

**HOW TO DEAL
WITH A DISPUTE
OR COMPLAINT
IN A
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The purpose of this publication is to provide an overview of the process to be utilised in Catholic schools in the resolution of a dispute or complaint that may arise from time to time.

The Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA), Dispute and Complaint Resolution policy was implemented in the first term of 2002 and provides a process that must be followed by all Catholic schools when addressing issues of dispute or complaint.

The Dispute and Complaint Resolution policy is consistent with the accountability requirements under the *School Education Act (1999)*.

The Dispute and Complaint Resolution policy has been developed on the following basis:

- the principles of the policy are based on the Church's social teachings and the principles of natural justice eg. the right to be heard and the right of response etc.
- the need to resolve the dispute or complaint initially at the school level before involving the Director of Catholic Education.

In the case of a dispute or complaint arising that directly relates to an existing CECWA policy, the procedural aspects of this policy shall be followed eg. student enrolment.

In the case of a dispute or complaint resulting from an employment related issue, the prescribed provision of the relevant Enterprise Bargaining Agreement or Award shall be adhered to.

A copy of the policy and guidelines is available upon request.

OVERVIEW OF PROCEDURES

- All issues of dispute or complaint must be addressed in the first instance at the school level.
- Where the parties are having difficulty achieving a resolution at the school level they may request the assistance of the Director of Catholic Education or Congregational Leader.
- Any party may appeal the Principal's decision to the Director of Catholic Education who will then in turn review the decision.
- Any party may appeal the Director of Catholic Education's decision to the Minister for Education. The Minister for Education will review the process utilised to resolve the dispute or complaint but will not review the merits of the matter.