

**PORT AHURIRI SCHOOL
CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS
(Policy)**

RATIONALE:

When concerns and complaints are dealt with in a confidential manner through an agreed process that is understood by everyone in the school, smooth functioning will be enhanced.

Concerns and complaints are best dealt with at an early stage and before problems reach serious proportions. Discussion should resolve almost all concerns.

PURPOSE:

1. To set out procedures for dealing with concerns or complaints from or regarding pupils, parents, staff, Board of Trustees and the wider community.
2. To distinguish between informal concerns and complaints and formal written complaints made to the Board of Trustees.
3. To enable concerns and complaints to be resolved quickly and fairly.
4. To avoid any possible claim of personal interest, bias or predetermination.
5. Care must be taken by the Board of Trustees not to entertain frivolous or vexatious complaints.

RELATED SCHOOL POLICIES:

Child Abuse Allegations against Employees
Suspensions and Expulsions
Sexual, Physical and Emotional Abuse
Drugs

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Website for the collective agreements
www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/employmentagreements

GUIDELINES:

Board of Trustees will be available to listen to concerns and identify the process to the individual as per the flowchart.

Informal concerns and complaints

1. Informal concerns and complaints, are those which are raised verbally or written but are not indicated as formal complaints, concerning the school including both educational and management issues.
2. Any concern or complaint should first be raised by the complainant with the staff member concerned directly, or if there is no relevant staff member, with the Principal. Any concern or complaint raised regarding a staff member, must be redirected to the staff member concerned.
If the complainant does not wish to address the staff member directly the complainant should be heard by the Principal, or the Chair of the Board of Trustees if the complaint regards the Principal.
3. Concerns or complaints that cannot be resolved by the relevant staff member are to be referred to the Principal. If the Principal is the relevant staff member, the concern or complaint is to be referred to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.
4. The Principal (or Board of Trustees Chairperson) will attempt to resolve the matter as soon as possible through means such as discussion, personal intervention, or by referring to someone suitably qualified to assist.

Formal complaints

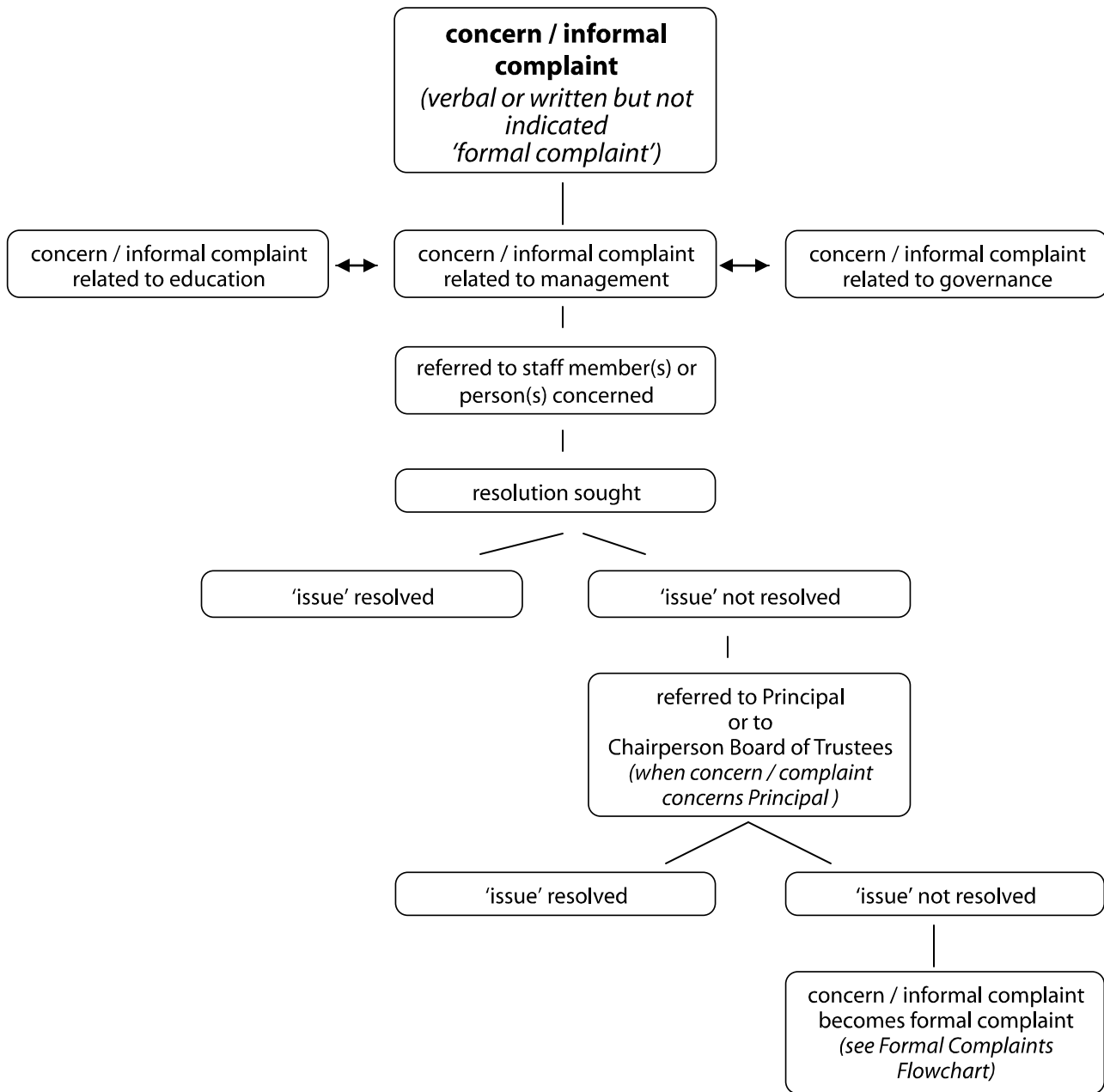
1. Formal complaints are written complaints made to the Board of Trustees and are addressed as a Formal Complaint'. Any Formal Complaints addressed to the Principal are to be forwarded to the Chair of Board of Trustees.
2. The Board of Trustees will acknowledge, in writing, receipt of the formal complaint and advise that the guidelines in the Concerns and Complaints Policy will be followed. A copy of the policy will be attached to the letter (this will include the above exceptions.)
3. Any persons likely to be involved in the investigation must declare any conflict of interest or any potential conflict of interest prior to or during any investigation. He/she will be asked to leave the meeting and will not contribute or be involved in the investigation.

