

St Virgil's College Complaint Management Process

Rationale

St Virgil's College recognises that all staff and volunteers minister in the name of the Catholic Church. Foundational to this is the commitment to ensuring that all relationships between the College, staff, students, parents and members of the wider community reflect the values of the College. This commitment to the values of St Virgil's College calls all members of the College community to engage in mutually respectful relationships which honour the dignity of each person and provide appropriate means for dealing with any grievances or complaints.

The College's is commitment to a procedure that reflects the values of the College and the integrity of each individual who interacts with the College. Central to this is the College's commitment to making available mediation for parties at all stages of the grievance process.

The St Virgil's College Complaints and Grievance (Grievance) Procedures contain four sections:

1. Parents or Guardians Grievance Procedure
2. Student Grievance Procedure
3. Staff Grievance Procedure
4. Member of the Public Grievance Procedure

1. Parents or Guardians Grievance Procedure

At St Virgil's College we believe that the relationship between the home and school is very important part of ensuring that boys are happy, secure and open to learning. We recognise that parents and teachers need to work closely together to provide the best educational opportunities for their children. We encourage parents or guardians (parents) to discuss their son's progress with teachers and to let the College know if there are any concerns or a specific grievance. This will enable the College and parents to work together to resolve the grievance as promptly and effectively as possible.

What to do if you have a grievance:

- Try to identify the problem or issue clearly before contacting the College. If there is more than one problem, list them to ensure that the extent of the problem is clear to the College.
- Decide whether the problem is a concern, enquiry or complaint. This will help in finding a solution.
- If appropriate make an appointment to meet with your son's pastoral care teacher in the first instance. The best way to do this is to contact the school office to arrange a mutually convenient time for a telephone call or meeting. Pastoral care teachers can be contacted via email – first initial, surname@stvirgils.tas.edu.au ie: tblizzard@stvirgils.tas.edu.au
- If you do not feel after your meeting that the matter has been resolved or if you have a complaint about one or more staff members please make arrangements to meet with the Deputy Principal or Head of Junior School.
- Please endeavour to stay calm when discussing your concern. Even if you do not feel it, being calm will help you get your concerns across more clearly than if you are upset or angry. It may help to take someone with you to advocate on your behalf.

