appropriately

3.2 Communications with School Management regarding finances and administration

3.2.1 Respectful communication between parents and those working in the School's management and support roles is required at all times.

3.2.2 Lorien Novalis School welcomes feedback and information on any aspect of school operations. Feedback on matters of governance, management or administration should be provided in writing to the Office Manager, who will then ensure that it is addressed to the appropriate person/group.

3.2.3 Communicating with the Board of Directors

If the matter is related to overall school governance the communication is to be addressed to the Board of Directors Lorien Novalis School.

Parents or staff members may communicate in writing directly to the Board of Directors through correspondence to the Chairperson.
Education matters are not the realm of the Board and need to be directed as above.

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3.2.4 Communicating with Management on Administration matters

3.2.4.1 Parents wishing to give feedback about aspects of school management should initially contact the relevant person by speaking directly or leaving a note:

General concerns about any aspect of the school management, fees or fee statements or school finances –can be raised with the Office Manager who will consult with the School Fee Committee which meet weekly

Feedback and suggestions on the safety or aesthetic of the school grounds and facilities can be raised with the Head of School

Feedback or concerns on school management, enrolment, or school daily administration can be raised with the Office Manager

3.2.4.2 Parents may request a meeting with the relevant manager, which would then be conducted in a professional manner. In planning this meeting parents should give advance notice about *what* it is you wish to discuss so that adequate preparation can be made.

A record must be kept of any such meeting with a parent: eg a diary note indicating the purpose of and outcome of the meeting.

Confidentiality is always an absolute priority in communications related to school fees or school finances. These meetings and conversations must be carried out in a suitable meeting space.

If the parent/s or staff member are unsatisfied with the outcomes of this initial meeting / communication, parents should write their concerns to the Office Manager, stating the issue and requesting that a facilitated meeting be established at which at least one other management team member will be present.

The purpose of this facilitated meeting will be to ensure:

That the concerns or feedback raised by the parent are accurately conveyed to the school.

That the school's officer / Manager fully understands them and that they have been witnessed by another Administrative team Manager.



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That the school's officer / Manager has an opportunity to respond directly to the concerns and that the nature of the response has been heard and understood by the parent.

That the School Management Team takes responsibility to support a clearly articulated action plan for taking any next steps.

All meetings will be documented with notes kept in the Office Manager's office.

Should this process be unsuccessful the school will offer a mediated meeting according to the Grievance Procedures set out below.

3.2.5 Communications with School Reception

3.2.5.1 The office staff have a huge job supporting the staff and children of the school every day and it is important that they are not regularly repeating information which is already made available to the school community in the usual communication channels.

3.2.5.2 Parent's have a responsibility to read communications from the school eg:

- Class notes
- School Newsletter
- School Website Messages
- School policies

4. Documentation and Records

5. Version Control

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1	Sept 2009		First Version
2	Mar 2014		Separated into Policy and Procedures. Modify some references related to current Management system.
3	March 15 2015	D of T\$L	



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4	March 2017	DTL	Inclusion of fast tract procedure. Other minor modifications
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