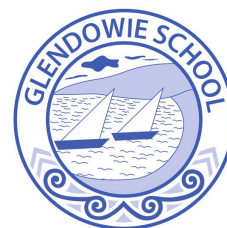


Glendowie School



PARENT/CAREGIVER COMMUNICATION FOR CONCERNS

RATIONALE

To provide an equitable and consistent process so staff and parents/caregivers can resolve issues and concerns that occur during school instruction hours promptly and satisfactorily for all parties involved.

PURPOSES

- To outline the process when parents/caregivers have an issue or concern.

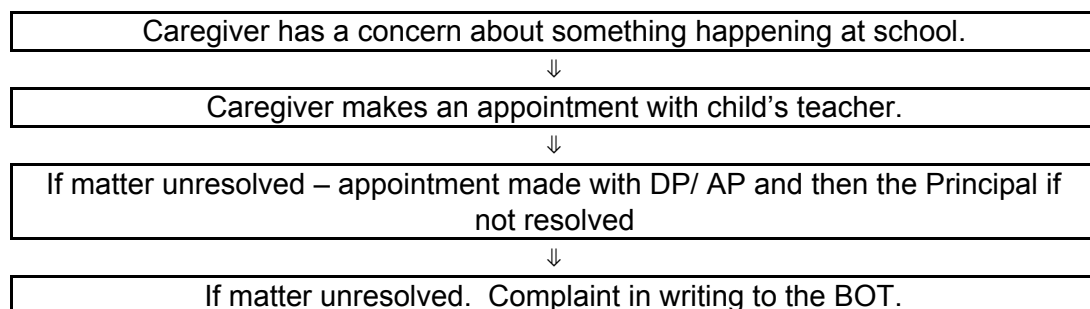
GUIDELINES

Part 1: Classroom Concerns

The process when parents/caregivers have a concern related to the classroom:

- If the problem relates to the classroom then the first person to see will be the teacher involved – this appointment will be made out of teaching time.
- The parent/caregiver can make an appointment via the secretary.
- When a parent/caregiver makes an appointment to see a teacher over a class related concern, the teacher will advise their syndicate leader as to the time and date of the interview. This will ensure that further support is available to the teacher or parents/caregivers, should it be needed, during or after the interview.
- If a parent/caregiver has a concern which has not been resolved in discussion with the class teacher after an agreed period of time, then the appropriate person to see is the Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal and then the Principal if not resolved
- At this stage the teacher concerned with the issue will be given the option to be present at the subsequent interview.
- If the matter still remains unresolved after an agreed period of time and the Principal has been part of the process, then the complaint can be put in writing to the BOT Chairperson.
- To the best of our ability, all complaints will be dealt with discretely and with regard to the safety and well being of all involved.

Communication Procedure for Classroom Concerns



Part 2: Concerns not related to the classroom

(The process when parents/caregivers have a concern not related to the classroom:)

- If a parent/caregiver has a concern not related to the classroom, then an appointment can be made to see the Principal.
- The Principal may write case notes about a complaint. In a serious concern, the secretary will take minutes and then make a copy of the minutes available to the complainant.
- At times, parents/caregivers may feel the need to have a support person(s) to accompany them. This should be stated at the time of making the appointment.
- Complaints will be investigated impartially, with the intention of a satisfactory resolution to all concerned.
- Parents/caregiver will be advised as to how the investigation will be carried out.
- If the matter still remains unresolved after an agreed period of time, the complaint can then be put in writing to the BOT Chairperson.

When a concern is related to another pupil in the school, the parents/caregivers need to ensure that the concern is taken to the teacher, AP/D.P or Principal and not to the other pupil(s) or their parent /caregiver.

Sometimes it is impossible to reach an agreement on what happened in a specific situation and it is better to move forward by agreeing how all involved should handle a similar situation another time.

When a matter concerns school policy and procedures, and a parent/caregiver has not been able to resolve the matter with the staff and Principal, then it is appropriate to take the concerns to the BOT – this should be done fully in writing to the Chairperson, including names, specific incidents and dates, and full details in order for a complete investigation to be made. Without this information the BOT cannot pursue the matter any further. The Chairperson then follows the Board process for handling complaints (see BOT process below)

The process for issues addressed to the BOT:

- All letters addressed to the Chairperson of the Board are for the **whole Board**. The Chairperson cannot decide independently as to what action will be taken.
- Resolutions or dismissal of the complaint must not be discussed before all the information is to hand.
- A conflict of interest will be determined on a number of issues, including whether the complaint involves the actions of any trustee.
- Issues of a serious matter, e.g. allegations of physical abuse, may require a special meeting of the Board to be called.
- The Board will exercise caution when dealing with complaints regarding staff, particularly in relation to confidentiality and processes to ensure the principles of natural justice are met. Contact will be made to the regional NZSTA personnel / industrial advisor in such cases. The Board will consider the relevant staff disciplinary policies, employment contracts and expert advice from the NZSTA advisor.
 - Refer to: *Complaints Against Staff Policy*.
- The Board recognizes that not all complainants will be satisfied with the outcome of a complaint. After reconsideration, if the Board is confident of its decision it will refuse to enter into further discussion / correspondence. In making such a decision the NZSTA helpdesk can assist by giving an objective assessment of a Board's processes in dealing with the complaint.

- A complaint regarding lack of compliance in relation to an agreed complaint resolution will be treated as a serious matter and actioned with urgency as a new complaint rather than as a re-consideration of the previous issue.
- Trustees need to be clear in their mind of the difference between a complaint they have as a parent (i.e. regarding their own child) and a complaint they have as a trustee (e.g. obstruction of staff preventing them carrying out Board work). In the first instance they are required to follow the normal procedures and are excluded from decision making due to a conflict of interest. The latter case is dealt with as an agenda item for the whole Board. (Possibly with the public excluded).

BOT Complaints procedures

Letter of complaint is acknowledged by the chairperson who will clarify and confirm with the complainant the exact nature of the complaint and subsequently any policy that it relates to, and the complainant advised of the next steps in the Board process. The letter becomes part of the correspondence that will be dealt with at the next Board meeting while the public is excluded.



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 either the matter as a whole or appoint a committee to investigate and recommend to the Board.



At the meeting of the Board/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. This may be either publicly or confidentially depending on the case.

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 Boards deliberations must be produced.



Please note: Shaded areas denotes 'public excluded' meetings.

REFERENCES

Staff Complaints Policies

Protected Disclosure Policy

Visitors to School and Access to Students Procedures

Approved : Board of Trustees Meeting 2008

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. J. Bennett', written in a cursive style.

Signature of Chairperson _____

Date **2/8/16**

Reviewed: **18th June 2019**