

Christchurch Boys' High School Complaints Policy

Rationale

All members of the Christchurch Boys' High School (the School) community have the right to raise concerns and complaints about the School and have those concerns and complaints addressed.

This policy sets out the process by which concerns and complaints are to be dealt with by the School. The School is open to feedback on this policy, and desires to work with its community in all matters.

Purpose

To ensure that a clear process exists to enable raising and addressing complaints in alignment with the principles of natural justice.

Policy Statement

The School will follow the principles of natural justice, processes outlined in all relevant employment agreements (where applicable) and will meet its statutory obligations in dealing with concerns and complaints.

The School aims to deal with concerns and complaints fairly, efficiently and consistently, and in a way that respects the mana and dignity of all parties to ensure that all staff members, students, and students' families feel safe and supported.

Definition of Concerns and Complaints

Concerns: A concern is a matter that causes worry or disquiet that can be resolved collaboratively at the level, or close to the level, where the concern was generated.

All members of the School community (including staff, students and students' families) are welcome to raise matters of concern with individual members of staff, and issues are encouraged to be resolved collaboratively and at as low a level as possible.

If a concern is raised with a staff member that staff member may seek support from a senior staff member to address the concern.

If a concern is unresolved those holding the concern may decide to make a complaint.

Complaints: A complaint is a serious concern that the complainant wishes to be investigated and resolved

Complaints may be made about students, staff, Board Members or school procedures or requirements.

A complaint must:

- a) Be in writing;
- b) State in detail the reason for the complaint;
- c) Be based on specific and factual information, with all information provided; and
- d) Identify the complainant.

Process for making a complaint

- a) A written, specific, factual and signed account of the relevant issue should be provided to the School.
- b) Complaints about staff, students or operational matters should be provided to a member of staff with management responsibility e.g. a Dean, Head of Department or Senior Manager (all of these staff will be familiar with this policy).
- c) Complaints about the Headmaster or governance matters should be provided to the Board of Trustees via the Chair who will table the complaint at the following Board Meeting (assuming this meeting is more than three working days after the receipt of the complaint – if a complaint is received less than three working days before a Board Meeting it may not be tabled until the next meeting).
- d) Written acknowledgment of the receipt of the complaint can be expected within five working days of the receipt of the complaint.

Process for dealing with a complaint

- a) Once a complaint is received the complainant can expect to have receipt acknowledged in writing within five working days, unless exceptional circumstances exist.
- b) The delegated senior manager will be informed of all complaints about members of staff.
- c) An assessment will be made of the best level for the complaint to be addressed, with a view to having the complaint addressed fully, fairly and expediently, and at the lowest appropriate level. The Board will only address complaints that are about the Headmaster, governance matters, or where the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome of an investigation of a complaint raised with the Headmaster.
- d) The person against whom a complaint has been made will be fully informed of the details of the complaint including the identity of the complainant. There may be some exceptions to this, for example matters relating to fraud or other criminal matters, or matters of safety, and an exception will be applied following legal or police advice.
- e) The complainant will be informed as to who will be investigating the complaint, who the decision maker will be, and the likely timeline to undertake the investigation.
- f) There can be no pre-determined length of time to resolve complaints, however, complainants can be expected to be updated in writing on a likely timeline within 10 days of their complaint being acknowledged, or in the case of complaints being addressed by the Board within 10 working days of the Board meeting at which the complaint was tabled.

- g) Any investigation that takes place will comply with the relevant employment agreement(s) (where applicable) and legislation.
- h) Complainants can expect to be advised in writing of the outcome of their complaint. If they are unsatisfied with the outcome they may then forward their complaint to the Headmaster, and then if required, the Board. They will be informed of the outcome of the complaint as far as is allowed by law, to preserve the mana and dignity of all parties involved.
- i) The Board will only review a complaint that has already been investigated if they are satisfied that the investigation process was unfair, or where new information becomes available and is provided by the complainant.

Additional Clarifications

- a) Board members are available to receive concerns and comment about the school from any source but shall redirect that concern or complaint in the first instance to the Headmaster (or Board Chair if concerning the Headmaster) for action.
- b) The Board recognises that not all complainants will be satisfied with the outcome of the investigation into their complaint. Once reconsidered, if the Board is confident of its decision, it may refuse to enter into any further discussion/correspondence regarding the complaint.
- c) A complaint regarding lack of compliance in relation to the process outlined in this policy will be actioned as a new complaint, rather than a reconsideration of the previous issue.
- d) Complainants seeking confidentiality should consider making a protected disclosure, refer to Section 24 of the Governance Manual.

COMPLAINTS POLICY PROCESS