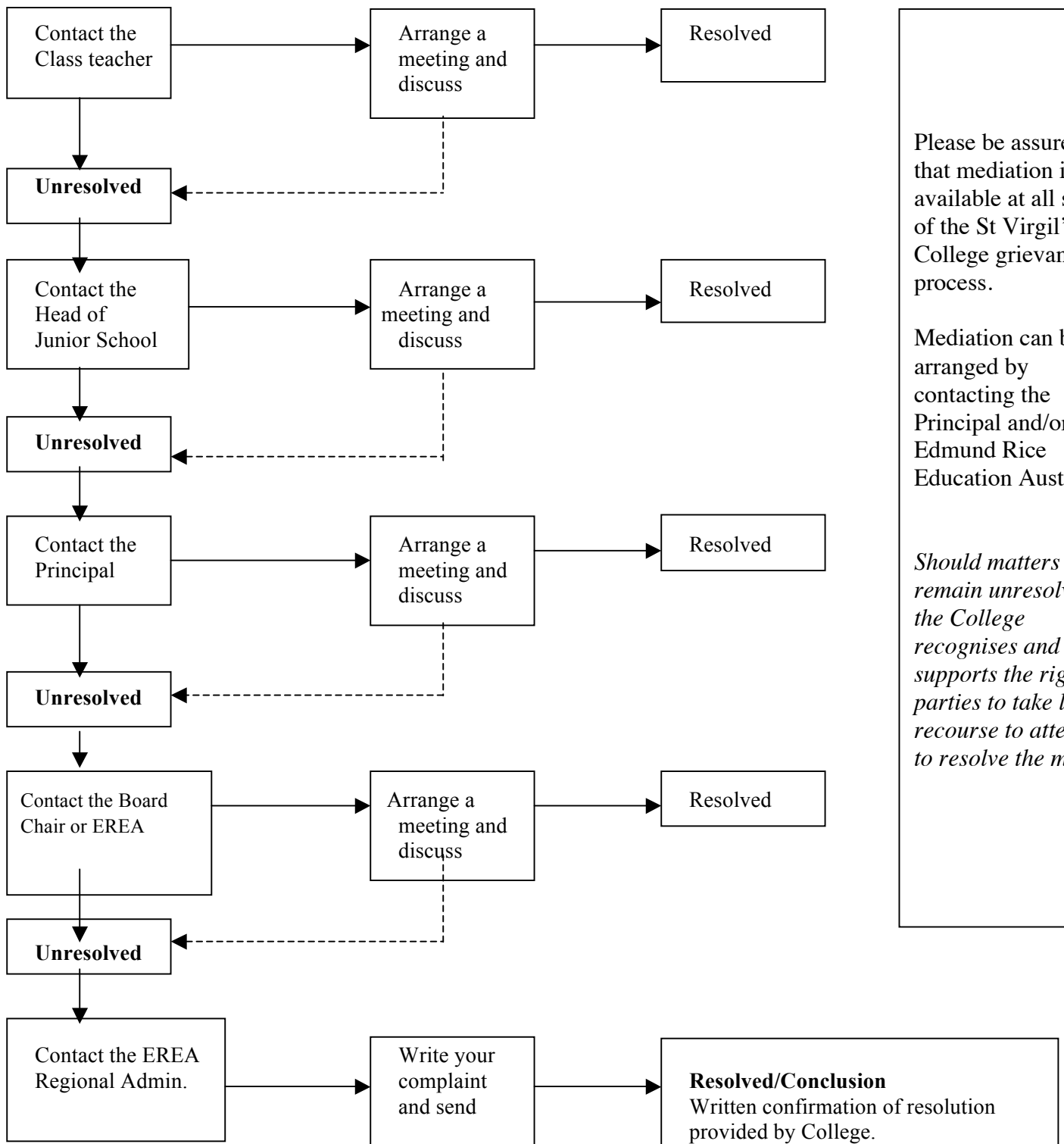
- Please be assured that staff are committed to resolving any issues that parents might have regarding students and will discuss with you actions that might be taken in regard to your concern.
- If you still do not feel that the matter has been resolved or if your complaint is about a very serious matter, please send your complaint in writing to the Principal.
- If this does not resolve the issue or if your complaint is about a particularly serious or sensitive matter, please send your complaint in writing to the Chairman of the Board or to Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA). Contact details can be obtained by phoning the Principal's Personal Assistant Mrs Monica Nugent.
- Please be assured that mediation is available at all stages of the St Virgil's College grievance process. Mediation can be arranged by contacting the Principal and/or Edmund Rice Education Australia.
- If the matter has still not been resolved, notify the Edmund Rice Education Australia Regional Administrator stating your concerns in writing. If no resolution has been achieved, the Director of EREA will arbitrate after thorough examination of the grievance and related issues.
- If matters still remain unresolved you have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, ombudsman, legal representation and other government commissions such as Human Rights Commission for example. Please be aware that such avenues might entail some financial cost to your family.

Please note that as St Virgil's College is a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition and that the Department of Education do not deal with complaints concerning Catholic schools.

When You Make a Complaint -

- If a complaint is made against a person, that person will be informed of the nature and content of the complaint and have the right to respond.
- Discussions of complaints are confidential and all grievance procedures will comply with National Privacy Legislation.
- Complaints may be made verbally or in writing
- All complaints, the actions taken to resolve them and outcomes of those actions will be fully documented.
- A person who has made a complaint may withdraw it at any time. If the complaint is in writing, the withdrawal should also be in writing.
- No one will be victimised as a result of taking out a formal grievance.
- At the formal stage, a person who has made a complaint has the right to be represented and supported by another person of his/her choice as a support person
- A process of mediation is available if a complaint is not satisfactorily resolved.
- If matters still remain unresolved you have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, ombudsman, legal representation and other government commissions

