

Mission Heights Primary School Procedure Complaints

*In implementing the policy on **Complaints** the following procedures will be observed. Procedures laid down in individual employment contracts are to be followed in all cases. Many complaints can be resolved by informal discussion, but the following will be used as a guide when handling formal complaints.*

1. Parents are encouraged to discuss any minor concerns they may have regarding the conduct of staff members or their role in the School directly with the staff member concerned in the first instance. If they are not satisfied with the outcome of that discussion or the concern is of a major nature or affecting the larger school population, they may wish to approach the Principal for a discussion.
2. If a student has a concern or complaint regarding a staff member, the student, or the parent or appropriate caregiver on his/her behalf shall approach a Senior Leader, Principal or Board Chair. The Principal should be immediately informed of any complaint against a staff member.
3. An appropriate staff member will follow up on all minor complaints/concerns with the person making the complaint after an appropriate passage of time to discuss perceived developments. These contacts may be continued for whatever time is deemed appropriate both for an evaluation of developments and for positive relations with parents. The Board Chair may be advised of the complaint/concern at this point at the discretion of the Principal.
4. All parties to the complaint should be involved in the resolution where possible, and every endeavour will be made to resolve the complaint at the first stage.
5. Anyone wishing to make a serious complaint or having a serious concern will be advised to make the complaint to the Principal. Where the complainant does not provide a written statement of concern, the Principal will record, in writing, the salient points. Every attempt will be made to verify the accuracy of this written information with the complainant. This statement along with all subsequent documentation will be retained in a confidential file.
6. The Principal will follow appropriate procedures in accordance with applicable employment agreements. This will usually involve an initial meeting with the staff member to discuss and verify the facts relating to the complaint. The Staff member may choose to bring someone by the way of personal support during this discussion with the Principal and should be advised of this.
7. A copy of the complaint and the Principals investigation report will be kept on the Staff member's personal file and/or in a complaints file as appropriate, along with a record of the Principals response, for a time period to be determined by the Principal. N.B. This discussion stage does not constitute or imply any disciplinary process.
8. Changes in the Staff member's behaviour or practices may be suggested and agreed at this stage.

9. Where appropriate, the Principal will follow up all serious concerns with further discussion with the complainant and Staff member after an appropriate passage of time to discuss perceived developments and any ongoing concerns.
10. Where the complaint is of a serious nature (as determined by the Principal) and is found to be soundly based, the Principal will follow processes outlined in the appropriate Collective Agreement, will advise the Board Chair and where necessary will seek advice from the school's legal advisor and/or from another agency such as STA. Where a complaint may have a potential disciplinary consequence for an employee they should be advised of their right to representation.
11. Where serious misconduct is found to have occurred the Board will follow processes outlined in the appropriate Collective Agreement, will seek advice from the school's legal advisor and/or from another agency such as STA. and where appropriate will inform the New Zealand Education Council of the incident.
12. Board members are to regard complaints against individuals made to the Board as confidential and shall not express personal opinions on the matter outside of the Board Meeting.
13. Board members with personal knowledge or a conflict of interest should exclude themselves from participating in the complaints procedure.
14. Where the complaint is against the Principal, the processes will be managed by the Board Chair who will receive the complaint in the first instance.
15. Complaints against the Board, individual members or Board policy/actions will be made to the Board Chairperson in writing.
16. The Principal or Board, as appropriate, will ultimately determine what information will be released to parents and /or the media.

Principal's Acknowledgement:.....

Date:.....