Creek Street Christian College

Grievance Policy

Implemented: 2023

Contents

Creek Street Christian College Vision, Mission and Philosophy Statements 3
College Vision 3
College Mission 3
College Philosophy 3
Know and Understand… 3
Apply/do… 3
Collaborate… 3
Become… 3
College Statement of Doctrines and Beliefs 4
Introduction 6
Principles 7
Procedure 8
Level 1 8
Level 2 8
Level 3 8
Discrimination or harassment 9
Sexual and physical abuse 9
Confidentiality 9
Responsibilities 9
Complainant 9
Respondent 9
Mediator 10
Support person 10
Time limit 10
Record keeping 10
Frequently asked questions 10
Notes – Flow Chart 11
Families 11
Staff 11
Students 11
College Council members 11
Flow Chart 12

Creek Street Christian College Vision, Mission and Philosophy Statements

College Vision

Creek Street Christian College (hereafter 'the College') is a ministry of the Creek Street Church and has been established to provide Christian education and training to students so that they are equipped to impact their community, our nation, and the world for the Lord Jesus Christ.

College Mission

The College has been established to provide families with a Christian education, within a caring and disciplined environment that will enable students to fully develop their God-given talents and academic abilities, so that they are able to contribute effectively to the changing society of which they are a part.

The College encourages and supports students to develop a positive and wholesome outlook on life, to become self-disciplined people and to be responsible and caring members of the community, both locally and internationally.

College Philosophy

At the College, our approach to learning is holistic in nature. We have a commitment to the development of the whole student in a Christian environment. A Christian education provides unparalleled opportunities for students to discover their passions and nurture their talents. We teach, equip, activate, and release the students with the wisdom which comes from God.

Our four foundations of a true Christian Education are to learn to:

Know and Understand…

Our programs are designed to engage the learners by stimulating wonder and dynamic educational experiences. The students develop a deeper connection to content, understand that learning areas are related to each other and the world beyond the classroom. Our students take risks, become independent thinkers in a rapidly changing world, seeking and acquiring new skills and knowledge at every stage of life.

Apply/do...

Learning is developed through experience, action, and engagement. Through real-life experiential learning students at the College understand how to put their knowledge and skills into action in meaningful and positive ways locally, nationally, and globally. We believe the Bible is God's revelation to man and that it contains the principles and values that show us how to live and do what God has called us to do.

Collaborate...

God created us for relationships. In fact, the greatest commandment - love your God with all heart, all your soul, and all your mind (Matthew 22:37) helps us build, maintain, and expand our relationship with God and others. At the College, much of what we learn is about ourselves in relation to experiences with others. Through this our students develop collaborative, interpersonal, social and language skills to help them develop an appreciation for the wider world and their place within it.

Become...

From Early Learning Centre (ELC) to Year 12, the students begin on a journey of discovering and embracing all God has made them to be and are helped to become their best versions of themselves. Students graduate from the College as open-minded, compassionate, balanced, resilient global citizens.