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FLOW CHART FOR MAKING COMPLAINTS – PRIMARY SCHOOL



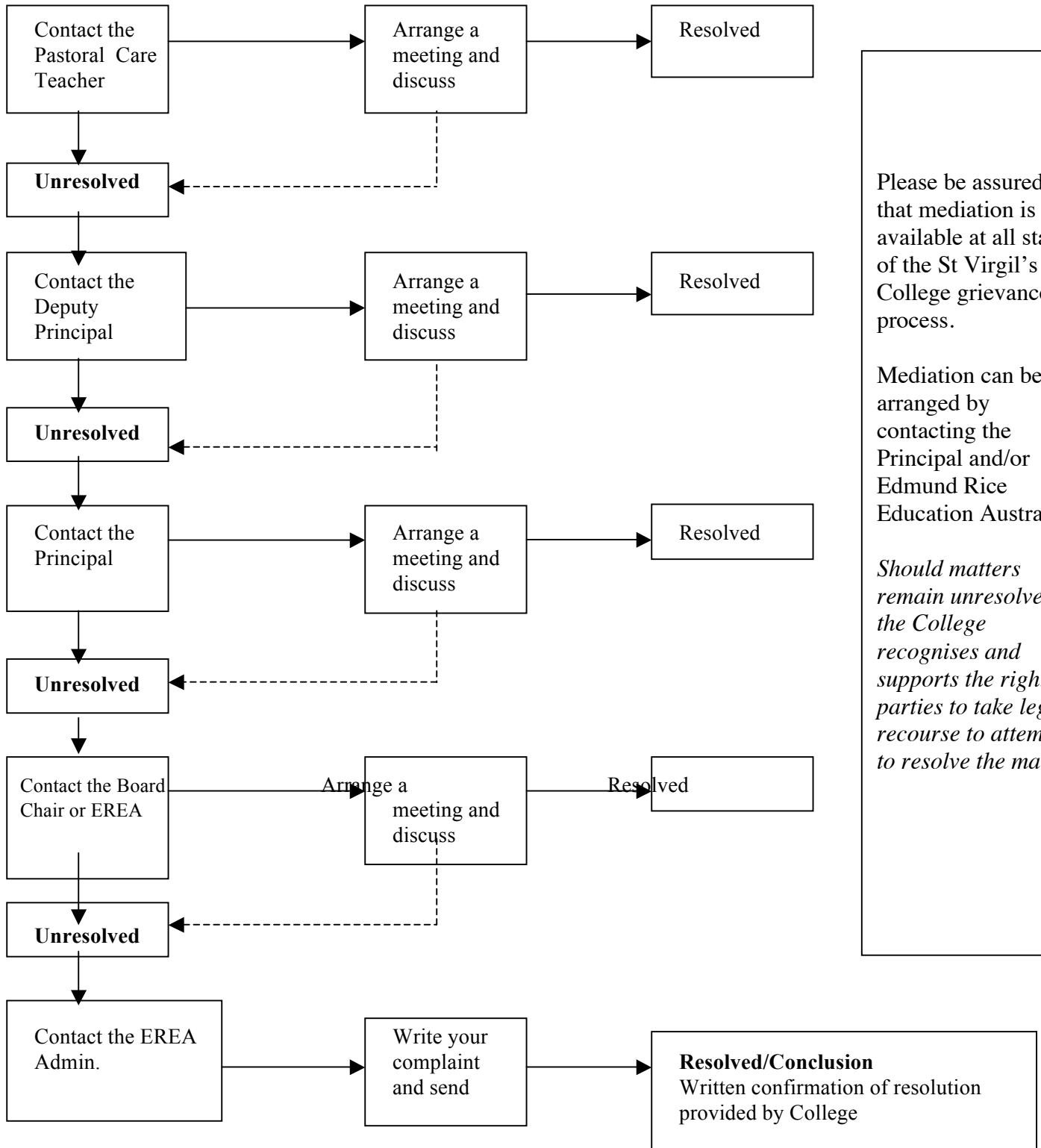
Please be assured that mediation is available at all stages of the St Virgil’s College grievance process.

Mediation can be arranged by contacting the Principal and/or Edmund Rice Education Australia.

Should matters remain unresolved the College recognises and supports the rights of parties to take legal recourse to attempt to resolve the matter.

If the matter has still not been resolved, notify the Edmund Rice Education Australia Regional Administrator stating your concerns in writing. If no resolution has been achieved, the Director of EREA will arbitrate after thorough examination of the grievance and related issues.

