

**Ratified by B.O.T.**    **Date: 12 June 2017**

**Review Date: 12 June 2020**

**Signed Chairman:**

**POLICY TITLE:    Complaints and Resolution of Conflicts**

**POLICY NUMBER:        5**

**NAG'S REF:        5 & 6**

**PURPOSE:**

Within the School Community individuals are valued and any member of the community, that is; pupils, staff and parents or caregivers who believe that they have a genuine complaint or grievance, has the right to be listened to and their complaint or grievance responded to in a Christian manner.

Any member of the community who is the subject of a complaint will be treated fairly in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

In accordance with Biblical Principles, Lake Taupo Christian School's view is that the parties involved should be encouraged first of all to reconcile their differences.

The School will actively seek to resolve conflict between parties if and when the need arises.

**GUIDELINES / OBJECTIVES:**

***Guiding Principle for dealing with complaints - Matt 18:15-17***

- 1 The Staff and Board Members who receive complaints, or are involved in conflict of any nature, shall deal with them in a way that actively seeks a resolution being at all times guided by Christian principles.
- 2 All complaints or grievances, including minor matters will be dealt with honestly, responsibly and in the manner which is consistent with the School's Special Christian Character.
- 3 Staff complaints or grievances should be taken in the first instance to the Principal. If the matter involves the Principal then it may need to be taken directly to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.
- 4 Parent complaints or grievances should generally be taken to:
  - a) Firstly, the teacher concerned and if not resolved,
  - b) Then the Principal and then if not resolved,
  - c) Thirdly in writing to the Board of Trustees.

- 5 It is expected that almost without exception minor matters shall be resolved by the staff concerned and/or the Principal without the need for involvement of the Board of Trustees.
- 6 Informal complaints can be dealt with quickly, by the Principal or staff member concerned. A note is to be made in the complaints register, stating the nature of complaint, the action taken and the date the action was implemented.
- 7 Formal complaints must be made in writing to the Principal
  - 1 On receipt of such a complaint the Principal shall decide whether to deal with the matter directly or pass the complaint matter to the Board of Trustees.
  - 2 Actions taken must be recorded and dated in the register.
  - 3 Complaint letters must be acknowledged and an appropriate response given as soon as possible.
- 8 Unless otherwise decided by the Board all complaints whether written or oral received by Board members shall be passed on to the Principal for a response.
- 9 General and anonymous complaints will not be responded to in any form or manner. If the matter is regarded as serious, it should be referred to the Principal before any action is taken or any response is made.
- 10 As the physical and emotional safety of the children is paramount, any complaints or concerns raised for their safety shall be responded to and if necessary immediate action shall be taken to ensure the children are not at risk.

Complaints against teachers, Principal, students or classroom administration by parents need sympathetic and tactful handling. Much will depend on the circumstances, but teachers should always endeavour to reach a satisfactory conclusion. While some complaints may seem trivial and occasionally parents may be 'over reacting', teachers should try to win their confidence to co-operate in solving any problem.

- 1 Where teachers receive a complaint they should as soon as possible notify the principal of the complaint and how the matter was handled. Where a teacher for whatever reason expects a complaint the principal must be notified.
- 2 Parents or those making serious complaints, should be referred directly to the Principal. Where the complaint directly concerns the Principal the matter should be referred to the BOT.
- 3 If a teacher feels an interview is getting out of control, it should be terminated, and the matter referred to the Principal.
- 4 The Principal will discuss the complaint with both the parents and the teacher. Most concerns should be resolved at this level. The Principal will notify

parties, including the Board of his decision and of any action taken.

- 5 Complaints about teachers should initially be made to the Principal, who will first investigate them. Consultation will precede any action.
- 6 Complaints may be brought to the Board of Trustees only in the following circumstances:
  - a) Through the Principal's recommendation (i.e. unresolved complaints)
  - b) In cases of serious misconduct
  - c) Where school policy needs to be addressed
  - d) When complaints are against the Principal.
- 7 Complaints should never be dealt with away from the school premises.

If parents feel that changes need to be made to school policy, written representation may be made directly with the Board, but preferably through the Principal. These representations must be made at least 7 days prior to Board meetings.

### **Conclusion**

If these general procedures are adhered to, complaints can be dealt with fairly and appropriately and with confidentiality so that a resolution can be found promptly.

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