

CARTERTON SCHOOL

Complaints procedure

General complaints

From time to time there may be expressions of concern or complaints made concerning a wide aspect of matters concerning Carterton School. There is a clear avenue that people should follow if they have a complaint.

Guidelines

- 1) Do not wait until the concern becomes a serious problem. Take your complaint to the person it concerns
- 2) All verbal concerns/complaints need to be documented at the professional judgment of the teacher.
- 3) If you are not satisfied, discuss the matter with a senior teacher at the appropriate level of the school. This could be the Team Leader, Deputy Principal or, if necessary and you are still dissatisfied, the Principal.
- 4) If the complaint is one in regard to an employee of the Board of Trustees then the matter will be dealt with under the procedure regarding Complaints Against Employees.
- 5) If the complainant wishes or if the Principal judges the complaint to be a serious one, the complaint should be put in writing to the Principal. Their complaints will be recorded in the Complaints Register which will be viewed and signed by the Chairperson each term. The Principal will investigate the matter. The complainant will be informed of the outcome of the Principal's investigation.
- 6) If the complainant remains dissatisfied, then the complaint should be sent in writing to the Board of Trustees. The Chairperson of the Board of Trustees will acknowledge receipt of the complaint, discuss the matter with the Principal, and investigate the complaint further. If appropriate the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees will arrange a meeting of all interested parties to resolve the matter. The result of the investigation will be reported to the complainant as soon as possible.

Complaints against employees

Complaints concerning employees of the Board of Trustees need to be dealt with in an appropriate, clear and fair manner to all parties to ensure good

relationships are maintained between employer and employee and the community.

When a matter is brought to the principal or BOT they will distinguish between "concerns" and formal complaints.

Any complaint or concern is to be dealt with fairly and in accordance with the relative employment contract provisions.

Our aim is to attempt to resolve any complaint as close as practical to the source and at the lowest level possible in the procedures.

Definitions

Concerns shall include any queries and/or statements by any employee, student, BOT member, member of the Community or other person concerning any matter relative to an employee, the resolution of which may require only corrective measures - not disciplinary action.

Complaint shall include any matter raised by any employee, student, member of the community or other person which on its face value may result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee.

Concerns – procedure

1. Shall be made to the Principal or the Board Chairperson verbally - but not anonymously.
2. The Principal / BOT chairperson shall record:-
 - the date on which the matter is raised,
 - identify the informant and the subject of the concern,
 - the nature of the concern,
 - brief comment on actions taken.
3. Concerns shall be investigated and actioned by the Principal and/or Principal's nominee. Where the matter involves the Principal, it shall be dealt with by the Board Chairperson.
4. With concerns the person should approach directly the person they have the concern about and attempt to resolve it at this level.

Complaints – procedure

1. Complaints will be treated with fairness, discretion and confidentiality. All parties will be provided with opportunities to present their views. All relevant information will be considered. All parties have the right to be represented.

2. Serious complaints against employees or BOT members are to be made in the first instance to the Principal, or where this is inappropriate to the Board of Trustees Chairperson.

3. The complaint must be made in writing, dated and signed.

4. If a pupil is making the complaint the Principal will record the complaint in a written statement from the pupil – the Principal may assist the pupil write the complaint.

5. The Principal will inform the Chairperson of the complaint.

6. The Board of Trustees will form an investigating sub-committee. The sub-committee will include the Principal, Chairperson and at least one other Board member but not the subject of the complaint.

7. The investigating sub-committee will have the authority to fully investigate the complaint and determine the complaint. The matter of the complaint will be confidential to this sub-committee.

8. The investigation will follow all the legal requirements in the State Sector Amendment Act 1989 (Part VII Section 73), the NZEI Guidelines as set out in the current Collective Employments Contract, other employment Contracts and the policies of the school.

9. The Board investigation sub-committee will ensure they:-

- (a) seek legal advice (where appropriate).
- (b) seek the advice of NZSTA.
- (c) keep the school insurance company fully informed.

10. The investigation will include:

- (a) informing the subject of the complaint their rights including having representation, support and advice.
- (b) receiving signed statements
- (c) fairly interviewing the employee, providing a copy of the school's complaints procedure to the employee and providing all collected evidence to the employee
- (d) preparation of statement of facts.
- (e) preparation of findings.
- (f) preparation of a statement of penalty which may include conditions which apply to continued employment.

11. Decision Making.
possibilities:

The decision could come from a range of

- (a) Take no further action.
- (b) Reprimand.
- (c) Warning.
- (d) Final warning.
- (e) Conditions to continued employment including

- counseling, advice and guidance programmes.
- (f) Suspension
- (g) Dismissal
- (h) Any other legal action, e.g. trespass order.

12. The investigation sub-committee will report to the full Board their decision and any penalty which will apply.

13. The person who made the complaint will be provided with a generalized statement of the outcome/decision/penalty reached by the sub-committee. The extent of information provided will be at the discretion of the sub-committee

14. Time Frames. The complaint will be dealt with promptly but allowing sufficient time for responses, setting meeting times/dates etc.