



PS5 – Concerns and Complaints

We use Scriptural principles in resolving issues; first go to the person concerned. Most concerns can be resolved this way.

*"James 1:19-20 - This you know, my beloved brethren.
But everyone must be quick to hear,
slow to speak and slow to anger;
for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God."*

Throughout the process, all parties are expected to demonstrate the school values of Love and Grace, Servanthood, Truth and Perseverance. The mana of all parties should be upheld throughout the process.

Wide discussion about a concern or complaint with those who aren't directly involved in the issue, or posting on social media about it, is not in keeping with the vision and values of Timaru Christian School. At all times we must 'assume good intentions' in order to focus on finding solutions which benefit the school and learners. We will do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit.

Generally, an anonymous complaint cannot be processed unless there is a sound legal reason for protecting the identity of the complainant.

Raising a Concern

1. Speak to the staff member most directly involved eg your child's teacher.
2. If you don't want to speak to the staff member concerned, contact a senior staff member or the principal.
3. If it isn't resolved, go to the next most senior person eg senior staff member, principal, presiding member.
4. If you have a concern about the principal, contact the presiding member of the School Board (presidingmember@timaruchristian.school.nz).
5. If you still feel it isn't resolved, you can make a formal complaint.



Making a Formal Complaint

This process can only be followed if the Raising a Concern process has been done first.

1. Any formal complaint must be made in writing with as many details about the issue and steps taken, as possible. Confidentiality must be maintained.
2. The complaint is sent to the school principal or, if it is about the principal, the presiding member.
3. Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged.
4. The Board will set up a Complaints Committee to investigate. They will review the complaint, the staff member's response to it and determine if any further action is required. This will be done 'in-committee'. (Note: if there is a conflict of interest with any board member, they cannot take part in the Complaints process.)
5. Unless the Committee has been directed by the Board to carry out some action, the only outcome from the Committee will be to report back with their recommendation to the Board, who will make a decision.
6. The decision will be communicated to the complainant.

Important things to note:

- Once the Board has done all that could be reasonably expected, they enter into no further discussion on the matter, unless the nature of the complaint has changed prompting further action. If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of a Board decision, they have a right to apply to the Ombudsman for a review and ruling on the decision. In the interest of transparency, it is expected the complainant would advise the Board that they have elected that course of action.
- Board members are 'representatives' not 'advocates'. If a Board member is made aware of a concern or complaint, they will direct the person to the Complaints Procedure or they are at risk of breaking the Code of Conduct (which may lead to removal from the Board). Any letter of complaint should only be shared with the Presiding Member or Principal. If a Board member is given a copy, they are not allowed to be part of the meeting to discuss the complaint.
- The Board will not address issues related to the child of another parent, including those raised by members of their wider whānau, without the parent's knowledge.