1.0 Introduction

1.1 Our aim is to be a community with high levels of mutual trust and respect among students, staff and parents.

1.2 Any concerns raised should be treated as opportunities to:

- Correct an injustice or a mistake;
- Evaluate how well the school is doing;
- Identify weak behaviours or processes and act to correct them;
- View situations from a parent’s, student’s or member of the wider community’s perspective;
- Improve on what is already done;
- Generate greater loyalty from parents and students; and
- Build Hillbrook’s reputation in the wider community.

2.0 Exclusions

2.1 This policy will not apply in the following circumstances where a concern or complaint relates to:

2.1.1 The abuse of an enrolled student under 18 years of age and is an allegation of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse, significant harm or unacceptable risk of harm or inappropriate behaviour. Such complaint shall be made and dealt with in accordance with the Student Protection in Anglican Schools Policy and Procedures and the Hillbrook Anglican School Student Protection Policy which are available on the school’s website and on online@hillbrook.

2.1.2 The abuse of a school staff member or other person not enrolled at the school and is an allegation of sexual assault. Such complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the Professional Standards Canon which is available from the Anglican Church Southern Queensland website.

2.1.3 Alleged workplace bullying, discrimination, physical assault, harm, harassment or sexual harassment. Such complaint will be made and dealt with in accordance with the Administrative Guidelines for Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Workplace Bullying which is available from the Anglican Schools Commission’s website.

3.0 Guiding Principles

3.1 All teachers and support staff should be committed to making Hillbrook a community with high levels of mutual trust and respect among staff, students and parents. It is important this is modelled by the School Board and the School Leadership Team.
3.2 The School Board and the School Leadership Team should ensure that the school culture is ‘open and approachable’ rather than defensive.

3.3 Any concerns should be received politely, and the person(s) involved treated with respect. This does not necessarily mean accepting the validity of the concern: it does respect the right of the person making it, and acknowledges that the person believes it is valid. At all times the safety of anyone involved will be guaranteed.

3.4 It is difficult to respond to communications that are anonymous. It deprives the subject of the concern and limits the outcome of any investigation. We hope this document gives a number of avenues through which to express concerns.

3.5 Any expression of concern or request to clarify should be handled as efficiently as possible by being directed to the person who can best address it.

4.0 Procedures

4.1 An allegation of sexual abuse must be directed to the Principal, who must then invoke the Diocesan Sexual Abuse Policy and abide by any relevant State legislative and regulatory requirements.

4.2 Any issues concerning a teacher should where possible be handled by an informal discussion between the person expressing the concern and the teacher. If the issue remains unresolved, it may be directed to the Principal.

4.3 Any issues arising from within the school about a student or students should firstly be directed to the Home Class teacher and then to the Student Management team.

4.4 Any issues from outside the school concerning a student/s or parents’ actions, should be directed to a member of the School Leadership Team.

4.5 Any issues concerning a member of the School Leadership Team should be directed to the relevant member of the School Leadership Team. If the issue remains unresolved, it may be directed to the Principal.

4.6 A concern about the Principal should in the first instance be directed to the Principal. If the issue remains unresolved the issue can be taken to the Chair of the School Board.

4.7 Any issue concerning the School Board should be directed to the Chair of the School Board.

4.8 Any issues about school policies, or the implementation of any of those policies, should be directed in the first instance to the Principal, who may seek guidance from the School Board in particular cases. If the issue remains unresolved the concern can be taken to the Chair of the School Board.

4.9 Any issues concerning a member of the school’s support staff should be directed to the Business Manager in the first instance and if unresolved to the Principal.
5.0 Documentation

5.1 Issues from or about a student and any resulting actions will be recorded in the relevant student file.

5.2 Issues handled by the Home Class teacher or the Student Management Team should be recorded in the relevant student documentation.

5.3 Issues about a member of staff, and the action taken, should be recorded in the staff member’s file.

5.4 Concerns about the School Board should be recorded in the Minutes of the relevant School Board meeting.

6.0 Natural Justice

6.1 Any issue concerning a member of staff should be dealt with in the following manner.

6.1.1 The member of staff must be made aware of the issue.

6.1.2 The member of staff must be given an opportunity to respond to the issue.

6.1.3 All issues must be handled with discretion to avoid any unnecessary embarrassment to the member of staff.

6.1.4 In accordance with ‘Grievance & Dispute Resolution Policy’.

6.2 Any issue which affects a student should be dealt with in the following manner.

6.2.1 Every student has the right to a fair hearing. The Student Management Team interview protocol will be used.

6.2.2 Parents have the right to information concerning their child.

6.2.3 Parents have the right to be informed about and involved in the decision-making process involving their child.

6.2.4 Parents have the right to be informed of the decision.

7.0 Parent Contract with the School

7.1 Parents who accept a place at Hillbrook formally agree to support the policies and rules of the school.
In circumstances where all possible avenues have been explored and have failed to resolve an issue, the Principal will provide parents with an option of withdrawing the student’s enrolment.

8.0 Sources

