



COMPLAINTS POLICY

RATIONALE

To provide a process for complaints concerning school staff, children or trustees which will be just and fair to all concerned.

For the purpose of this policy 'complaints' are defined as statements (verbal or written) which express significant concern about some matter.

PURPOSE

To ensure swift and appropriate action is taken in dealing with complaints.

GUIDELINES

- All complaints need to be documented and acknowledged within twenty-four hours.
- The complaint resolution procedures are based on the understanding that no action will be undertaken without the knowledge of the complainant. The person complained about must be informed as soon as possible and kept informed.
- The rights of the person(s) complained against will be acknowledged and protected throughout the resolution process.
- The principles of natural justice will underpin decisions and actions.
- Members of the school's community must know how and where to lodge a complaint or concern. This is to be sent home annually in a school newsletter.
- Written records will be kept in a confidential file and a full response will be given to the complainant in writing within fifteen working days.
- Verbal incidents/complaints/concerns, if unable to be resolved satisfactorily at the time, must be referred to the Director and/or Board in writing.
- It may be appropriate for outside or independent personnel to be involved, eg the mediator, educational psychologist, etc.
- In all meetings or interviews, the opportunity to bring support persons or professional/legal representatives will be offered.
- Whenever possible, concerns should be first raised with the person or persons concerned but complainants can be given options about how their complaint can be handled in the first instance.
- If the complaint is found to be soundly based, appropriate action must be carried out to overcome the situation that generated the concern.
- All participants to the action of a complaint are to maintain confidentiality of information and documents.

Date Reviewed April 2010

Policy to be reviewed each three years..

PROCEDURES

1. Complaint against the Director

- referred in the first instance to the Board Chairperson.
- the Board will meet and decide on an appropriate process to handle the complaint.
- appropriate advice should be sought by the Board.
- appropriate support systems should be put in place for the Director.

2. Complaint against a teacher or Administration staff member

- referred in the first instance to the Lead Teacher ODS or SP (teachers) or Director (administration) who will deal with it him/herself or refer it on (at Director's discretion).
- Board Chairperson to be kept informed and the whole Board to be informed of the process and outcome.
- appropriate support systems should be put in place for the staff member.
- If a parent complains, they may ask for the support of a Board Member.
- If a problem remains unresolved after contact with the Director, the complainant must be invited to approach the Board Chairperson for the issue to be discussed by the whole Board, or a designated Committee.
- Nothing in the above prevents summary dismissal in the case of serious misconduct. In such a case, an unprejudiced investigation will be carried out and the employee given the opportunity to answer any allegations against them and speak to the results of any investigation.

3. Complaint against a Parent/Trustee

- referred in the first instance to the Director and Board Chairperson.
- to be fully discussed by the whole Board either at a regular Board Meeting or at a special meeting.
- appropriate advice from Advisory Board to be sought.

4. Complaint against a Student

- referred in the first instance to the Lead Teacher, who may refer it on to the Director.
- the student's parents/caregivers will be informed as soon as practicable.
- the incident/complaint will be documented and the investigation will be confidential.