

Concerns and Complaints Policy

NAG 3 – Personnel Policy # 3.6

Rationale

The Board of Trustees and the Proprietor's Board of the Waikato Diocesan School for Girls recognise the importance of responding to complaints in a fair, consistent and timely manner and in accordance with the relevant employment contracts, legislation and the school's codes of conduct to achieve positive resolution. Parents/caregivers, students, staff and community members must feel confident that there is a procedure in place that enables complaints to be examined fairly and a suitable resolution found as quickly as possible.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of this school to:

- 1. ensure fairness and consistency when dealing with complaints.
- 2. deal with complaints in line with set procedures such as in Collective Agreements.
- 3. put in place corrective or disciplinary action where this is deemed appropriate.
- 4. safeguard the rights of both complainants and of other staff or students involved.

Guidelines

- All members of the school community have the right to have their concerns listened to and addressed. All complaints will be investigated and where possible, the complainant will be given a reasonable time frame within which a response will be received.
- 2. Concerns can often be resolved informally by the persons receiving them and this informal approach should be used when possible. Concerns and complaints should therefore be addressed at the lowest appropriate level (see the relevant Concerns and Complaints Procedure flow chart attached to this Policy) and escalated only when they cannot be resolved or if they are of a serious nature.
- 3. Complaints may be made in writing (or in person in the first instance and formalised in writing) to the relevant staff member.
- 4. While complaints will be treated in confidence as much as possible, the person against whom the complaint has been made will be notified at the earliest reasonable opportunity. Other parties may be informed at the Principal's discretion. Where appropriate, alternative dispute resolution, such as mediation, may be sought from relevant organisations.
- 5. Complaints of a serious nature or complaints that remain unresolved through the outlined procedure should be directed to the Principal in person, by appointment, or in writing.
- 6. In the case of a complaint against the Principal, a formal written complaint should be addressed to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and/or Proprietor's Board.

- 7. Complaints about the conduct of any individual board member should be directed to the relevant Board Chair.
- 8. Complaints against the Board of Trustees and/or the Proprietor's Board, or the Board Chair(s), will be acknowledged and referred to the School Trustees Association (in respect of the Board of Trustees) and/or to the Waikato Board of Diocesan Schools (in respect of the Proprietor's Board) in order to establish an appropriate and unbiased course of action.
- 9. Documentation relating to any complaint will be stored in a complaints file, which will be held by the school in confidential storage.
- 10. In dealing with any complaint related to staff the school will act as a good employer and in accordance with the relevant conditions of the current employment agreement pertaining.
- 11. Complaints made by a member of staff against another member of staff should be consistent with the school's customary restorative practices.
- 12. Where necessary the school will assist with any language issues or cultural sensitivities.
- 13. All parties to the complaint will be informed by the Principal or Board of Trustees and/or Proprietor's Board Chairperson, at the earliest reasonable opportunity, of the outcomes of the complaint enquiry or hearing.
- 14. Anonymous complaints cannot be responded to but the Principal and/or Board(s) may choose to investigate such a complaint, at their discretion.
- 15. The Concerns and Complaints Policy and Procedures will be made available to the school community, including through the school's website.

Procedures:

Appendix 1: Parent/caregiver concerns and complaints procedure

Appendix 2: Staff concerns and complaints procedure

| Adopted by BOT: | | Signed (BOT Chairperson) |
|-----------------|---------|--------------------------|
| | 13/4/22 | Date |

Adopted by PB: Signed (PB Chairperson)

30.3.22. Date

Reviewed: 2022 Next review: 2025



Appendix 1: Concerns and Complaints Procedure for parents/caregivers

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| Parent/caregiver has a concern about something happening at school (eg. a classroom matter or a particular staff member) Parent/caregiver communicates the issue to the staff member concerned (eg. email, phone) to make a time to discuss. Talk with the staff member about the issue. Be prepared to listen to their point of view. This may require more than one meeting. Give feedback to the staff member about whether you are satisfied or not to ensure the problem is settled. Matter unresolved or has resurfaced. Pastoral matters should be referred to the Dean. Curriculum matters referred to the Head of Department. Matter unresolved or has resurfaced. Pastoral matters referred to the DP – Wellbeing Curriculum matters referred to the DP – Leader of Learning Matter unresolved. Matter unresolved to the satisfaction of both parties. Matter unresolved to the satisfaction of both parties. Matter unresolved to the satisfaction of both parties. | | _ | |
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| · | addressed to the Principal. Indicate what the concern is about | | |
| Principal, be prepared to listen to their point of view. Provide | and what steps you have taken to remedy it. Discuss with | | |
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| feedback to ensure the matter is settled. The concern may be | • | | |
| referred back to the staff member(s) concerned where this | | | |
| process has not been followed to date. | process has not been followed to date. | | |
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| Matter unresolved. You now have a complaint. Matter resolved to the | • | | |
| Complaint put in writing and addressed to the Chairperson, satisfaction of both parties. | Complaint put in writing and addressed to the Chairperson, | - -/ | satisfaction of both parties. |
| Board or Trustees, and/or Chairperson, Proprietor's Board. | | | |
| Include your name, signature and contact details. Your | , , | | |
| complaint will be acknowledged, with an expected timeframe | | | |
| for resolution. The Chair will need to ensure the correct | t to a accordation. The Chairmaill accord to a service the accordat | | |
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| | process has been followed, and may direct you back to the | | |
| process for handling complaints. | process has been followed, and may direct you back to the staff member or principal. Chairperson(s) follow the board | | |

If the matter remains unresolved, the Office of the Ombudsman (www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) can be asked to investigate the complaint.



Appendix 2: Concerns and Complaints Procedure for staff members

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| Staff member has a concern about something happening at school. | |
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| Staff member communicates the issue to the staff member concerned. | Matter resolved to the satisfaction of both parties. |
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| Matter unresolved or has resurfaced. Issue referred to the relevant Manager. | Matter resolved to the satisfaction of both parties. |
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| Matter unresolved or has resurfaced. Issues relating to teaching staff referred to relevant DP. Issues relating to non-teaching staff referred to the Commercial Manager. | Matter resolved to the satisfaction of both parties. |
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| Matter unresolved. Appointment made to discuss with Principal or put in writing and addressed to the Principal. | Matter resolved to the satisfaction of both parties. |
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| Matter unresolved. Complaint put in writing and addressed to the Chairperson, Board or Trustees, and/or Chairperson, Proprietor's Board. Chairperson(s) follow the board process for handling complaints. | Matter resolved to the satisfaction of both parties. |
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If the matter remains unresolved, the Office of the Ombudsman (www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) can be

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