

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Key Principles

It is important that the concerns of students, staff, parents/whanau and members of the school community are recognised and resolved in order to assure the best educational outcomes for students and facilitate confidence in school processes.

Guidelines

1. Papakowhai School will make a genuine effort to resolve all concerns and complaints, verbal or written.
2. Concerns will normally follow the process set out in the Procedure for Concerns unless there are culturally specific circumstances that require a different process.
3. Judgment about who should deal with a concern will be made when the concern is received, and appropriate steps taken.
4. Formal complaints must be made in writing and may be addressed to the Principal and/or Chair of Board of Trustees who will follow the process set out in the Formal Complaints Procedure.
5. The Principal will report all serious complaints to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. All enquiries carried out by the school in relation to complaints will follow the principles of natural justice. Legal requirements and the procedures of any related employment contracts will be adhered to.
6. Complainants have a right of appeal to the Board of Trustees if dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaints process.
7. A copy of the Complaints Policy and procedures are available from the school office.

APPENDIX 1

Procedure for Concerns by Parents and Children

a) For Children

Children are encouraged to talk directly to their teachers whenever a problem arises. They should approach the teacher at a suitable time (e.g. at the end of the lesson) or during a break time. Issues dealt with as soon as they occur are usually straightforward to solve. However if the concern is not resolved, children should talk to another teacher, the principal or their parent

b) For Parents/Whanau

Classroom Issues

(i) If you have a concern about a classroom matter you should firstly try to contact the class teacher and discuss the matter with her/him. Do this by phoning the school office (2338321) or writing to the teacher concerned. Teachers are unlikely to be available to answer calls during the day, since they will normally be teaching. A message should be left with the school office asking the teacher to return your call.

(ii) Teachers will, wherever possible, return calls by the end of the next school day. You should ensure that you leave information with the school office about how and when to contact you. Contact phone numbers should also be included if the concern has been made in writing. The school will try to respond to written concerns within three working days.

(iii) If the response provided by the school does not fully address your concerns, you may wish to take the matter further by making a formal complaint (see Appendix 2).

Other Concerns

If you have a concern about a matter which you do not feel able to discuss with the teacher directly or which does not involve a particular teacher, you may phone or write to one of the following :

Shane Robinson – Deputy Principal
Mark Smith - Principal

APPENDIX 2

Procedure for Making a Formal Complaint

If you are not satisfied with the school's response to your concerns, or you wish to make a complaint you may wish to make a formal complaint as set out below:

1. Write down your complaint giving details of what it is you are complaining about. Include details of efforts that have been made to resolve the matter. Include your name and contact phone number.
2. Address your written complaint to the Principal (or to the Acting Principal if the Principal is absent). Ask for assistance at the school office if you are unsure how to go about delivering your complaint.
3. When the Principal receives a complaint, he/she will discuss the matter with you before deciding what further action should be taken. You may have a support person with you when you discuss the complaint, if you wish.
4. The complaint will be investigated by talking to the person about whom the complaint has been made and interviewing anybody else who may have had a part to play in the incident. Written statements will normally be taken.
5. The Principal will decide what steps will be taken as a result of the investigation and will ensure that a record of the process is kept.
6. You will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.
7. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the matter may be referred to the Board of Trustees for consideration and action.
8. Your complaint will generally be treated in confidence. However, in the interests of natural justice any persons included in a complaint must have the opportunity to hear all details about the complaint and reply to it. They may be accompanied by a support person during discussion of the complaint if they wish.
9. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint you may write to the Board of Trustees for a review of the complaint. A review should be completed by the Board within 28 days of the referral.