4. In the event of a complaint being about a staff member, a copy of the complaint will be provided to the relevant staff member to allow a response. The staff member will also be provided with a copy of the Concerns and Complaints Policy. Collective Employment Agreement procedures will be followed as such complaints are against an employee of the Board of Trustees.
5. In the event of a complaint against the Principal, a copy of the complaint will be provided to the Principal to allow a response. The Principal will be provided with a copy of the Concerns and Complaints Policy. Primary Principal's Collective Agreement procedures will be followed as such complaints are against an employee of the Board of Trustees.
6. In the event of a complaint against a Board of Trustees member, the remainder of the Board of Trustees will investigate the complaint. If the complaint is against the whole of the Board of Trustees, the matter will be referred to the local office of the Ministry of Education.
7. In attempting to resolve any complaints, the rules of natural justice must be adhered to including but not limited to:
 - Neither party should interfere with the complaints process by approaching, discussing or harassing the other party in any way in relation to complaint
 - Give adequate time for response to claims
 - Approach enquiries with an open mind and in a fair and reasonable way
 - Give matters due consideration
 - Consider the particular facts in each case
 - Ensure there is no predetermination of the outcome
 - Right of reply for person complained against
8. A copy of every Formal Complaint is to be given to the Principal for comment.
9. The Principal must convene a meeting of the parties involved. If the complaint is against the Principal, the Board of Trustees Chairperson will convene the meeting between the parties involved. The Board of Trustees will be represented at the meeting by the Principal or (where the complaint is in regards to the Principal) some other Board of Trustees member.
10. The meeting will be convened as soon as possible upon receipt of the formal complaint and will be chaired by the person convening the meeting or a mutually agreed third party. Minutes of any meetings will be kept on file.
11. The parties directly involved may bring an advocate or support person.
12. If the meeting does not result in a resolution, then the complaint and the minutes of the meeting must be referred to the Board of Trustees for deliberation and a decision as to the next step.
13. If a complainant withdraws the complaint where possible they will be requested to confirm this in writing.

DRAFT / ADOPTED / REVIEWED			
Date			
Informal last reviewed 22/10/02. Formal last reviewed 22/10/02 . Both policies merged to form 1 policy 2/5/05			
2/5/05	Reviewed		
15/06/09	Reviewed		
26/3/12	Reviewed		

Concerns and Informal Complaints Flowchart

(Concerns and complaints are always recorded)



Formal Complaints Flowchart

(Concerns and complaints are always recorded)

