

### Rationale

This policy provides staff, parents /caregivers and students with clear guidelines for raising and resolving concerns and complaints.

We encourage open communication and prefer that you come to us to talk through any issues. By directly engaging with us as early as possible, we can work together to resolve effectively.

Most concerns can be resolved informally through discussions with the people concerned. The school has a procedure for making a formal complaint, if informal discussion doesn't resolve the issue.

### This Policy is to ensure that we:

1. Maintain a safe and effective learning environment for our students and staff
2. Address all concerns and complaints by students, staff, parents/whānau and members of the Ōmata community, fairly, effectively and promptly
3. Maintain confidentiality and taking into account all parties interests
4. See complaints as constructive and a way to preserve and enhance relationships and communication
5. Monitor and record complaints.

### Purpose

1. To ensure students, parents/ whānau, staff members and members of the Ōmata community are aware of how to raise concerns or complaints.
2. To provide staff, the principal and the Board with guidelines on how to respond to complaints.
3. To ensure complaints are investigated fairly, in a timely manner and in a way that respects all parties concerned.
4. To ensure that all legal obligations to students and staff have been maintained.

### Guidelines

1. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction where a response or resolution is, explicitly or implicitly, expected.
2. Anyone with a complaint is encouraged to discuss the matter directly with the person involved as soon as possible, to prevent issues escalating.
3. Most complaints will be able to be resolved by discussion between the parent and teacher or principal without the need to take the matter any further. If the concern is not resolved through this process, a formal complaint may be made.
4. The BOT will ensure there is a complaints procedure which is made publicly available to students, staff, parents/ whānau and the Ōmata community on the school's website and displayed at the school.
5. A formal complaint must be made in writing to either the Principal or the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.
6. A register or record of formal complaints must be maintained and monitoring reporting about formal complaints provided regularly to the BOT.
7. All complaints against a staff member shall be referred in the first instance to the Principal and will follow the process in the Collective Employment Agreement part 10, or any applicable employment agreement or legislation.
8. All complaints against the Principal shall be referred in the first instance to the Board of Trustees Chairperson and will follow the process in the applicable employment agreement or legislation.

## Concerns and Complaints

9. Complaints about the Board of Trustees (not individual trustees) may be directed to the Office of the Ombudsman.
10. All complaints will be treated in confidence, however, any person included in a complaint must be informed of the details of the complaint and be given an opportunity to address the issues. Generally, an anonymous complaint cannot be considered unless there is a sound legal reason for protecting the identity of the complainant.
11. All parties should respect the confidentiality of the complaints process.
12. If a complaint is being considered by the BOT, all business concerning the complaint and action resulting from it will be held "in committee" and recorded as such. Any member of the Board who is personally involved in the complaint shall take no part in the discussion about it, but may submit a statement on the matter.
13. Parents may complain to the Ministry of Education if they are not satisfied with this complaints process.

Ratified by Board: 20 June 2005

Reviewed Date: 10 August 2021

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