

# TAPANUI SCHOOL

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE



*"Together we learn and grow."*

### **GENERAL**

The BOT encourages positive relationships between students, staff and parents/caregivers at Tapanui School, realising that no policy or procedure will cover every situation, and asks that common sense prevail so that children's learning is not disrupted.

BOT members should direct any person making a complaint to seek an interview with the Principal.

Issues concerning the handling of disciplinary matters and matters of teacher competence must be dealt with in the first instance by the Principal as the professional leader of the school.

Matters of concern will be directed to the person/s involved.

The Principal or a BOT member may receive a complaint in writing and will direct it to the person/s concerned.

The Principal may act as a facilitator in a meeting between the parties concerned.

The investigation or consideration of a complaint should be on a scale appropriate to that complaint and should not escalate the issue beyond those who are immediately involved.

Social Media, such as Facebook and Twitter, are not the right forum to air complaints or issues about the school. Concerns should be directed to the person concerned which also provides an opportunity for clarity around the issue and an explanation if this is needed.

The Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures for Employees as outlined in the relevant Collective or Individual Agreements will be followed.

From time to time misunderstandings occur or concerns arise which need to be addressed.

### **PARENTS**

- If the concern or complaint is about classroom organisation or something involving a teacher or children this should first be discussed with the teacher concerned.
- If the concern is minor the parent/caregiver should contact the staff member in person or by phone and arrange an interview time outside teaching hours.
- When arranging an interview time the nature of the concern should be stated so that relevant documentation can be organised.
- A parent/caregiver may bring a friend or support person to the interview, but this should be stated when organising the meeting.

- If after discussion with the teacher, there is still concern, the Principal should be contacted.
- The Principal may set up an interview with the teacher on behalf of the parent, or together they may discuss the issue with the teacher.
- Complaints will be handled discretely by those involved and, after both parties have discussed the issue, it will be usually be resolved.
- If the Principal feels that the concern cannot be resolved easily or needs further clarification, the parent may be asked to put the complaint in writing.
- If, after talking with the teacher and principal, the parent/caregiver feels the issue is still unresolved and the situation is still unsatisfactory they should write to the BOT via the Principal. If the issue has been with the Principal rather than with a staff member the parent/caregiver should contact the BOT Chairperson either verbally in the first instance or in writing.
- Letters written to the BOT should allow at least one week before their meeting so that background information can be gathered. The BOT will usually deal with complaints 'in committee' so that confidentiality is maintained.
- The Principal shall communicate with the person making the complaint to outline procedures and action taken by the BOT.

## **STUDENTS**

- If the concern or complaint is about something involving a teacher or other children or classroom organisation this should first be shared with the person or people concerned.  
This may mean that the situation is resolved immediately and no further action is required.
- If the student feels unable to do this they may choose to talk to their parents, the Principal or another staff member.
- In a class situation the teacher may act as a mediator between the children concerned.
- If the complaint involves a teacher, or children are unable to resolve the problem with a teacher's assistance, the Principal may set up an interview with the teacher or children concerned so that they are able to discuss the issue further.
- When arranging an interview meeting time the nature of the concern should be stated so that relevant documentation can be organised.
- A student may bring a friend or support person to the interview, but this should be stated when organising the meeting.
- Complaints will be handled discretely by those involved and usually, after both parties discuss the issue, it will be resolved.
- If the complaint is of a serious nature [sexual harassment or abuse], counselling and guidance will be made available to the student.