College Statement of Doctrines and Beliefs

1. We believe the whole Bible is uniquely inspired by God & is therefore wholly trustworthy and of supreme and final authority in faith & life (2Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:21).
2. We believe the sovereign God is one, in three co-equal persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, who act together in creation, providence, redemption and restoration (Matt 28:19, Colossians1:12 -16).
3. We believe in the creation, test, and fall of man as recorded in Genesis; his total spiritual depravity and inability to attain to divine righteousness, apart from amazing grace (Romans 5:12-18).
4. We believe Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day, and personally appeared to His disciples (1 Corinthians 15:1-7, Romans 4:24-25, Acts 10:39-41, 13:29-31).
5. We believe in the bodily ascension of Jesus to heaven, His exultation, and personal, literal, and bodily coming again the second time for His Church (John 14:2,3, Acts 1:9-11, 2:32-33, Philippians 2:8-11,1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).
6. We believe that Jesus Christ, the Son is fully God and fully man. We believe in His virgin birth, His sinless life, His sacrificial death in our place, His bodily resurrection, His bodily return to judge the living and the dead (John 1:1-14, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 8:34).
7. We believe in the salvation of sinners by grace, through repentance and faith in the perfect and sufficient work of the Cross of Calvary by which we obtain forgiveness of sins and liberty from bondage originating in Satan (Ephesians 2:8,9, Hebrews 9:12, 10:12-14, John 8:31-36, Romans 5:11, Galatians 5:1,13).
8. We believe in the Holy Spirit who together with the Father and the Son is worthy of our worship, who convicts the world of guilt regarding sin, righteousness, and judgement. The Holy Spirit unites us with Christ, and makes us partake in Christ's risen life, pointing us to Jesus, freeing us from slavery to sin, producing in us His fruit, granting to us His gifts, and empowering us for service in the world. (John 3:5-7, John 14:16 -18, John 15:26).
9. We believe in His death and resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ took the place of humanity, making full payment for the sins of all people. For those who accept His grace and exercise faith in Him, He secures forgiveness, a right relationship with God, a new life now and an everlasting life now that will continue at the end of history. (Romans 3:23-26, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 1:3, 1 Peter2:24).
10. We believe in water baptism, by immersion wherever possible, in the name of the eternal Godhead in order to fulfil the command of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19, Acts 2:36-38, 8:36-38, 19:1-6, Romans 6:3-4, 1 Peter 3:21).
11. We believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a real experience at or subsequent to salvation, with scriptural evidence such as speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance (Acts 2:1-4, 8:14-17, 10:44-46, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Galatians 3:14).
12. We believe in the operation of the gifts of the Spirit as enumerated in 1 Corinthians 12:8-11, as manifested in the early Church.
13. We believe in the Spirit-filled life, a life of separation from ungodliness and perfecting holiness in the fear of God as expressing the true Christian faith (Ephesians 5:18, 2 Corinthians 6:14, 7:1, Galatians 5:16-17, 22-25).
14. We believe in the healing of the body by divine power or divine healing in its varied aspects as practised in the early church (Acts 4:30, Romans 8:11, 1 Corinthians 12:9, James 5:14).
15. We believe in the Table of the Lord, commonly called Communion or the Lord's Supper, for believers (1 Corinthians 11:23-32, Matthew 26:26-28).
16. We believe Satan is a personal spiritual being opposed to God and the salvation of humanity, sworn to enslave and destroy the human race, but his ultimate purpose has been brought to nothing by the Lord Jesus Christ (Genesis 3:1-15, Matt 4:1-11, Rev 20:10, Col 2:15).
17. We believe in eternal life for believers and a person who rejects the gift of eternal life in the Lord Jesus Christ will be eternally separated from God. (John 5:25, 3:16, John 3:36, Rev 20:12-15).
18. We believe that there is one true universal Church made up of genuine believers, and that this one universal Church is important to God and composed of many local churches in given localities. These churches are under the sovereign headship of the Lord Jesus Christ, exercising autonomous

government under Him, administering all its local affairs and ministry as well as the propagation of the gospel (Acts 15:22, Matthew 16:18, 18:15-20).

