

# Te Miro School Complaints Policy

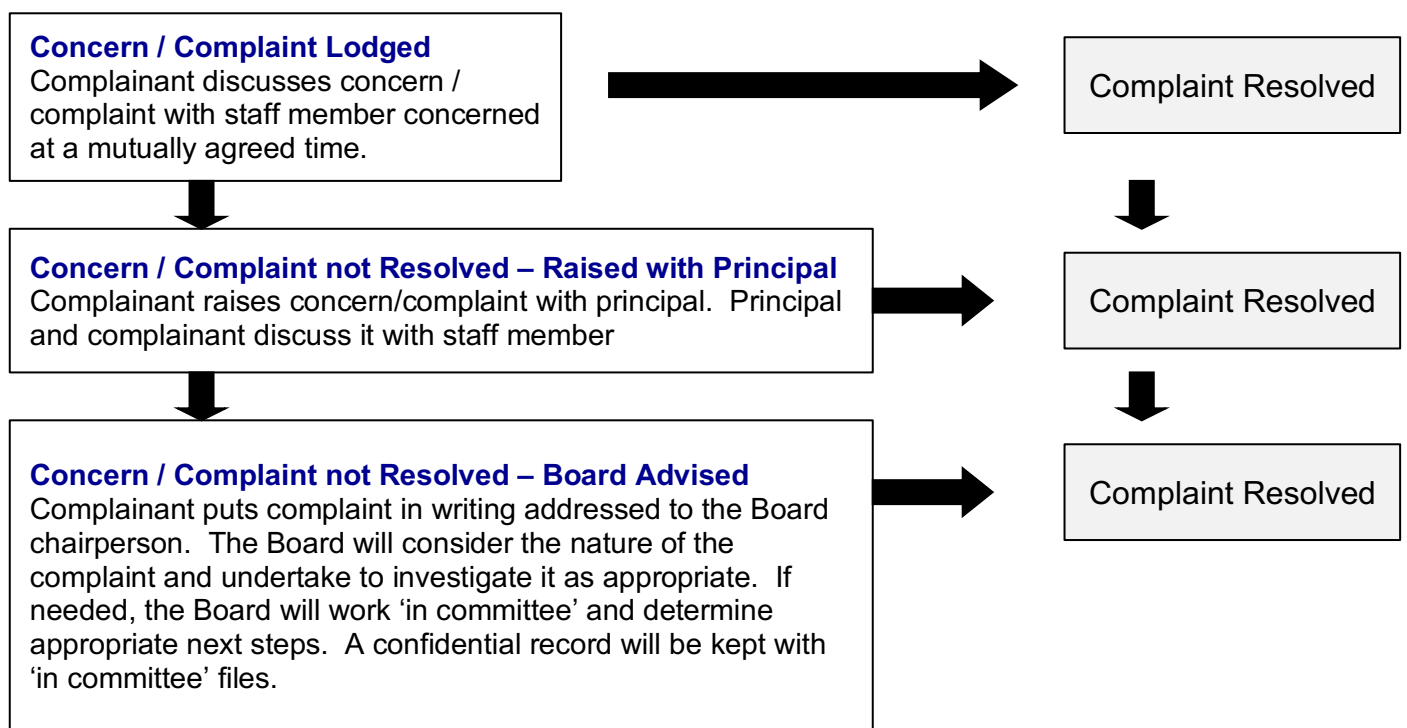
## Rationale

Where open communication is encouraged and complaints, problems, and issues are talked through and resolved positively and in a timely fashion all stakeholders are more able to maintain a focus on the core business of the school – learning and teaching.

## Guidelines

The school will:

- Clearly communicate a willingness to engage in conversation about challenges, concerns, or issues. It will be regularly acknowledged that it is ok to express concern.
- Welcome the communication of concerns, for the potential to build a stronger partnership.
- Make every effort to resolve concerns at the lowest level possible and as informally as possible.
- Support and guide Board members, all staff, students, and parents to follow the process as set out below.



In each instance, Te Miro School staff will:

- Listen carefully to the details of the complaint, seeking clarity as needed to ensure they have a mutual understanding of the grievance.
- Clearly explain the steps they will take in response to the complaint (e.g. speaking to children/staff involved, applying consequences, seeking support)
- Make an agreement to respond to the complaint within a satisfactory timeframe.

Where child safety has been compromised, or child welfare is considered at risk the complaint may be referred to Child, Youth, and Family. Phone: 0508 FAMILY (0508 326 459).

## **Verbal Abuse of a Staff Member or Student by a Parent**

When a parent/guardian has verbally threatened or abused a staff member or student on school premises. Section 241, procedure outline and flowchart as follows:

### 241 Offence relating to insulting, abusing, or intimidating teachers or staff members of registered schools

(1) A person commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$1,000 if the person intentionally insults, abuses, or intimidates a teacher or staff member of a registered school (a) within the presence or hearing of any student of the school; and (b) while on school premises, or in any other place where students of the school are assembled for school purposes.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply to a student of the school.  
Compare: 1989 No 80 s 139C

#### ***In short, the procedure is:***

- First.....Attempt to calm the situation to a normal discussion level
- Next.....if it continues remove them from proximity to students
- Next.....Continue to calm the situation if not then warn them you will be calling for assistance and ultimately the police
- Hopefully normal discussions can continue otherwise the police will have to be contacted and the parent/guardian removed from school premises
- Follow up with a formal letter as described below

Following an incident, a formal letter to the parent outlining the behaviour and that it was unacceptable will be sent. As appropriate this may be accompanied with a meeting or phone call. The letter should remind that under section 241 of the Education Act it is an offence to intentionally insult, abuse or intimidate a member of staff of a school on school premises and within the hearing of any student. A person who has committed this offence is liable on summary conviction to a fine of up to \$1000. If the insult was to a child, the letter will not mention the Education Act of a fine.

The board has legal obligations to ensure a safe workplace and a safe environment for students, and will work with staff members as needed to set boundaries around how/when the parents are able to be on school property e.g. only on school grounds at pick-up and drop-off times, only able to speak to class teacher by appointment, another staff member will be present at all meetings etc. If necessary, parent/s can be warned that if this behaviour occurs again or if the parent breaks any boundaries set the Board may consider trespassing them from the property and may consider taking action under s 241 if appropriate.

Staff members must keep a full record of any incidents that do occur and of all correspondence sent.

Reviewed by: Michaela Phillips

Date of Review: November 2023