



St Peter's College

NAG 3

School Management Policy

G20 Concerns and Complaints Procedure

The Board will ensure that, should a complaint be received, it is settled fairly, quickly, and with as little damage to the Board's working relationship with the school as possible. The Board shall refer to the appropriate Operational or Governance Policy.

Reason for procedure:

A clear, fair procedure to resolve complaints will help to maintain good relations within the school community.

Objectives

1. To identify the nature of a complaint
2. To provide procedures for the resolution of complaints
3. To ensure that all people in the school community know the correct procedure to be taken for the type of complaint being made
4. To encourage resolution of less serious complaints speedily by discussion at the lowest level within the school's structure
5. To ensure a complaint will be dealt with quickly and fairly and with minimal disruption to working relationships
6. To ensure that people get a fair hearing in accordance with any applicable Collective Agreement and people's careers are not unnecessarily damaged

Guidelines

A. Nature of the complaint: Complaints involving serious matters include among other things:

1. Gross negligence or incompetence
2. Theft of Board property
3. Fraud or other forms of dishonesty including misuse of Board funds
4. Assault or fighting
5. Refusing to obey lawful instructions
6. Possession of, being under the influence of, or consuming non-prescription drugs or alcohol during the course of duties
7. Intentionally providing false information
8. Undermining Board policy or otherwise seriously damaging the integrity of the Board
9. Conduct of an indecent or sexual nature, sexual abuse or sexual harassment
10. Conduct of a criminal nature
11. Bullying or intimidation
12. Any other conduct that deeply impairs the relationship of trust and confidence

B. Procedures for less serious complaints

1. The complainant should first endeavour to speak to the person whose actions or conduct have given rise to the complaint.
2. If the complaint is not resolved, or if the complainant feels unable to speak to the person, or where it would be inappropriate to do so, or if the matter does not involve a particular person, then the complainant should speak to either: the class teacher, the Head of a Learning Area, a Learning Tutor, the Deputy Principal, the Principal, or the Board Chairperson (where the complaint involves the Principal).



3. If the complainant considers that the complaint has not been resolved, then he/she may submit a written complaint to the Principal or to the Board Chairperson (where the complaint involves the Principal).
4. The written complaint must be signed and should give specific details of the incident; the efforts made to resolve it, a contact name and phone number and it should be posted or delivered to the Principal or Chairperson.
5. The Principal or Chairperson may seek legal or industrial advice from an approved source and notify the Board's insurer if that is considered appropriate.
6. The Principal or Board Chairperson will discuss the complaint with the complainant who may have a support person present at the interview.
7. The Principal or Chairperson will discuss the complaint with the person who is the subject of the complaint, give them a copy of the complaint and invite them to respond within a reasonable timeframe and advise them of their right to representation and support.
8. The Principal or Chairperson shall investigate the complaint as he/she considers appropriate.
9. The Principal or Chairperson will decide what the outcome of the investigation will be and advise the complainant.
10. All complaints will be treated in confidence.

C. Procedures for serious complaints

1. Serious complaints may be made to either the Principal or the Chairperson.
2. The complaint must be fully detailed, in writing, and signed.
3. The Principal will immediately inform the Board of Trustees when a serious complaint is received at management level.
4. The complaint will be tabled in the public-excluded section at a meeting of the full Board of Trustees.
5. All complaints will be acknowledged.
6. The Board will determine an appropriate course of action to be undertaken according to its own policy and procedures.

D. General

1. All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant Collective Agreements
2. All investigations will be carried out in a procedurally fair manner. Explanations and information gathered will be given full consideration free of predetermination or bias.
3. When an investigation is being carried out the person who is the subject of the complaint is required to answer questions and provide explanations either personally or through a representative. Where explanations or facts known to that person have not been offered, they cannot be used in later proceedings as evidence of a lack of substance to the complaint or justification for the decision taken.
4. All complaints and details of any conditions of employment that may arise from a resolution of the complaint will be treated in confidence by all parties except where there is a legal requirement to report.
5. Where complaints are formally investigated, minutes of all meetings will be taken. Agreements and decisions made will be recorded in writing. These documents will be held by the Principal, Board or on the employee's file as deemed appropriate.

Review: This Policy will be reviewed according to the Board of Trustees triennial programme of self-review

Reviewed: November 2021

Supporting Documents and Resources:

Concerns and Complaints Procedure from staff manual