19. We believe God has instituted the family as the central social structure and parents have the primary responsibility for bringing up their children. Parents are to instruct and care for their children and provide for their physical, spiritual, and educational upbringing. God has also instituted the church to make disciples of all nations and provide spiritual teaching. He has established civil governments to make laws, keep civil order and promote human flourishing. Each of these institutions has distinct roles and responsibilities which overlap but one should not usurp the role of the other (Genesis 1:28, Mark 12:17, Romans 13:1-7).
20. The College plays an important role in the formation of students- in leading and nurturing the, spirit, mind and body, to lay hold of their unique purpose and potential in God's world, and to equip them for a life of fulfilment and significance. It is the aim of the College that graduating students will be transformational in their future callings and vocations (Psalm 127:3-4, Psalm 139:1-18).
21. We believe God has created humanity in His image and ascribed dignity, sanctity and worth to human life from conception until death. God requires human life to be accorded respect and to be protected from harm (Genesis 1:27, Psalm 139:13-16, Exodus 20:13).
22. We believe God has created humanity as distinctly male and female and has ordained a normative connection between binary biological sex and a person's true self-conception as male and female. The two distinct, complementary genders (sexes) of male and female together reflect the image and nature of God. The Bible ties gender identity to biological sex. God's intended best for humankind is that we live our lives in accordance with our biological sex. According to Scripture, our gender identity is to align with our biological sex, as designed by God. The determination of biological sex commences in the womb and is confirmed at birth. We recognise that in a very small number of cases sex may be indeterminate at birth and a determination of sex may be required. We acknowledge the biological sex of a person as recognised at birth and require practices consistent with that sex (Genesis 1:26-27, Genesis 2:22-24, Matthew 19:4, Genesis 5:1-2, Psalm 139:13-14, Mark 10:6).
23. We believe some people will marry and some will remain single: one is not inferior or superior to another, and both have dignity, according to the Bible. God has instituted marriage between one man and one woman for life to be the only Scriptural covenantal, sexual, and procreative union for humanity which signifies and mirrors the covenant love between Christ and His Church. Married couples must be sexually faithful to each other. Sexual relationships outside of marriage between a man and a woman are contrary to God's will and command for humanity (Genesis 2:23-24, Matthew 19:5-6, Ephesians 5:22-32).
24. We believe humanity, originally created for a relationship with God, turned away from God and thus became sinful by nature and practice, unable by any personal merit or effort to restore that relationship. This fall has corrupted human identity and purpose, impacted sexuality, family and social relationships, and has separated humanity from fellowship with God (Genesis 1:26-31, Romans 1:18-32, Romans 3:23, Titus 3:3-7).
25. Acknowledgement of our sin and acceptance of the loving grace of God will lead to purity and holiness as the Holy Spirit's work enables the believer to demonstrate the character of the perfect man, Jesus Christ. The Bible exhorts us to pursue godliness and to model Biblical standards of behaviour to our peers and the wider society in both word and deed. It also calls Christian believers to abstain from all appearance of evil and to be active members of a local church and meet together regularly as a body so that we may encourage one another (Leviticus 20:22-26, Deuteronomy 6:25, Psalm 133:1, Matthew 5:16, Acts 2:46, 1 Corinthians 14:26, Philippians 2:12-16, 2 Thessalonians 5:22, Titus 2:10-14, Hebrews 10:25, 1 Peter 1:13-16, 2 Peter 3:11-14, 1 John 1:5-10).
26. Creek Street Christian College Incorporated aims to spread and strengthen the teaching of Christian faith, as articulated in this Statement of Doctrines and Belief, the maintenance of the doctrines upon which that faith rests, and the observances that promote and manifest that faith. In the context of Christian schooling, conduct that is inconsistent with the Christian beliefs of the College, including on the part of the student body, can impact detrimentally on:

a. the College's ability to be conducted in conformity with its Christian doctrines, tenets, beliefs, or teachings.
b. its ability to maintain its Christian ethos; and
c. its ability to model a Christian standard of conduct to each individual student and to the student body.

The use of college facilities or property in a manner that is inconsistent with its Christian doctrines, tenets, beliefs, or teachings can have the same impact. Such conduct can remove the ability of the College to act in conformity with its doctrines, tenets, beliefs, or teachings and can incur injury to the religious susceptibility of adherents of its religion (Psalm 127:3, Proverbs 22:6, Matthew 5:13-16, Matthew 18:10, Mark 9:37, 42, Luke 17:1-2, Acts 20:28, Ephesians 2:20-22, Ephesians 5:3, Hebrews 10:24-25, Hebrews 13:17).

