

Complaints and concerns procedures

We will respond to complaints:

- in a fair and consistent manner
- in accordance with the relevant employment contracts, legislation and the school's codes of conduct
- in a way that safeguards the rights of everyone involved (e.g. the complainant, staff and students).

Our complaints policy will be published twice each year in our school newsletter, and made available on the school website.

Regarding all complaints, please note that the Board of Trustees, as an employer, is required to follow the steps outlined in employment contracts for all employees. In the first instance, the Board will try to resolve matters informally, and in a manner consistent with natural justice.

Procedure for complaints and concerns from the community

In the first instance, complaints may be made in person to the relevant staff member or to the Principal. If an informal approach is not successful, the complaint should be brought to the attention of the Principal. Any complaint of a serious nature should be directed straight to the Principal.

Formal complaints may be made in writing, in a letter to the Principal. If you find it difficult to write a letter about your complaint or concerns, you may make a verbal complaint to the Chair or Secretary of the Board of Trustees. They will record the details of your complaint and ask you to sign to confirm these are correct.

Written complaints and concerns need to include the following details.

- Your name and contact details
- The name and class of your child
- Details of the date, location and situation that led to your complaint
- What has happened so far, and who has been involved
- The outcome you would like
- Your signature and contact details.

If there has been more than one incident, each must be dealt with as a separate complaint.

The school holds a complaints file in confidential storage. Any new documentation about complaints will be added to that file.

After we receive your complaint:

- other parties may be informed (at the Principal's discretion)
- we will take appropriate action, as required
- if appropriate, we may seek outside mediation or advice from organisations such as NZSTA (New Zealand School Trustees Association), PPTA (Post Primary Teachers' Association), NZEI Te Riu Roa (New Zealand Educational Institute) etc.

We will:

- treat all complaints with the strictest confidence
- respect the rights of all involved

- assist with any language or cultural sensitivities if necessary.

The Principal or Chair will inform you of the outcome of any complaint enquiry or hearing that comes from your complaint.

Information for staff

When dealing with a complaint, in all cases:

- the Board will act as a good employer
- the Board will act in accordance with the conditions of the relevant employment agreement
- all employees who have a complaint made about them will be advised in writing about the nature of the complaint, the process, timeline of investigation, and any support available.

Procedure for complaints and concerns between staff members

If you have concerns about another staff member, follow these steps in the first instance.

- Write a note to the staff member asking them to contact you. You can leave a note at the office. Office staff will deliver it to the staff member concerned.
- If your concern isn't resolved by email or telephone, arrange a suitable time to discuss your concerns in person. You can take a support person with you. This meeting may involve the Principal.
- If your concerns aren't resolved by phone or email, or in a meeting, a member of staff (usually the Principal) will be asked to help. The Principal will keep you up to date about what's happening and will be your point of contact as we work through your concerns. You should expect to have regular contact with the Principal.
- Keep a note of what you have done to resolve your concerns, including dates.

If the concern is not settled within a reasonable period (i.e. one to two weeks), write a note to the Principal outlining your concerns.

If any of the following apply, your concerns are considered to be a formal complaint and you need to write a letter to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

- Your concerns are not resolved within a reasonable period
- Your concerns relate to the Principal
- Your concerns relate to the Board of Trustees
- Your concerns are of a serious nature or relate to a serious incident.

If you find it difficult to write a letter about your complaint or concerns, you may make a verbal complaint to the Chair or Secretary of the Board of Trustees. They will record the details of your complaint and ask you to sign to confirm these are correct.

Written complaints need to include the following details.

- Your name and contact details
- The name and class of your child
- Details of the date, location and situation that led to your complaint
- What has happened so far, and who has been involved
- The outcome you would like
- Your signature and contact details.

What you can expect

- Your complaint should be acknowledged as received by the Board within seven days.
- The Board will usually ask the Principal for a written report on what the school has done to deal with your complaint.
- The Board may discuss your complaint in a closed session at the next Board meeting.
- The Board may wish to meet with you to get more information. They will contact you to make arrangements for this to happen. You are welcome to take a support person with you to any meetings with the Board.

- You will be contacted after the meeting and informed of the outcome. A written response will be sent within one to two weeks.
- If the school is satisfied that your complaint has been appropriately dealt with, but you still have concerns, the school will give you advice about any other options you may wish to consider. This may include mediation or involve other agencies.
- The school staff and Board of Trustees will make every effort to work with you constructively and fairly to resolve concerns. We encourage you to make contact at the earliest opportunity if you have a concern so that together we can try to resolve matters at the lowest level for all parties.

Procedure for complaints and concerns about the Principal

If you have a complaint against the Principal, in the first instance, you should contact the Principal to discuss it. If this doesn't resolve your concerns, you can contact the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Write a letter to the Chair of the Board of Trustees raising your concerns. If you find it difficult to write a letter about your complaint or concern, you may make a verbal complaint to the Chair or Secretary of the Board of Trustees. They will record the details of your complaint and ask you to sign to confirm these are correct.

Include the following details.

- Your name and contact details
- The name and class of your child
- Details of the date, location and situation that led to your complaint
- What has happened so far, and who has been involved
- The outcome you would like
- Your signature and contact details.

What you can expect

- Your complaint should be acknowledged as received by the Board within seven days.
- The Board will usually ask the Principal for a written report on the issues that you have raised.
- The Board may discuss your complaint in a closed session at the next Board meeting.
- The Board may wish to meet with you to get more information. They will contact you to make arrangements for this to happen. You are welcome to take a support person with you to any meetings with the Board.
- You will be contacted after the meeting and informed of the outcome. A written response will be sent within one to two weeks.
- If the school is satisfied that your complaint has been appropriately dealt with, but you still have concerns, the school will give you advice about any other options you may wish to consider. This may include mediation or involve other agencies.
- School staff and the Board of Trustees will make every effort to work with you constructively and fairly to resolve concerns. We encourage you to make contact at the earliest opportunity if you have a concern so that together we can try to resolve matters at the lowest level for all parties.