

PROCEDURE 3.5 Complaints and Concerns



RUAHINE SCHOOL

The Best I Can Do, The Best I Can Be

Tū māia au ki te mahi, tū rangatira au ki te ao

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PURPOSE:

1. Provide an appropriate and clear procedure for a complaint or concern to be raised and managed
2. Provide clear guidelines for acceptable behaviour when raising and managing a complaint or concern

GUIDELINES:

Note: In cases of personal grievance/employment issues the Principal or BoT chairperson must immediately (and prior to entering negotiations or legal appointment) notify the school's insurance company.

1. The Board will ensure that complaints and concerns are dealt with at the appropriate level.
2. Parents/caregivers/staff will be informed of the school procedure relating to the handling of complaints.
3. The levels of contact for complaints or concerns are;
 1. *Classroom teacher*
 2. *Team leader*
 3. *Principal*
 4. *Board of Trustees*
4. The requirement of employment contracts, natural justice and relevant legislation will be complied with.
5. Appropriate Ruahine ROCKERS Behaviour is expected from all parties at all times.
6. Staff are expected to behave in a professional manner at all times.

COMPLAINTS PROCESS:

Appropriate Ruahine ROCKERS Values are expected to be shown from complainant at all times.

- Discussions will be held in good faith.
- Staff members are required to terminate any meeting or phone call if voices are raised, the complainant becomes abusive or rude, staff members feel threatened. The staff member will inform the Principal, who may then inform the Board Chair. Another meeting will be scheduled with school leadership in attendance.
- Staff private phone numbers or social media accounts may at no time be used to lodge a complaint. Staff are not to respond to any complaint laid in this way.
- Only school email addresses or the school phone number may be used to discuss a concern or to make an appointment to discuss a complaint. Staff are not to respond to any complaint laid in an abusive or rude manner.
- An email or phone call made in good faith regarding a complaint will be responded to within three (3) school days.
- Teachers are preparing lessons before school and often in meetings after school. Therefore, appointments must be made to meet and discuss a complaint.
- Any issue with another child must taken to school staff rather than approaching the child or child's parents.
- KiVa: Any reports of bullying must be dealt with by taking the matter to the classroom teacher who will refer to the KiVa team, after accurately filling in the KiVa referral form.

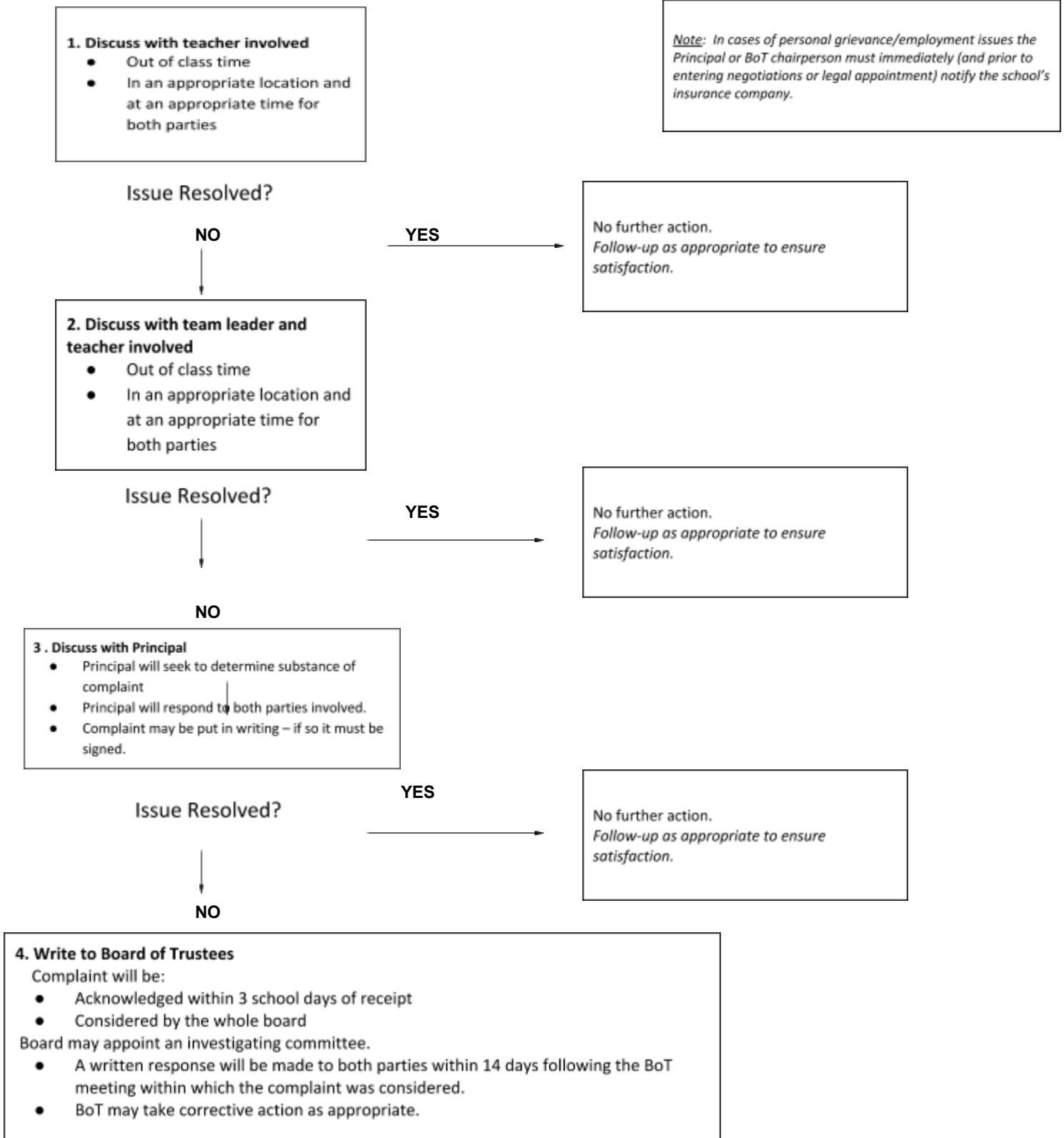
Steps for staff to take in addressing a complaint