FLOW CHART FOR MAKING COMPLAINTS – SECONDARY



Please be assured that mediation is available at all stages of the St Virgil’s College grievance process.

Mediation can be arranged by contacting the Principal and/or Edmund Rice Education Australia.

Should matters remain unresolved the College recognises and supports the rights of parties to take legal recourse to attempt to resolve the matter.

If the matter has still not been resolved, notify the Edmund Rice Education Australia Regional Administrator stating your concerns in writing. If no resolution has been achieved, the Director of EREA will arbitrate after thorough examination of the grievance and related issues.

2. Student Grievance Procedure

At St Virgil's College we believe that it is important that everyone feels happy and safe at school so that the best learning can take place. We believe that staff and students need to work closely together to provide the best educational opportunities for each student. If you have a problem, a concern or a complaint, we encourage you to speak to someone about it and we have provided some steps that you might work through to help you do this.

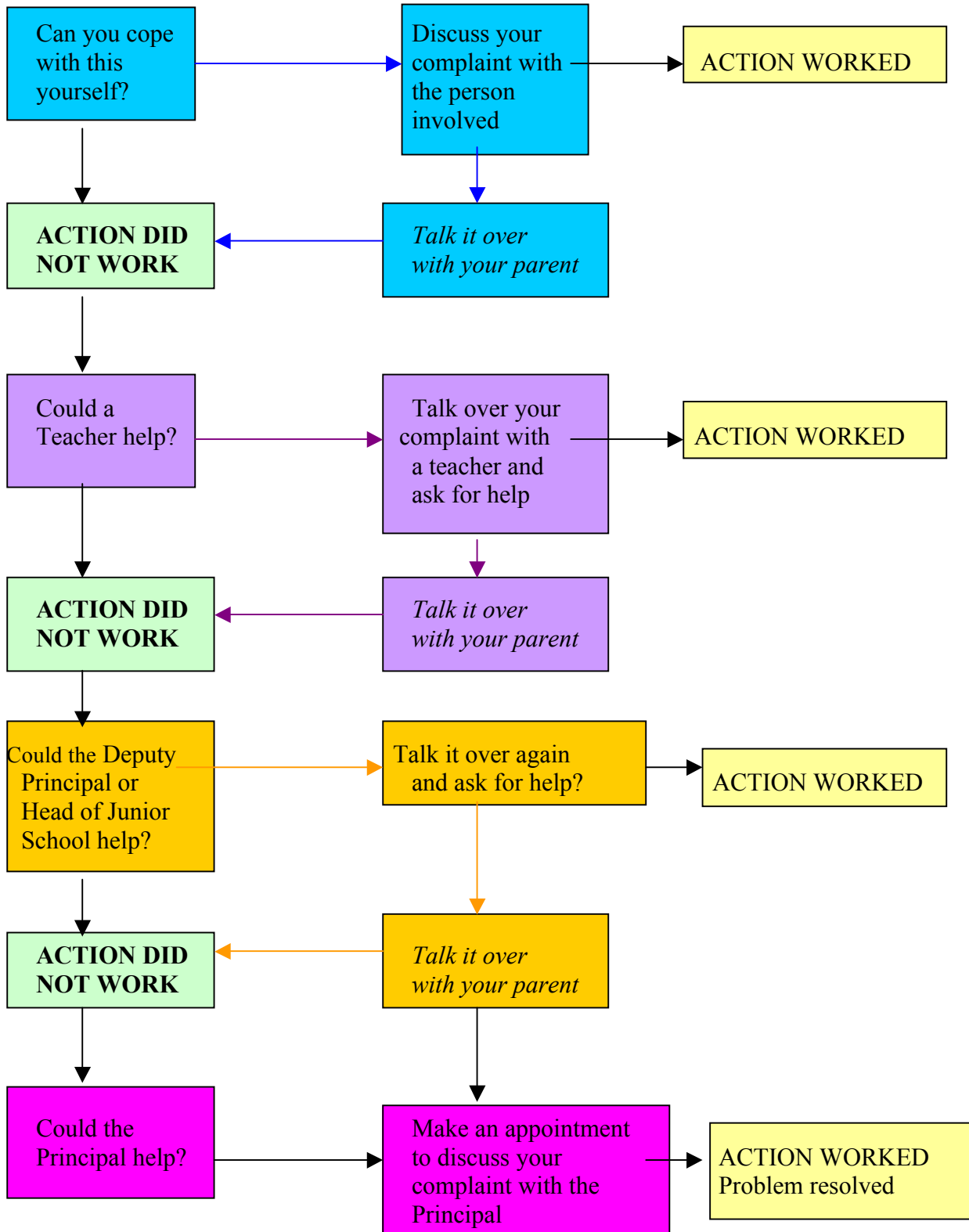
What to do if you have a problem (a grievance):

