



MIRAMAR CENTRAL SCHOOL 2.04 COMPLAINTS POLICY

2.04 Complaints Policy

Board Signoff Date - 21st March 2017

Purpose/ Rationale

The purpose of the Complaints Policy is to define the rules around the lodging, investigation and resolution of complaints with particular regard to ensuring that the following principles are upheld throughout the lifecycle of the complaint -

- i. Timeliness
- ii. Transparency
- iii. Fairness
- iv. Privacy
- v. Improvement

Scope

1. The policy applies to all who may be involved in a complaint which could include the board, parents, staff, pupils and other members of the community affected by the running of the school operations.

Policy Statements

Lodging a complaint

2. For the sake of fairness, before a complaint is lodged the complainant should satisfy themselves that the issue cannot be resolved through discussion with the other party.
3. The timeliness of any complaint is important. Although a complaint can be raised at any time it is far more likely to lead to a satisfactory resolution for all parties if it is raised as soon as possible after the event.
4. In general, the principal is regarded as the most appropriate starting point for lodging a formal complaint, however there are valid exceptions such as where the principal was involved in the incident giving rise to the complaint. In these cases, it is more appropriate for the sake of fairness and transparency that the complaint be lodged with the chair of the board of trustees.
5. Where a complaint is lodged with the chair of the board of trustees, the chair may choose to investigate themselves, appoint a suitable trustee from the board to investigate on their behalf or direct the principal to investigate.
6. A formal complaint is defined as a written description of the complaint. This may be in the form of a letter, an email, an electronic document that is readable using school technology
7. In order to allow a fair and transparent investigation a formal complaint must include some minimum details –
 - The name and contact details of the complainant (anonymous complaints cannot be taken any further so will be disregarded),
 - The name of the person(s) the complaint is about,
 - A description of the incident(s) including the date(s) they occurred,
 - If known, the policy(s) that have allegedly been contravened.



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8. For the sake of transparency, all new complaints must be reported to the board at the next scheduled meeting or sooner if there is significant risk posed to the running of the school.

Investigating the complaint

9. In terms of timing, the investigation must begin as soon as is practicable after the receipt of the formal complaint and should be concluded without undue delay.
10. In the interests of fairness and transparency,
 - It is only **fair** that any person who is implicated in the complaint must be notified that their actions are under investigation. In the case that the person is a child, the parent/caregiver must be notified.
 - The complainant and the person implicated must be regularly informed of the progress of the investigation. However, this is likely to be simple task completion updates and without judgement until the investigation is completed. Where necessary regular updates may also be provided to the board.

Resolution of the complaint

11. Once the investigation is complete and all relevant information is collated the complaint investigator may make the determination as to the resolution of the complaint. Ideally this will involve some agreement between the parties involved as to what is considered fair by all, although this will not always be possible.
12. In determining the resolution, the complaint investigator must give consideration to several factors including –
 - **Fairness** and acceptability to all parties involved
 - The reputation of Miramar Central School as a **fair** and responsible part of the community
 - Above all, what is best for the children involved directly or indirectly.
13. At any time, the complaint investigator may call on outside expertise to assist with the fair resolution of a complaint.
14. For the sake of transparency and bringing the matter to a conclusion, all parties must be notified of the resolution of the complaint in writing which must include the escalation path should the determination not be accepted.
15. At this point it is fair to place an entry on the relevant personnel files by those with authority to do so where necessary.
16. The complaint investigator is responsible for recommending areas for improvement in the school's policies and procedures discovered during the processing of the complaint. These should be addressed immediately wherever possible and raised with the board at the next opportunity.

General considerations

17. Where there are suggestions of serious wrongdoing the complaint must be referred to the New Zealand Police and any activity placed on hold pending the outcome of the police investigation so as not to inhibit the actions of the Police.
18. Complaints that are non-specific or more general in nature, (such as disagreements with standard teaching practices or National Standards), may be accepted where there is some hope for a local outcome, but are more likely to be referred to the Ministry of Education or rejected.



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19. For privacy reasons, the Principal or Board are not able to disclose the nature of any performance management concerning a person, including anyone who is the subject of a complaint.

Related Information

For example Ministry of Education requirements, legislation, standards, other related process, policies, procedures and guidelines.

#	Name	Where it can be found
1	Complaints process	http://www.miramarcentral.school.nz/ (full address if available)
2	Complaints procedure	http://www.miramarcentral.school.nz/ (full address if available)
3		
4		

Authorisation/ Signoff

Georgie Miles

21st March

2017s

Georgie Miles

Date

Board Chair



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Document History

This document will be reviewed no later than 3 years from the date it is signed off or sooner if required.

Date	Version	Author	Description of change
	1.0	<Who drafted the change >	<e.g. reviewed due to legislation change or new MoE guidelines or 3 year expiry reached or to remedy a deficiency of some sort etc N.B. Only whole versions should be added to this grid i.e. 1.0, 2.0 etc any drafting versions do not need to be entered The date is the date the version was signed off>