27. We believe that the Christian faith is a life-transforming faith. That transformation is enabled through the active power of the Holy Spirit. Accordingly, an active faith will be authentically evidenced in a believer's actions. We believe that the Christian faith cannot be authentically conveyed by a person whose words are inconsistent with their actions. The Christian faith's most authentic representations is found in an alignment of expressed affirmation and practice. Accordingly, actions can inform the content of one's faith. Every staff member represents the dramatic outworking of the Christian faith through the testimony of their acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and through the resultant ongoing daily transformation towards Christ's likeness, as evidenced through the fruits of the Spirit. Across the full complement of occupations found within our staff community, every member plays a crucial role in demonstrating the outworking of an authentic Christian life to the wider school community. It is for this reason that we believe that, in the context of Christian schooling, 'it takes a village to raise a child' and that 'faith is caught, not taught' (Matthew 7:20, 1 Corinthians 12:12-31, 2 Corinthians 3:17-18, Galatians 5: 16-26, 1 Thessalonians 5:22, James 1:22-25, James 2:14-26).
28. Those called to model the Christian faith to others receive the high and worthy calling. Those who accept such a calling do so acknowledging that conduct that is inconsistent with the professed beliefs can place an impediment toward, or negatively impact upon, the faith of other believers, or those who are yet to express faith in Jesus Christ. We believe that such impediments or impact can also occur where Christian believers have failed to model the Christian life but continue to personally affirm Christian beliefs (Matthew 18:6, Romans 14, Ephesians 4:1, 1 Timothy 3; 1 Timothy 4:12, 2 Timothy 2:15, Titus 1:7-14, Hebrews 13:7, James 3:1).

- NOTE: Bible version used is New King James translation

Introduction

The College is a community and as such, there will be times when stakeholders will wish to make suggestions, may have a grievance or raise a concern that needs addressing. The College takes these issues seriously and welcomes such feedback. Only grievances occurring within the College's jurisdiction will be dealt with by the College, College Council or Church Oversight.

This document details principles applicable to and procedures to be followed with respect to the resolution of grievances and disputes and is applicable to College Council members, staff, families, volunteers, contract workers and students.

The College prefers to use a restorative practices framework to resolve grievances and disputes. Restorative practices focus on the quality of relationships between members of the College community. Parents, students and staff have all invested into the College community and long term, significant relationships exist between all members of our community, and are greatly valued.

'Restorative practices' mean we take a relational approach to solving problems, rather than apportioning blame and taking punitive action. 'Restorative practices' means everyone involved reflects on the ways in

which their attitudes, beliefs and behaviours may have contributed to the problem. Restorative practices provide accountability by encouraging all parties to repair the harm, where appropriate, which provides restoration, builds relationships and encourages us to learn from the experience which led to the problem.

The College is following the Matthew 18 principle:
"15 Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."

This is referred to in this document as Level 1. If after following the Level 1 process, with its emphasis on restorative practices, and the staff member, parent or student is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may move to the Level 2 Grievance Procedure, which involves a formal grievance or dispute, and an investigation.

The College will endeavour to resolve grievances and disputes, as we have a commitment to continuous improvement, and to provide a service which results in high levels of staff, parent and student satisfaction.

College staff, parents and students are able to make enquiries, raise concerns or lodge grievances and have these dealt with impartially, efficiently and with respect and courtesy. When raising concerns and lodging grievances, staff, parents and students are expected to exercise respect and courtesy towards College staff investigating the allegations.

The College will endeavour to ensure grievances are handled promptly, sensitively and in accordance with restorative practices and the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.

Principles

- The College is open to the concerns of community members, staff, parents and students.
- Grievances will be carefully investigated.
- The College is committed to the positive resolution of problems preferably using Restorative Practices.
- The resolution of disputes should occur at the lowest possible level in the dispute process.
- Matters which cannot be resolved at a particular level should be referred to the next level in the process. Executive staff will recognise when issues need to be referred directly to the Principal.
- Matters should not normally be brought directly to the Principal or other senior staff until the various stages of the grievance process have been followed, or unless the matter is exceptionally serious.
- Individuals raising grievances are able to proceed through the levels in the process and are able to take unresolved concerns to the Principal and then if so desired, to the College Council and to outside authorities, as appropriate.
- People who are the subject of a grievance, who raise a grievance or provide information during an investigation into a grievance, will not be subject to prejudice, intimidation, harassment or any disadvantage because of their involvement.
- Grievances and concerns may initially be lodged verbally or in writing.
- If a grievance is complex or serious, the complainant will be required to restate the grievance in writing.
- A person lodging a complaint must provide his/her name and contact information and details of the grievances.
- Grievances thought to be vexatious, malicious, and trivial or relating to previously finalised issues, are referred immediately to the Principal.
- Grievances will be monitored and their frequency, nature and management evaluated to reduce the occurrence of systemic and recurring problems.
- All people in the College community, including students, parents, educators and support staff, have a right to be treated with respect and courtesy. If complainants are disrespectful or discourteous