- Try to identify the problem that is upsetting you. If there is more than one problem, list them so that you are clear about what you feel or need.
- If you feel you can, talk to the person you are having the problem with and if their behaviour is upsetting you, tell them to stop.
- Often parents can help if you are unsure of what to do. It is a good idea to ask for support and advice when problems arise. Keeping it to yourself will not make the problem go away and often will make it worse.
- If your talk with the person you are having the problem with does not solve your problem, talk to your pastoral care teacher or another teacher who you feel comfortable with to discuss your concerns and ask them to help you deal with the problem. A teacher will often be able to give you good ideas on how to cope with it and will help you. You should explain:
 - Who was involved
 - What happened
 - What you did
 - What you believe was unfair or unjust
- Try to stay calm when discussing your problem or concern. Even if you do not feel it, being calm will help you get your concerns across more clearly than if you are upset or angry. It may help to take someone with you.
- Work with the teacher to decide what should be done to help you.
- If you still do not feel that the matter has been solved, make an appointment to talk to the Student Counsellor or Deputy Principal. These staff are part of the Student Welfare Team and are here to help you.
- If you still do not feel that the matter has been solved, please make a time to talk to the Principal about your concern.

Please Remember:

- Sometimes the person helping you will need to speak to someone else so that the problem can be solved. You need to let that person know that you are comfortable about that.
- You can bring a friend, parent or a teacher to support you when you need to talk about the problem.
- No one will be allowed to pick on you or hurt you because you have made a complaint.
- If you want to, you can write out your complaint in a letter instead of talking about it, but the person helping you will need to speak to you later

A STUDENT'S GUIDE TO MAKING A COMPLAINT



Please be assured that mediation is available at all stages of the St Virgil's College grievance process.

Mediation can be arranged by contacting the Principal and/or Edmund Rice Education Australia.

Should matters remain unresolved the College recognises and supports the rights of parties to take legal recourse to attempt to resolve the matter.

If the matter has still not been resolved, parents/guardians can notify the EREA Regional Administrator stating your concerns in writing. If no resolution has been achieved, the Director of EREA will arbitrate after thorough examination of the grievance and related issues.

3. Staff Grievance Procedure

At St Virgil's College the relationship between colleagues is a very important part of ensuring that students are happy, secure and open to learning. We recognise that all staff need to work closely together to provide the best educational opportunities for the students in our care. Relationships between staff should be professional and in line with the Code of Conduct and the values of the College. All staff have a right to feel safe and supported within their workplace, a principle that is evident within the College's mission and relevant workplace health and safety legislation. If you have any concerns or complaints regarding any other member of the school community, we strongly encourage you to work together to resolve these as promptly and effectively as we can.

What to do if you have a problem:

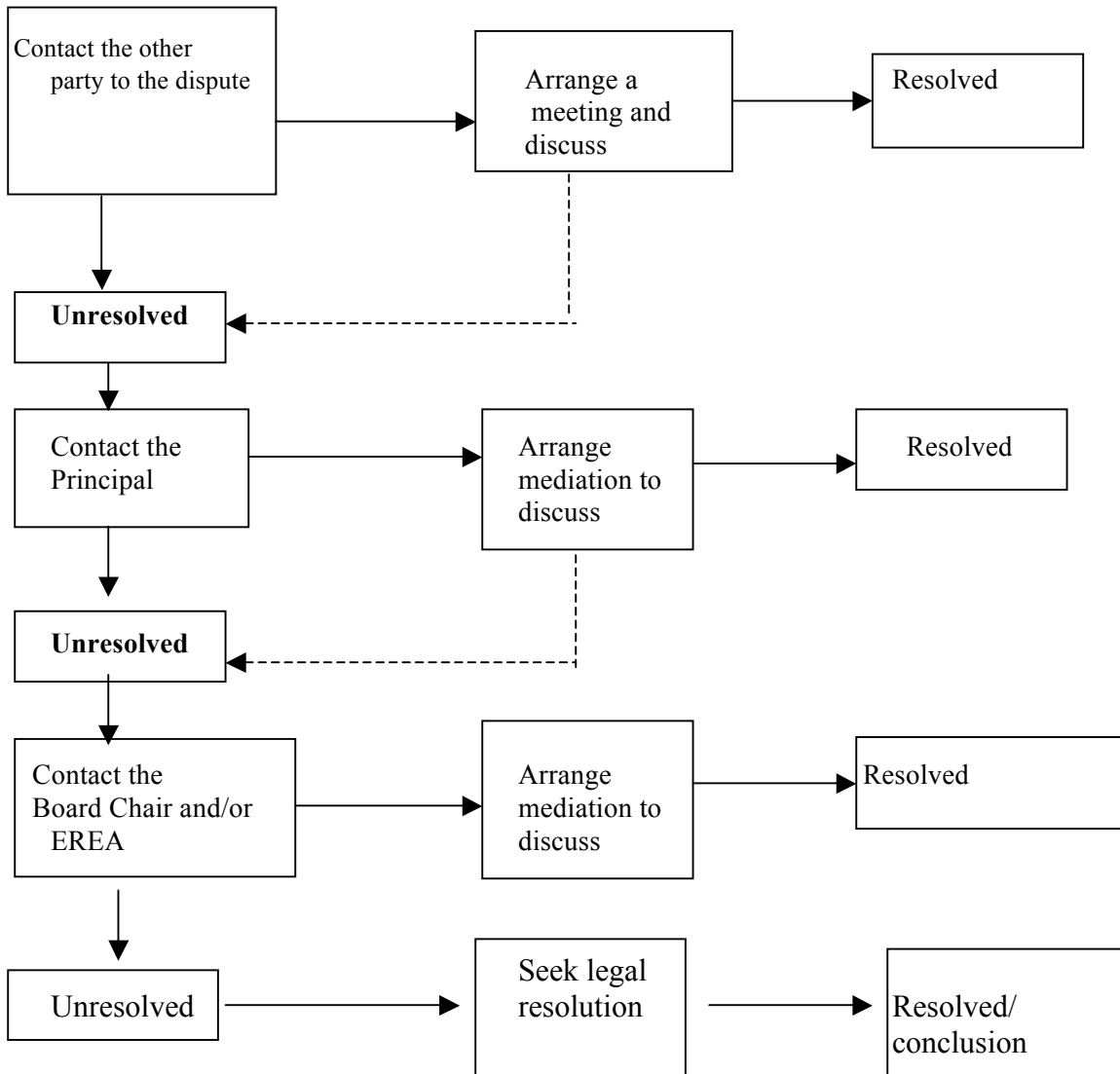
- Try to identify the problem clearly before taking any action. If there is more than one problem, list them to ensure that the extent of the problem is clear to the College.
- Decide whether the problem is a concern, enquiry or complaint. This will help in finding a solution.
- In the interests of resolving matters quickly and effectively, you are encouraged to informally discuss your concern or complaint with the person concerned.
- If informal strategies do not resolve the issue, make your complaint formally and in writing to the Principal. Where the Principal advises, mediation can be arranged between the parties concerned on their mutual agreement.
- A process of mediation is available and can be enacted at any time during the grievance resolution process.
- If you still do not feel that the matter has been resolved, if your complaint is serious or involves the Principal, telephone or send your complaint in writing to the Board Chair or Regional Administrator of Edmund Rice Education Australia who will then contact you and make arrangements for you to discuss your grievance.
- If the matter has still not been resolved, notify the Director of EREA stating your concerns in writing. If no resolution has been achieved, the Director will arbitrate after thorough examination of the grievance and related issues.
- If matters still remain unresolved you have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, ombudsman, legal representation and other government commissions such as Workplace Safety, Anti-Discrimination and Human Rights Commissions These might entail some financial cost to you.

