

WAIKOWHAI INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL COMPLAINTS POLICY

Purpose

Occasionally, the Principal or Board of Trustee (BOT) will receive a complaint.

This complaint may come from a parent / caregiver, staff member or student.

Procedures are required to ensure such complaints are dealt with fairly, with due seriousness and with a degree of uniformity.

The procedures should also ensure that minor concerns do not get escalated unnecessarily.

Policy

1. Complainants are encouraged to discuss minor concerns directly with the individuals/ staff members involved. It is not uncommon for misunderstandings to arise that can easily be resolved through direct discussion.
2. Should the complainant not be comfortable with that approach, complaints may be referred to the Principal.
3. A complainant making a complaint, or raising a concern, of a serious nature must present the complaint in writing. Copies are to be provided to the principal and individuals involved with the complaint / concern.
4. A written confirmation will be sent to the complainant within 3 working days, acknowledging receipt of the written complaint and outlining the process to be followed.
5. The Principal will act upon the concerns expressed in the complaint, and will arrange any meetings deemed necessary to the investigation.
6. The Principal will use his/her discretion in terms of immediately notifying the BOT of the complaint (based on the seriousness of the complaint). All complaints will be commented on by the Principal at the next BOT meeting.
7. If the complaint to the principal is not resolved to all parties' satisfaction, it will be referred to the BOT.
8. Where the complaint concerns a staff member, it will become the responsibility of the Personnel Subcommittee to investigate. The Personnel Subcommittee will make appropriate investigations, seek advice if needed and will report back to the full Board. The BOT will then take such action as is deemed necessary. Any action taken under this policy will comply with the individual staff member's employment contract. Advice to guide this process may be sought from the Ministry of Education, NZSTA and/or other employment advisors.

9. Where the complaint concerns students, the Principal and BOT Chair will identify Board members to be included in the investigation. This group will report back to the full Board who will take such action as is deemed necessary.
10. Where possible, the complainant and other individuals involved in the complaint, will be informed in writing of the processes to be undertaken regarding the complaint (see process section below)
11. The BOT is (subject to any legal requirement) is committed to protecting the confidentiality of all involved. Accordingly, all BOT discussions regarding complaints will be held 'in-committee'.
12. Should the complaint also be investigated by a third party (e.g. Police, ERO) the school investigation should continue as normal, however, (unless the BOT decides otherwise) the findings and proposed actions should not be finalized or communicated prior to the third party findings and their recommended actions being received by the BOT.
13. The complaint should be dealt with as quickly as possible, however, care must be taken not to short circuit the investigation or the consideration process undertaken by the BOT.

Passed by the Board of Trustees: _____

Chairperson: _____

Signature: _____

Review Date: _____

PROCESS

- Written complaint received by Principal – from complainant.
- Copy sent to individuals involved in the complaint.
- Written acknowledgement sent to complainant (within 3 working days) outlining receipt of written complaint, and process to be followed.
- Principal to determine if BOT need to be advised immediately.
- All complaints will be tabled at the next BOT meeting (in-committee).
- If complaint resolved, Principal to summarise findings and actions and write to all parties involved. BOT to be advised of outcomes at next monthly meeting.
- If complaint not resolved to all parties satisfaction, complaint can be escalated to full BOT or designated sub-group.
- BOT to conduct investigation and undertake any interviews deemed necessary.
- Full documentation to be kept on the investigation including interviews undertaken subject at all times to confidentiality requirements.
- The BOT will consider the findings of any external party involved in the investigation.
- Full BOT to determine findings and actions required.
- Findings and actions to be communicated in writing to all parties involved.