



Harewood School

Next review: Term 3 2024

Raising Concerns

Where appropriate, Harewood School handles concerns and complaints informally in the first instance. If you would like to raise a concern with us, please follow the steps below. If you believe your concern cannot be resolved informally, it may be appropriate to make a formal complaint.

There may be instances where the concern raised under this policy amounts to a formal complaint or serious allegation. We may treat a concern as a formal complaint and address the concern using our [Investigating a Formal Complaint or Serious Allegation](#) procedure.

1. Raise the concern with the right person

In all instances, you may have a **support person** to help you raise a concern or make a complaint.

If you approach a board member with your concerns, you will be asked to follow the actions below and the board member will inform the principal and board chair. If several people share a concern, the process is the same. You could nominate a group representative to approach the school, and it may be appropriate for the group and the school to use a mediator.

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of those involved when a concern is raised, it may be appropriate for the person receiving a concern to limit communication about the concern until a facilitated session occurs or until a third party is present.

- If you have a **general concern about the school or its programmes**, discuss it with the person involved or with a member of the management team or the principal.
- If you have a **particular concern about a staff member or a school activity**, contact the person involved to discuss the matter privately. We ask that you make this direct approach as soon as possible.

If you do not wish to approach the person involved, contact a member of the management team or the principal to discuss your concern. The principal or management team member may communicate with the person involved.

- If you have a **concern about your own child or one of our other students**, contact the student's class teacher or the principal to discuss the matter. The school monitors, records, and responds appropriately to any concerns about a student's safety and welfare.

If your concern relates to another student, you must not approach that student or their parents/caregivers/whānau directly. Speak to their teacher or the principal.

If you want to raise concerns (especially serious concerns) about a student's wellbeing and/or safety, see [Responding to Student Wellbeing Concerns](#).

- If you have a concern about another **parent, caregiver, or member of the school community** on a school-related matter, raise this with the principal.
- If the matter concerns the **principal** and you have not first resolved it by discussion, or you feel uncomfortable directly approaching the principal, contact the board chair.

- If the matter concerns a **board member**, contact the board chair. Contact another member of the board if it concerns the board chair.

After raising the initial concern, parties involved in the complaints process should not communicate about the matter with each other until all parties agree to an appropriate way to discuss or resolve the matter. This applies at all times, both in and out of school.

2. Work towards a resolution

In most cases, concerns can be resolved informally with constructive discussions.

- Be prepared to make a time to discuss your concern if the person involved is unable to talk with you straight away.
- Be open to listening to the other side of the story to avoid communication breakdowns.
- Follow-up actions or later check-ins may be able to be agreed where appropriate.
- Involving a third party to facilitate discussion or participate in a meeting may be appropriate.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of your initial meeting, contact the principal, a member of the management team, or the board chair to discuss further resolution.

If this process does not resolve your concern, you can make a **formal complaint**.

3. Follow-up and feedback

Resolution of the concern or complaint may include checking that the solutions have been implemented and are working. The effectiveness of the solutions may be fed back to the person who raised the issue where appropriate. This follow-up may be recorded in the concerns and complaints register.

In some circumstances it will not be possible or appropriate for the school to advise you of a final outcome.

For an overview of the process, see our **Concerns and Complaints Process** flowchart.

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