Please Note: The Department of Education **do not** deal with complaints concerning Catholic schools.

When You Decide to Make a Complaint:

- If a complaint is made against a person, that person will be informed of the nature and content of the complaint and will have the right to respond.
- Discussions of complaints are confidential and in keeping with requirements of National Privacy legislation.
- Complaints may be made verbally or in writing
- All complaints, the actions taken to resolve them and outcomes of those actions will be fully documented.
- A person who has made a complaint may withdraw it at any time. If the complaint is in writing, the withdrawal should also be in writing.
- No one will be victimised as a result of taking out a formal grievance.
- At the formal stage, a person who has made a complaint has the right to be represented and supported by another person, for example his/her union, work colleague, friend or other person of his/her choice as a support person.
- A process of mediation is available if a complaint is not satisfactorily resolved.
- If matters still remain unresolved you have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, ombudsman, legal representation and other government commissions
- If the matter is resolved by the College a written summary of the resolution will be provided to both parties to the dispute.

Flow Chart for Making a Complaint – Staff



Please be assured that mediation is available at all stages of the St Virgil's College grievance process.

Mediation can be arranged by contacting the Principal and/or Edmund Rice Education Australia.

Should matters remain unresolved the College recognises and supports the rights of parties to take legal recourse to attempt to resolve the matter.

4. Grievance Procedures for Members of the Public

At St Virgil's College, we are conscious of our responsibilities as a member of the community. We recognise that our students and staff must represent us well in public and that as a College we must be a responsible and positive contributor to the local and wider community.

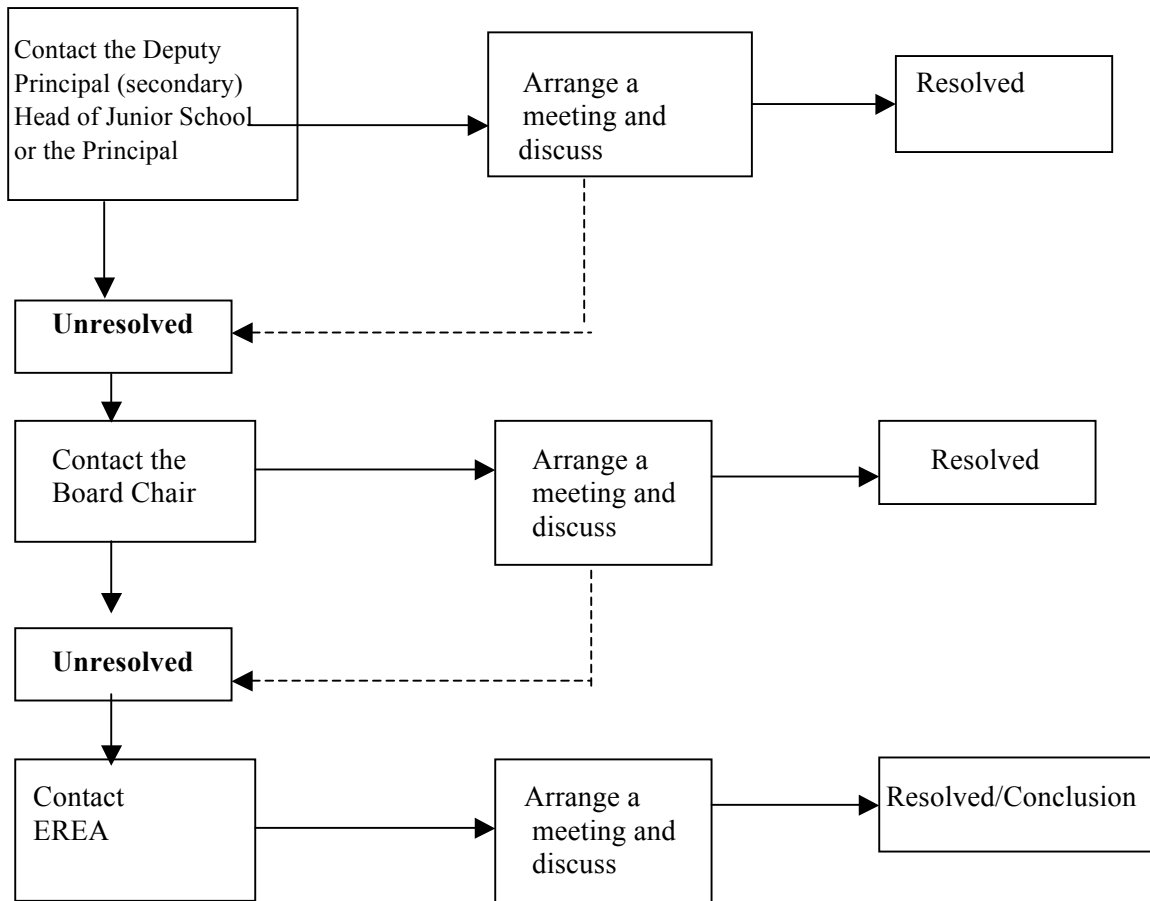
If there is an issue causing concern to a member of the public, the College would welcome hearing of it so that the matter can be addressed.

