

GP3 Concerns and Complaints

RATIONALE:

The school community contains diverse interests and viewpoints. Suggestions, concerns and complaints will arise from that diversity. Procedures need to be put in place for dealing constructively with them. These procedures should be fair, straightforward, well publicised and readily available to all concerned.

PURPOSE:

1. To ensure a prompt, professional, respectful and consistent approach when dealing with concerns and complaints regarding school staff or students.
2. To deal with concerns and complaints in accordance with procedures established by Board of Trustees and staff.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DELIVERY

The Board of Trustees delegates full responsibility of ensuring processes are in place and operating effectively and adequately to the Principal. Where the concern or complaint is concerning the Principal, the concern or complaint shall be addressed to the Board of Trustees.

BOUNDARIES

In complying with the policy the Principal shall not fail to:

1. Implement and maintain robust procedures to meet the policy requirements.
2. Ensure that the processes for concerns or complaints are clearly communicated.
3. Report to the Board of Trustees as below.

For complaints of an extremely serious nature e.g. physical or sexual abuse by a teacher toward a pupil the appropriate sections in the Complaints Against Staff Policy must be followed. This policy is held by the Principal.

REPORTING

The Principal shall maintain a register of complaints and resolutions, and shall report to the Board of Trustees at least quarterly per annum outlining the numbers of complaints, resolution success figures and any areas of concern for Board deliberation.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

1. Staff Procedures for Complaints
2. Board Complaints Procedure
3. Complaints Against Staff Policy

PUBLICITY

This policy is given to all new enrolments when they get their school pack. It is also to be published at the beginning of each school year in the newsletter. The policy should also be available prominently on the school website at all times.

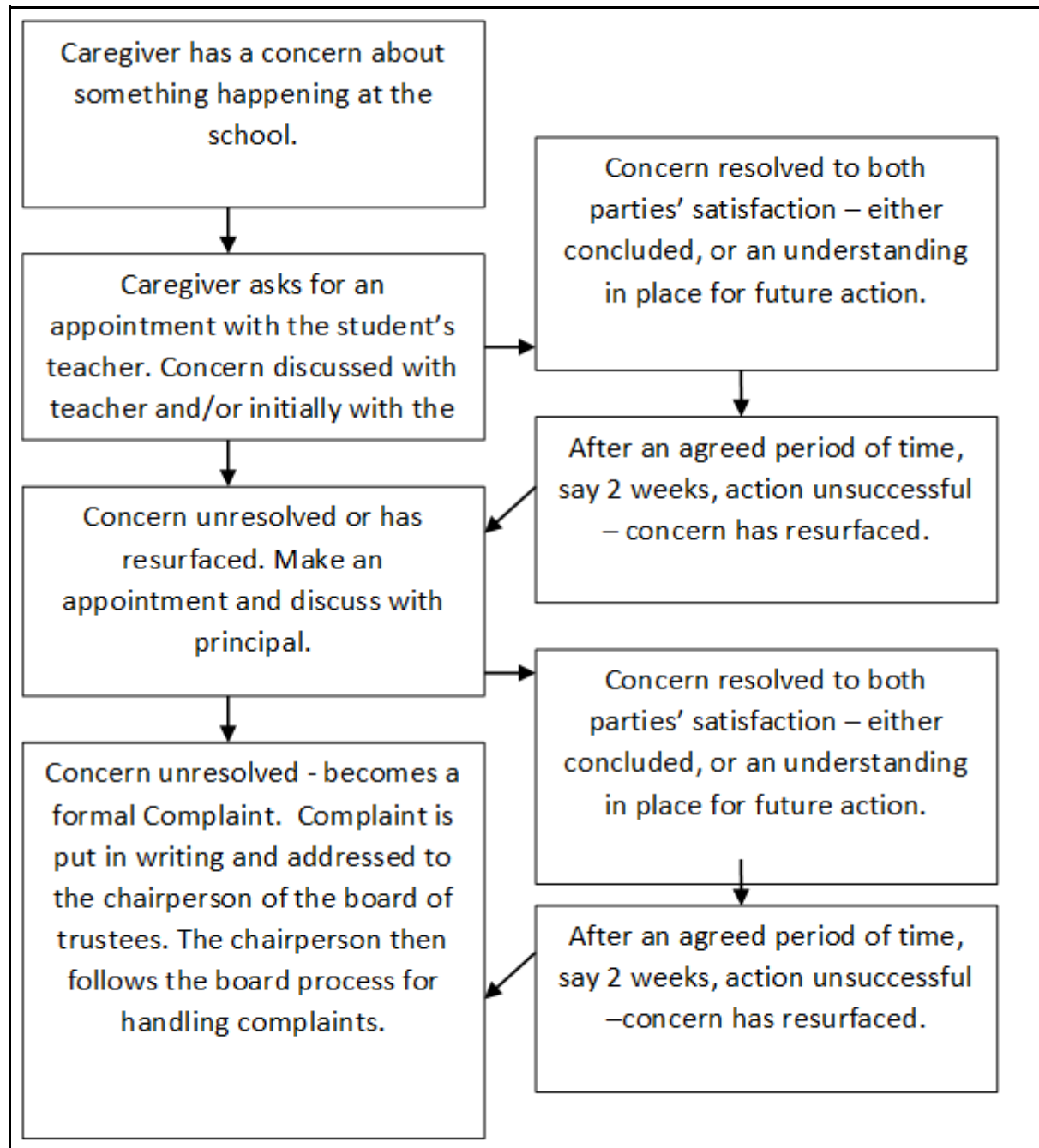
GENERAL OBSERVATIONS:

The views of individuals in the school community are important to the life of the school. It is essential that individuals feel free and are encouraged to express their views, concerns and complaints. There is a need to recognise the role of the Principal as the professional leader and manager of the school and to recognise the governance role of the Board of Trustees.

Please recognise that there are leadership and personnel matters involved that will require a level of confidentiality.

Concern and complaints procedure for Kaharoa School

Stage one: School Community Process



1. While minor concerns may be able to be discussed in a quick informal chat with a staff member, normally in order for both parties to give the matter full attention, arranging a time to discuss the matter is the preferred option.
2. **If the complaints procedure has not been followed, the Board will normally return any letter of complaint to the writer and ask that they follow the procedure first.***

3. The Board needs to formally receive a complaint in order to act on it. If a complaint is serious enough for the Board to deal with, it is serious enough to be put in writing. If you have worries about expressing the matter clearly in writing, please discuss the matter in confidence with the Board chair (or another delegated Board member) to enable them to assist you with this.
4. All parties to a complaint may bring a support person to any meeting where the issue is to be discussed.

Stage Two: Board of Trustees Procedure for Kaharoa School

Note that Full Records must be kept of every step taken

Letter of complaint is acknowledged within 7 days by the Chairperson and the complainant advised of the next steps in the Board process or *that it is being redirected to the Principal. The letter and the initial response to it becomes part of the correspondence that will be dealt with at the next Board meeting while the public is excluded. Forward to all Trustees confidentially for consideration prior to meeting. No action is to be taken by individual trustees.



Letter is tabled at Board meeting (with the public excluded) and referred to relevant parties for reporting back to the Board. The Board decides whether to deal with the matter as a whole or appoint a committee to investigate and recommend to the Board.



At the meeting of the Board or committee, the reports are received and the parties may be invited to speak to their complaint or answer questions. The Board/committee considers the evidence and/or information and comes to a decision or recommendation.



Depending on the delegated powers of the committee either they or the Board as a whole come to a resolution as to how the Board will respond and/or what action will be taken.



The Board's response is communicated to the parties to the complaint within 21 days of the complaint receipt, unless otherwise agreed by all parties. This may be either publicly or confidentially depending on the case.



The Board endeavours to convene follow up meetings within one month of the Board's initial response.



Any of the parties may request the Board to reconsider their decision – however normally for such a reconsideration to take place new information that would have been relevant to the board's deliberations must be produced.

If the Complainant feels that the Board has not dealt with their complaint adequately, their next contact point is the Office of the Ombudsman. Details of this can be found at www.ombudsman.govt.nz.

* shaded area denotes "public excluded" in committee meetings