towards staff, or attempt to intimidate staff members when making a complaint, the interaction will be terminated and the staff member is required to report the matter to their line manager and to the Principal.

- If a staff member is the subject of a grievance, they will usually be informed of the substance of the complaint. The text of the grievance will not necessarily be provided. Grievances against employees must be sufficiently detailed to enable the employee to respond to the allegations against them. A detailed description of the incident/s, the alleged time and place when the incident/s allegedly occurred, and the names of any possible witnesses to the incident/s, must be provided.
- If the Principal is the subject of a grievance, the matter will be referred to the College Council chairperson.
- If a College Council member is the subject of a grievance, the matter will be referred to the College Council chairperson.
- If a College Council chairperson is the subject of a grievance, the matter will be referred to the Church Oversight chairperson.
- If the grievance is of a serious matter, the person involved may be asked to take leave until the process of reconciliation is completed.
- When making a complaint, staff, families and students must be prepared to give their names. Anonymous grievances will not be investigated.

Procedure

Level 1

Staff, parents and students should meet with the person directly involved in the grievance before taking any further action. Depending on age, cultural background and personality, students might require support from a teacher.

If after approaching the person directly involved, the concern is not resolved, an appointment should be made with the staff member's line manager, or the matter must be put in writing to the line manager.

If the matter is not resolved by meeting with the line manager, the student or parent/guardian may request a meeting with the Principal.

Level 2

Staff, parents and students who have followed Level 1, but who are not satisfied with the outcome, can request a formal investigation into their concerns. An appointment should be made with the College Principal and the grievance needs to be put in writing. All written grievances will be acknowledged in writing, setting out a timeline and procedure for investigating.

Each party must have the opportunity to present his/her version of the facts. Each party must be given fair opportunity to respond to information provided by the other party. All grievances and disputes must be investigated in a fair, professional and impartial manner, with no disadvantage to the complainant. The investigation must be appropriate to the circumstances. Decisions are made on the basis of evidence provided. The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to all parties as soon as possible, providing reasons for any decisions to action taken.

Following an investigation, the College will review policies, procedures and protocols in an endeavour to minimise the likelihood of further occurrences.

Level 3

If parents, students or staff remain dissatisfied after bringing concerns to the College Principal, the matter **may be referred in writing to the College Council**:

The Chair
College Council
91 Creek Street South
Bendigo

The Council will investigate the grievance and report back to the complainant. Issues unresolved at Council level can be referred to the Creek Street Church Oversight.

Discrimination or harassment

The College is committed to applying principles, policies and procedures to the elimination of any form of unlawful discrimination or harassment.

In the 21st Century, diversity has become an exceedingly important consideration for schools. A focus on diversity can increase inclusion and create a fairer and more inclusive community.

The College has a diverse community and is therefore sensitive to the diversity and characteristics of the College community, including, but not limited to gender, race, ethnicity, age, experience, socioeconomic status, ability, sexual orientation, cultural background, religion, skill, political belief or educational background/status.

The College will not tolerate unlawful discrimination or harassment on the basis of above-mentioned diverse needs.

Sexual and physical abuse

Sexual and physical abuse need to be reported to the police. As a courtesy, the College Principal needs to be contacted.

Confidentiality

Parents often seek an assurance of confidentiality before expressing their concerns. If, for example, they wish to discuss a particular member of staff, they may fear their child will suffer in some way because they have complained.

