



## **POLICY: Concerns & Complaints from Parents**

### **Introduction**

The School has a recognised, accepted and published concerns policy that works well. If you have a concern that you want resolved / acted upon, then the most effective way for you to get action is to follow the procedure outlined below.

The school encourages open communication and prefers that you come to talk through a problem rather than discuss it in the community. It is our job to be fair and listen to your concerns, but this involves your support as well.

Prompt action and fair measures are in the interests of all staff, parents and students.

All concerns will be resolved at the lowest level possible and as informally as possible. Where this is not achieved the board will consider the complaint when it is submitted in writing and will make a decision on it after considering all the information.

### **Guidelines**

#### **What do I do if I have a concern? (as distinct from formal complaints)**

If you have a concern or issue with regard to your child or about the School, then it is ok to express that concern through following the steps below.

A concern should first be discussed with the person responsible or the person whom will have the best knowledge.....this may be a teacher, leadership team member, sports body rep or whomever is acting for the school.

1. If the matter involves the classroom programme or a teacher, write a note, email or telephone the school with a view to making a time to discuss the concern with the teacher. The staff member concerned may not be able to talk to you when you approach them, so it is best to make a time when you are both free.
2. Indicate before the discussion what the concern is about.
3. Talk with the relevant staff member about the issue and be prepared to listen to their point of view (There are always 2 sides to any issue)

#### **What if I do this but the problem is not solved, or if the concern does not involve a particular teacher?**

(It may be that if your concern has not been addressed or resolved, then consideration may be given to moving to the next stage)

1. Approach the Lead team member responsible for that area of the school.
2. If you do not know any of these people or feel they may not be able to help, contact the Principal. Write down the details of your concern.
3. The concern will usually be dealt with by the Principal, but in some instances may be referred back to teachers, leadership team or to the Board of Trustees.

### **Formal complaints can be made to the Board**

1. Complaints to the Board are to be in writing signed and dated, by the complainant.
2. Complaints should only come to the Board when the complainant has followed the earlier steps of the procedure (i.e. step 1 - consult the teacher, step 2 - consult the Principal) and is not satisfied with the outcome.
3. The chairperson, in consultation with the Principal/ a nominated Board member, may investigate to see if the matter can be resolved prior to the matter being formally discussed at a meeting of the full Board. If the chairperson is able to resolve the matter then the Board should be informed of the outcome.
4. Where the complaint comes to the Board, the Board will immediately acknowledge the complainant, in writing, that their complaint has been received and that the action will be taken in accordance with this policy.
5. The Board will ensure that the policy appropriate to the issue is in place and that the requirements of this policy are being met.
6. Both the complainant and the person against whom the complaint is being made may have a support person at any face to face meeting.
7. Where a verbal complaint is made to a member of the B.O.T. about a staff member the Board member shall ask the complainant to discuss the matter with the Principal.
8. Complaints against the Board, individual members or Board policy shall be made to the Board chairperson in writing.
9. Board members are to regard complaints against individuals made to the Board as confidential and shall not express personal opinions on the matter.
10. Board members with personal knowledge or a conflict of interest may exclude themselves from participating in the complaints procedures.
11. Before determining action to take, the Board should be prepared to seek advice.
12. If the complaint relates to alleged misconduct, the staff member concerned will be advised of the right to representation and the Board shall comply with the requirements of the relevant employment contract. Such matters will be conducted in Committee. The BOT chairperson will contact NZSTA to seek advice on how to proceed in any such instance.
13. If a complaint is received about the school or a member of the school that could potentially result in legal action being taken, the BOT must inform its insurance agency.

### **In short, the procedure is:**

1. Discuss your issue with the teacher, or the person concerned.
2. If not resolved to your satisfaction, then contact the team leader or Principal, explain the issue and request an appointment or his/her attention to the matter.
3. If the Principal fails to resolve your issues/concerns, then the Board encourages you to lodge a formal complaint in writing to the attention of the Chairperson.

# Concerns & Complaints Procedure

These procedures will provide Board members, all staff, students and parents with clear and consistent guidelines for raising concerns.

