

**PUNI SCHOOL**  
**NAG 3 - POLICY ON PROCEDURES COMPLAINTS AGAINST STAFF MEMBERS**

**RATIONALE:**

From time to time the Principal or the Board of Trustees will receive a complaint about the actions of a member of staff. This complaint may come from a parent, fellow staff member or a pupil.

Procedures are required to ensure such complaints are dealt with fairly, with due seriousness and with a degree of uniformity.

With positive, effective staff appraisal, staff development and other procedural policies, the chance of justified complaints is hugely minimised.

Procedures laid down in the employee's collective contract are to be followed in all cases and many complaints examples can be used as a guide when handling formal complaints.

**PURPOSE:**

1. To ensure minor concerns are not blown out of proportion putting the staff members under undue stress.
2. To ensure individual staff members are not unfairly harassed or unreasonably impeded from carrying out their allotted tasks.
3. To avoid staff members getting into confrontational situations with people making a complaint.
4. To ensure the concern is directed to the appropriate person in the first instance.
5. To ensure the person making the complaint is given a fair hearing and that the concern is taken seriously, being given due deliberation.
6. To ensure all collective or individual contract provisions are abided by.
7. To ensure due follow up procedures are carried out.
8. When found to be soundly based, appropriate action to be carried out to overcome the situation which generated the concern (including appropriate support).
9. To ensure that appropriate on-going monitoring takes place.

**GUIDELINES:**

1. This policy is to be supported by the guidelines outlined by the NZ Teacher's Council.
2. Parents are encouraged to discuss any minor concerns they may have regarding their children's education directly with the class teacher concerned. (They are also encouraged to make an appointment to ensure a mutually acceptable time outside of normal class hours).
3. Staff members are strongly encouraged to follow up all minor complaints/concerns with the person making the complaint after an appropriate passage of time to discuss perceived developments. These contacts may need to continue for whatever time is deemed appropriate by the staff member, both for an evaluation of developments and for P.R. reasons.
4. Should the staff member or parent so wish, or should the complaint be anything but of a minor nature, such complaints are to be referred to the Syndicate Leader or Principal.

5. Anyone making a major complaint or having a serious concern is to be requested to give it in writing and a copy is to be given to the Principal and staff member concerned. Where the complainant refuses to do this, the staff member hearing the complaint will record, in writing, the salient points. Every attempt is to be made to get this signed by the person making the complaint. If no one will sign the complaint or the notes covering relevant points, further action may be taken at the discretion of the BOT.
6. A copy is to be given to the employee identifying the alleged misconduct and an explanation sought.
7. Such complaints/concerns will be investigated by the Principal, with a report going to the staff member and to the Board's personnel subcommittee. A copy of the complaint and the Principal's response will be kept on the staff members file along with a record of the staff member's response. The time frame for the staff member's response should be determined by the Principal and be relevant to the matter causing concern.
8. Where appropriate a senior staff member (usually the Principal) will follow up all serious concerns with further discussions with the person making the complaint, after an appropriate passage of time to discuss perceived developments.
9. **VERBAL WARNING:**  
Where the complaint is found to have some basis, the staff member will receive support, to effect change and be given a verbal warning that failure to effect the stated changes by a due date will result in a written warning. At this stage, the staff member will be advised of their right to request representation at any stage.
10. **WRITTEN WARNING:**  
Where insufficient improvement occurs a further interview is to be held and if the staff member has no satisfactory explanation for the failure to meet the standard, the Principal will notify the employees in writing that s/he will recommend to the Board of Trustees that they review the staff members employment if the standard is not achieved by a newly given date.
11. Where the behaviour/performance continues to give concern a further interview is to be held and if the staff member has no satisfactory explanation for the continued failure to improve, the Principal will notify the employee in writing that s/he will recommend to the Board of Trustees that they review the staff member's employment.
12. **FINAL ACTION:**
  - a) Principal to make a recommendation to the Board.
  - b) The Principal is to remove him/herself from the final decision. This fact and a record of the Board's discussions are to be accurately minuted.
13. Nothing in the above prevents instant dismissal without notice in the case of serious misconduct as defined by the collective agreement.
14. Confidential aspects of any action taken will not be divulged to the person making the complaint or to any other inappropriate person(s) but the complainant will be advised that the Board of Trustees is taking appropriate steps to address the matter.
15. Complaints against the Principal should go through the Principal and the Puni School Board of Trustees.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Staff members will have all relevant policies and procedures explained and new staff members will undergo an induction process including explanation of these policies; all staff members will have a job description outlining who they are responsible to, and what they are responsible for and all staff members will be part of the school's on-going appraisal system which defines aspects of the job description which are to be emphasised over a given time frame, and which will be linked to staff development training.

**Approved:**

**June 2024**

**Review Date:**

**July 2026**