The substance of a grievance needs to be communicated to the person the subject of the complaint.
Students and parents will recognise the need for staff to be informed so they can provide information relevant to the investigation. If involved in, or informed of a dispute or grievance, staff members are aware of their obligation to ensure such grievances do not rebound adversely on the student involved.

Responsibilities

The Principal is responsible, with the College Executive Team, for ensuring that this policy and procedures are in place and operational. If there is an issue that is at a standstill in resolution the principal will have the authority to make the final decision.

Complainant

The complainant has the right to:

- receive feedback of the final determination
- be heard and listened to
- have the complaint addressed with procedural fairness
- have the complaint dealt with in a timely manner
- seek legal advice and support
- have a support person present at all meetings
- confidentiality and sensitivity in the resolution of the process.

Respondent

The respondent has the right to:

- present their version of events and reasoning
- be informed of a complaint against them within a reasonable time frame

- seek legal advice and support
- have a support person present during all meetings
- confidentiality and sensitivity in the resolution of the process.

Mediator

The mediator has the right to:

- be treated with respect
- allowed to complete the investigation and restrictive meeting without interference of others

The mediator has the responsibility to:

- approach the process in good faith
- uphold strict confidentiality
- be courteous in dealing with the complainant, contact officer and investigator
- ensure that any support person understands their role in the process.

Support person

The support person is entitled to accompany a complainant/ respondent to any meetings that take place during the grievance process but must not have an active role in the resolution process. It is not the role of the support person to be a spokesperson for the complainant.

Time limit

The College will try to resolve all grievances as quickly as possible. However, the timeframe for resolution of a grievance will depend on the complexity, nature and scope of the grievance.

Record keeping

Refer to the Procedure for Retention of Records.

Frequently asked questions

1. **"I don't want to complain as such, but there is something bothering me. What should I do?"**
   We are all working towards the same purpose or goal – the education and well-being of children within this community. If you have a concern, it is better to seek to have it resolved with the people immediately involved in the matter. This might be possible from a meeting, either formal or informal.

2. **"I am not sure whether to complain or not?"**
   If you have a concern, you are entitled to raise it with the College. If in doubt, remember we are here to help. Sometimes it is reassuring just to talk your concerns through with someone. If there is still no resolution you might want to seek a resolution through the Complaints Process.

3. **Grievances Process**
   a. **"How should I complain?"**
   Grievances must be in writing. This may be as a letter or an email. Please be as clear as possible about what is troubling you. All written grievances should be directed to the College Chair/Principal and marked "Confidential".

   Your complaint will be acknowledged in writing within two working days and explain how the matter will proceed.

b. "What will happen next?"

i. The matter will need to be investigated further before responding. You will be given a date by which time you will receive a response. If a detailed exploration of the issues is needed, a letter or report will be sent to you as quickly as possible. This letter will inform you of the outcome of the grievance. It will explain the conclusion, the reasons for it and any action taken or proposed.

ii. The substance of the grievance will be conveyed to the person against whom the grievance is made.

4. "What happens about confidentiality?"

Your grievance or concern will be treated as confidential and with respect. Knowledge of the issue will remain limited to the Principal and to those directly involved. The Chairperson of the College Council may also need to be informed in some matters. It is a College policy that grievances should not rebound adversely on anyone.

We cannot entirely rule out the need to make third parties outside the College aware of a grievance and possibly also the identities of those involved. This would only happen in a case where the person's safety is at risk or where it became necessary to refer a matter to the Police. You will be fully informed.

5. "What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?"

We hope you will feel satisfied with the outcome, or at least that your concerns have been heard and fully considered.

If you are not satisfied, the Principal will offer to refer the matter to the Chairperson of the College Council. Alternatively, you may wish to write directly to the Chairperson. The Chairperson will call for a full report from the Principal and will examine matters thoroughly with the Council before responding. The decision of the Council will be conveyed to you.

If you are still not satisfied with the outcome or the way in which the College has handled your complaint, you can contact the VRQA.

Notes – Flow Chart

Families

Parents/Caregivers are only to approach the College Council Chair if complaints are about the Principal.

