

Onewhero Area School



Policy:

Concerns and Complaints

Personnel (National Administration Guideline 3)

PURPOSE

It is inevitable that from time to time members of the school community will have matters of concern that they bring to the attention of the staff, the Principal or the Board of Trustees. These concerns may involve students, staff, members of the community as well as the school environment, systems and processes or resources. This policy applies to all situations where a concern or complaint is identified and outlines the roles and responsibilities of those persons involved. It is in the interests of the whole school community that such complaints be received positively, without defensiveness and with a view to finding satisfactory outcomes for those involved. It is essential that there are procedures in place that allow these problems to be resolved promptly, fairly with respect to the principles of natural justice, to the satisfaction of the Board, staff, parents and students.

GUIDELINES

1. Concerns or complaints should be made in writing or in person. Where the complainant feels an issue is serious, they will be encouraged to express that concern in writing. Complaints (written and verbal) will be responded to in writing at the resolution or conclusion of that complaint
2. Concerns and complaints regarding student learning and behaviour will initially be addressed through the class or form teacher. A complaint of a serious nature concerning the welfare of a student should be directed to the principal. The bus controller or the bus contractor will initially deal with problems regarding the school buses.
3. Initially, concerns should be raised directly with the teacher and the teacher will take all reasonable steps to resolve the concern with the expectation that most concerns can be satisfactorily resolved at this point. The outcome can be documented using the student management system (Kamar). If the complaint is not able to be resolved by the teacher, then the teacher will refer the complainant to the Principal.

4. Communication should be maintained between parties while the concern or complaint is addressed. The protection of the privacy of all parties involved is essential and everyone involved in any investigation including those who may be supporting the complainant must maintain confidentiality during the entire process.
5. If a complaint is made about staff or management matters to the Board of Trustees, the board member will refer it in the first instance to the principal.
6. Problems regarding the governance of the school, or the principal, will be addressed through the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. In the case of a complaint against the principal, the complaint should be made to the BOT chairperson.
7. Where the principal is unable to resolve the concern or complaint, the principal should take the issue to the Board Chairperson and the complainant can write directly to the Board Chairperson expressing their concern.
8. Complaints made by the staff, principal or parents about a board member should be referred to the BOT chairperson, who will aim to address the issue in-house.
9. Where appropriate outside mediation and/or advice may be sought from organisations such as NZSTA, NZEI etc. Before investigating a serious complaint involving a staff member or Board member the Board will contact the litigation insurers for advice and seek assistance from a NZSTA representative.
10. The person investigating the complaint will try to ascertain the full nature of the problem and will seek a solution that can be shared by the all parties.
11. In all cases the Board will act as a good employer when dealing with complaints. In dealing with any complaint the school will act in accordance with the relevant conditions of the current employment contract/s.
12. The complainant and any person that has had a complaint about them, is entitled to support people during the process and to advice and representation as needed.
13. The complainant will be notified of the resolution at the completion of the investigation and complaints process, in a written letter which states the outcomes of the process in relation to each issue raised by the complainant and identified any action that will be undertaken as a result of the complaint.

14. The complaints process aims to resolve a situation to the satisfaction of all parties involved by allowing them to be listened to respectfully and to feel their issue has been treated seriously, that the outcome addresses their concerns adequately and that the matter is now at an end.

**THE AIM OF THIS POLICY IS THAT CONCERNS WILL BE
RESOLVED THROUGH MEDIATION.**

Board of Trustees Chairperson_____27/09/11

Policy reviewed, September 2011. Next review date 27th September 2014.