



Wesley College Trust Board

Concerns and Complaints Policy

Outcome statement

The Wesley College Trust Board commits to attend to all complaints promptly, respectfully and professionally and seek to bring effective resolution to all parties concerned. For this policy, a concern is the initial event or issue that has not been resolved enough for all parties involved. Once the concerned party has sought resolution through following the concerns process this then becomes a formal complaint. Concerns and complaints may include, but are not limited to verbal, physical, sexual altercations, dissatisfaction about unacceptable behaviour. This policy and the procedures will address all concerns and complaints.

Purpose

Establish a clear process for addressing College complaints that ensures awareness of procedures for both making complaints and resolving issues, promotes timely resolution at the appropriate level, maintains fairness and consistency, and protects the rights of all parties involved.

Purpose

~~To provide a process for the College to deal with complaints that:~~

- ~~1. Ensures that all people in the College community are aware of the correct procedure to be followed for both making and resolving a complaint.~~
- ~~2. Resolves complaints in a timely manner at the lowest appropriate level within the College's structure.~~
- ~~3. Ensures fairness and consistency when dealing with complaints.~~
- ~~4. Safeguards the rights of both complainants and of other staff or students involved.~~

Delegations

The board delegates to the Principal full responsibility of ensuring processes are in place and operating effectively and adequately. In the event of a complaint or grievance concerning the principal, responsibility lies with the presiding member.

Expectations and limitations

In complying with the policy, the Principal will ensure to:

- implement and maintain robust procedures to meet the policy requirements
- ensure that this policy is accessible to students, staff, whaanau and hostel community on the school website and as an appendix in all induction and enrolments information
- refer the complainant to the school's concerns and complaints flowchart
- ensure that the complainant has previously followed the school's concerns procedure before escalating to a complaint
- Once a complaint has been received the Principal will ensure:
 - all complaints are acknowledged within 5 working days
 - complaints against the principal will be written to the Wesley College Trust Board Chairperson
 - the Principal may receive personally presented verbal complaints and these need to be put into writing, but all complaints are to be in writing
 - written complaints should be signed by the complainant or from a complainants personal email
 - anonymous complaints may be disregarded, however, may prompt a review of school's policy and procedures
 - the complainant receives a copy of relevant information, internal processes and any external agencies involved
 - the complainant and staff member should be advised of the outcome of the complaint
 - ensure that all documentation is securely stored and locked away
- ensure complainant is informed of any investigation progress within 10 working days
- ensure that all meetings are recorded, dated and signed by all those in attendance
- report to the board regularly about the progress of current complaints

In complying with the policy, and in regards to ~~the~~

- a complaint against the Principal, this shall be addressed to the General Secretary of the Trust Board. †The Wesley College Trust Board Chairperson will ensure to:
 - consider the best action in response to the complaint, this may include the principal's employment agreement
 - consider if the seriousness of the complaint warrants initiating a

competency process, which may include the presiding member of the school board and who may seek the support and advice in the first instance from NZSTA and or Teaching Council | Matatū Aotearoa to ensure due process is followed

- a complaint against the Superintending Chaplain the procedures of the Methodist Church of New Zealand – Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa shall be followed.
- a complaint is about a member of the Chaplaincy Team, other than the Superintending Chaplain, the complaint will be investigated by the Principal.

In complying with the policy, the presiding member in consultation with the board, will ensure to:

- inform, if necessary, its insurance agent of any complaint being dealt with by the Principal, or the Chairperson of the board
- advise the complainant that the complaint has not been able to be resolved and the board shall advise the complainant of their right to apply to the Ombudsman.
- The investigation and action resulting from the investigation will comply with relevant Employment Agreements and other Legislation (where applicable).

Monitoring

The Principal shall maintain a register of complaints and report to the board, at every board meeting, of the progress of all complaints received.

Procedure for Complaints

These procedures are the school's guidance to all concerns and complaints. The Privacy Act 2020 requires that matters such as complaints must be processed confidentially. All those involved including staff, whaanau, students need to be confident that any discussion will follow a fair and open process which ensures that natural justice prevails.

If a concern about a staff member escalates to a complaint, staff have the right to be represented or supported by their union, a colleague, or a friend, at any time throughout the process. The complainant may bring a support person/s.

Initial concerns should be raised with the staff member before taking the matter

any further. Resolving concerns in this manner should be tried in the first instance.

If the concern has escalated to a complaint, the principal has the main responsibility for ensuring that the complaints procedures are followed. When complaints are received, the complaint must be handled with care and sensitivity - and promptly.

The provisions of employment agreements must be followed at all times.

Where a complaint is about a staff member's performance, competency processes in the collective agreement should be followed.

Documenting complaints

After a concern has become a complaint, this should be added to the complaints register, and all meetings, actions and next steps in the process must be documented. The initial documentation of the ~~complaint~~ complaint should include what happened, where it occurred and when, and the names of all those involved including witnesses.

This should be detailed enough to enable the Principal or Chairperson to be informed of the conduct and to be able to respond to the complaint. Further clarification must be sought if there is confusion when reading the ~~writing~~ written complaint.

After agreement has been reached, documentation will be ~~filed~~ filed away in a secure and confidential way.

Agreement should be reached on when written or oral warnings are to be removed from personal files.

The board will follow In Committee procedures when the Principal or delegated authority reports on all complaints.

Suspension/Dismissal

When alleged conduct is deemed sufficiently serious the board may decide to suspend the staff member. If the Principal and board have been unable to resolve the issue without a formal investigation by the board, or if the safety of

any of the parties involved is at risk.

Suspension may act as a safeguard for all parties and create a space where a formal investigation can be conducted with fair process.

Suspensions, stand downs and exclusions will follow the Hostel guidelines.

Legislative compliance:

Education (Hostels) Regulations 2005

Education and Training Act 2020

Ombudsman Act 1975

Official Information Act 1982

Privacy Act 2020

NZ Bill of Rights Act 2022

Relevant employment agreements

The Wesley College Trust Board approved this policy on 30th June 2024.

This policy will be reviewed on / before the June meeting 2027.

Jan Tasker 

Chairperson

Date 30 June 2024

Complaints Procedure