Staff

Staff concerns need to be addressed by the Principal only. If staff members' concerns are about the Principal, the College Council Chair needs to be approached.

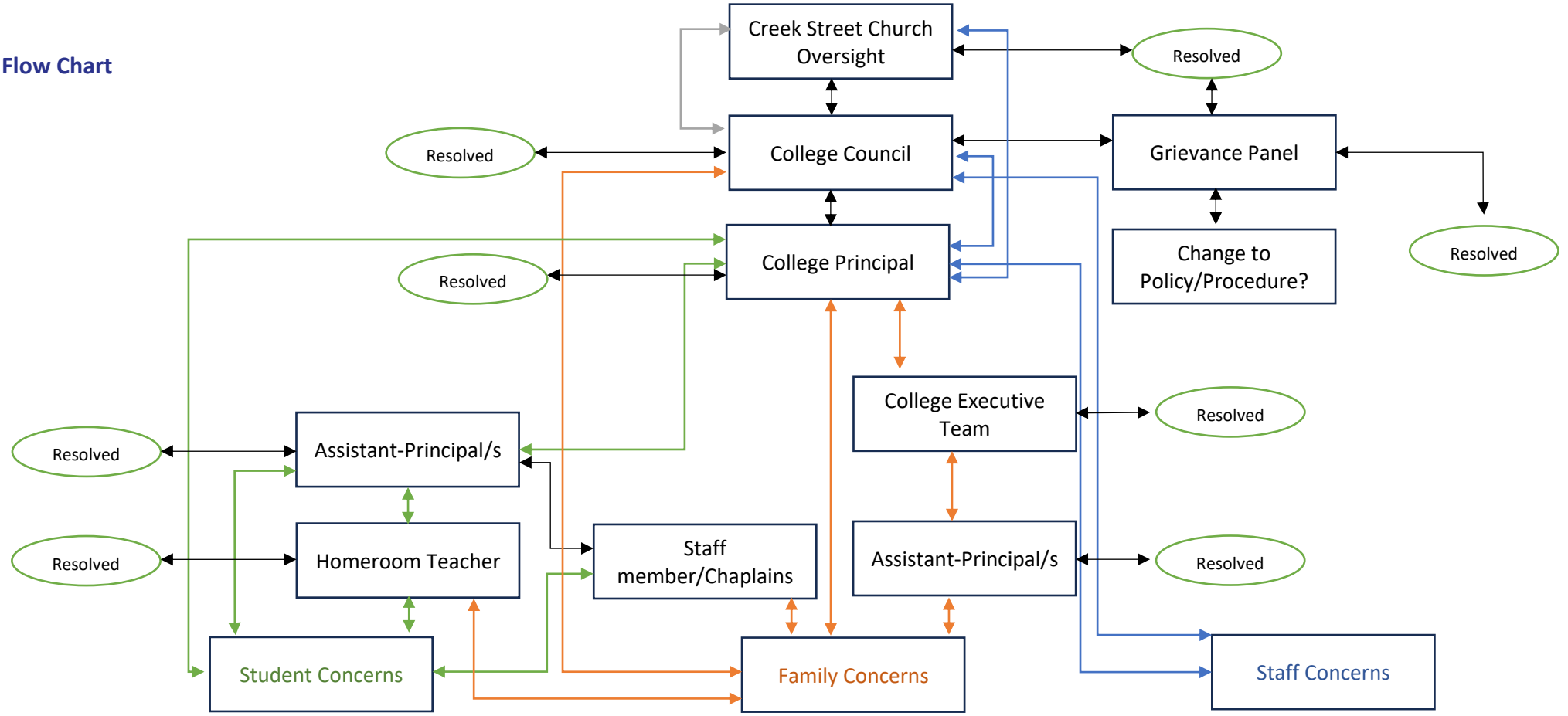
Students

Students are allowed to approach any staff member they feel comfortable to approach.

College Council members

College Council Members can approach the Church oversight if they have any concerns about the Council Chair.

Flow Chart



Key
Student – Green
Families – Orange
Staff – Blue
College Council Members - Grey