What to do if you have a problem:

- Contact the College, asking to speak with the Deputy Principal or Head of Junior School. They will inform the Principal of your concern. On a serious matter you should feel free to contact the Principal directly.
- If you feel that the situation is not resolved then you may contact the Chair of the College Board of Management.
- Depending on the type of complaint (for example, matters of a legal or property nature) the College may inform the governing body of the College, Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA).
- If the matter is not resolved you may contact the Regional Administrator of EREA.
- A process of mediation is available and can be enacted at any time during the grievance resolution process.
- If matters still remain unresolved you have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, ombudsman, legal representation or other government commissions as appropriate. This may entail financial cost to you.

Please Note: The Secretary of the Department of Education does not deal with complaints concerning Catholic schools.

FLOW CHART FOR MAKING COMPLAINTS – MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC



Please be assured that mediation is available at all stages of the St Virgil's College grievance process.

Mediation can be arranged by contacting the Principal and/or Edmund Rice Education Australia.

Should matters remain unresolved the College recognises and supports the rights of parties to take legal recourse to attempt to resolve the matter.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES: SUMMARY

STUDENTS	PARENTS	STAFF
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you feel you can, talk to the person who is upsetting you and tell them to stop. 2. If you cannot do this or if the person does not listen, talk to your parent(s) and/or a teacher you trust and ask them to help you work through the problem. 3. If the problem is still not worked out, talk to a School Counsellor, the Deputy Principal or Head of Junior School, telling them everything you have done so far and ask for their help. 4. If the problem remains, make an appointment to speak to the Principal about your complaint. 5. A process of mediation is available and can be enacted at any time during the grievance resolution process. <p>Remember: often parents can help when young people are unsure of what to do. It is a good idea to ask for support and advice when problems arise rather than keep it all to yourself.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange a time through the school office to speak to the person concerned. Remember, if the concern is about your child, the pastoral care teacher is the first person you should talk to about the problem. 2. If this does not resolve your concern, make an appointment to discuss it with the Deputy Principal (secondary) or Head of Junior School. 3. If still unresolved, make an appointment to discuss your concerns with the Principal. 4. Only after you have discussed the issues with the Principal, should you contact the Board Chair or Regional Administrator of EREA and make a time to discuss complaints or concerns with him/her. 5. If the matter remains unresolved, your complaint should be made in writing to the Director of EREA. 6. Further to this, you have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, relevant Government commissions or the Ombudsman. 7. A process of mediation is available and can be enacted at any time during the grievance resolution process. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Speak to the person concerned informally and privately. 2. If this does not resolve the issue, make an appointment to take your grievance to the Principal. If deemed appropriate, mediation at this stage may be arranged at the mutual agreement of all involved. 3. If still unresolved, or if the complaint involves the Principal, contact the Board Chair or Regional Administrator of EREA either by telephone or in writing. They will then make arrangements to meet with you. 4. If these actions do not resolve your grievance, notify the Director of EREA in writing, detailing your grievance and the actions taken so far. 5. Further to this, you have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, relevant Government commissions or the Ombudsman. 6. A process of mediation is available and can be enacted at any time during the grievance resolution process.

Please note: The Department of Education do not deal with complaints regarding Catholic schools.