- KiVa: Any reports of bullying will be investigated and managed by the KiVa team, following correct KiVa protocols
- It is important that:
 - The problem is defined. A concise statement of the facts or circumstances of the complaint is made. Establish an agreement on the facts if possible.
 - The problem is owned. Establish respective responsibilities for the actions to resolve the complaint. E.g. Principal's role, staff member's role, complainant's role.
 - Reflection is carried out on possible courses of action, including remedy and/or redress, strategies to prevent repetition of the situation and constructive alternative actions if the situation reoccurs.
 - Action is taken. Work for agreement between the parties. Work for acceptable remedy or redress. Evaluate action taken.
 - Record agreement on action and evaluation. Provide copies of agreements, where appropriate, to the complainant, staff member and Principal. Date all notes and agreements.
 - If agreement cannot be reached, the Principal should decide on action that is consistent with the appropriate school policy, job description and employment contract. This may include informing the BoT Chairperson and referring the matter to the Board for resolution.

Complaints Process Diagram

Procedure for raising concerns or complaints at Ruahine School

It is an expectation that all parties demonstrate responsible behaviour by following the Ruahine ROCKERS Values at all times.



Complaints Process Explanation

Step One - Classroom Teacher

- Any complaint should be made to the person it is directed at, where appropriate, and the staff member will be asked to attempt to resolve matters with the complainant. The staff member or the complainant may request the Team Leader to assist in facilitating a resolution.
- Any meetings will be scheduled outside of teaching time.
- Minutes of the meeting must be recorded.

Step Two - Principal

- If a satisfactory conclusion is not achieved the complainant may refer the complaint to the Principal. The Principal, or a person delegated by the Principal, will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and will discuss the complaint with the staff member to whom the complaint is directed at in an attempt to resolve the matter.
- The Principal may advise the complainant to submit the complaint in writing to the Board if he/she believes that it is appropriate for the Board to consider the matter.

Step Three - Board of Trustees

- Should the Principal be unable to resolve the matter to the complainant's satisfaction the complainant may send a written complaint to the Board of Trustees Chairperson. The Chairperson shall inform the Principal of receipt of the complaint. The Chair may table the complaint for an *In Committee* section at the next Board meeting, or a separate meeting may be held if appropriate. The Chairperson may request that the complainant be more specific as to the nature of the complaint.
- The Chairperson, in consultation with the Principal, may investigate to see if the matter can be resolved prior to being discussed by the Board. If the Chairperson is unable to resolve the matter then the Board shall be informed of the outcome.
- The Board may refer written complaints to the Principal to resolve or investigate. The Principal shall report back to the Board with recommendations.
- The Board may decide to investigate and determine appropriate action itself or delegate the responsibility to a special committee of the Board.
- Before determining action to take the Board should be prepared to seek advice, conduct an appropriate investigation and give matters due consideration.
- If the complaint relates to alleged misconduct, the staff member concerned will be advised of the right to representation and the Board shall comply with the requirements of its disciplinary policy, the rules of natural justice and the relevant employment contract. Such matters should be conducted in the public excluded section of the Board meeting.
- Complaints against the Board should come to the Board directly, in writing and signed by the complainant.
- The result of any Board decision in relation to a complaint should be forwarded to the relevant parties in writing. Assistance will be given to complainants who have difficulty expressing their complaint in writing.
- A meeting may be required to explain the Board's decision and to ensure that the parties accept that decision.
- Complaints against the Principal, which are not resolved through discussion between complainant and Principal shall be referred to the Board Chairperson in writing.
- Complaints against the Board, individual Board members or Board policy/actions shall be made to the Board Chairperson in writing.
- Board members are to regard complaints against individuals made to the Board as confidential and shall not express personal opinions on the matter.
- Board members with personal knowledge or a conflict of interest should exclude themselves from participating in the complaints procedure.
- Where a complaint may have a potential disciplinary consequence for an employee they should be advised of their rights to representation.
- A record of complaint and action taken will be kept in a Complaints Register.

It is envisaged that this policy will see most complaints resolved without formally coming to the attention of the Board

Adopted 2013

Reviewed May 2019