

BRUCE McLAREN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

PROCEDURES: COMPLAINTS

RATIONALE

As in any organisation there will be times when members are a subject of a complaint. Within the school structure, complaints could be classified into four groups:

- (a) Complaints of a serious nature against staff and/or possible legal implications
- (b) Complaints about the progress of children, classroom programmes and curriculum
- (c) Complaints of a minor nature
- (d) Staff grievances/complaints.

PURPOSES

1. To have in place a clear procedures on how complaints are to be investigated.
2. To ensure that all complaints are examined in an objective manner.

PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES

To be read in conjunction with:

- Procedures: Discipline and Competency

A copy of the Complaints Procedure is to be available in the school office and parents notified of this.

Group A (Complaints of a serious nature)

1. Complaints of a serious nature against staff by parents or members of the community and/or involving possible legal action are to be made in writing to the Principal with a copy to the Board.
2. The Principal shall inform the Chairperson and the members of the Board that a complaint has been received.
3. The Principal shall present a copy of the complaint to the person against whom the complaint has been made.
4. The Principal shall investigate the complaint and report his/her findings to the Board. The Principal then withdraws from the proceedings.
5. The Board will make a decision on what action to take based on all the evidence presented. The Board will inform the complainant and the person against whom the complaint has been made of its decision in writing.
6. Any complaints against the Principal will be investigated by the Board. The Principal shall receive a copy of the written complaint. The Board may appoint an independent person to investigate the complaint and to report their findings to the Board.

7. The Principal and the complainant will be informed in writing of the decision of the Board.
8. If the complainant is not satisfied with the way in which the Board has dealt with the complaint, a written complaint can be made to the NZ Teachers Council (see below).

Group B (Complaints relating to the progress of a child etc)

1. For any complaint of this nature, an appointment must be made as soon as is feasible, by the parent/guardian with the classroom teacher to discuss the matter.
2. The teacher must, where feasible, be informed of the nature of the complaint prior to the appointment.
3. The teacher concerned shall inform his/her Syndicate Leader of the complaint prior to the appointment with the parent/guardian.
4. If the complainant is not satisfied after the meeting with the teacher, the Syndicate Leader may be approached and an appointment made.
5. The Syndicate Leader will investigate the complaint and report the findings, in writing, to the complainant, the teacher involved, and the Principal.
6. If not satisfied, the complainant may approach the Principal who will examine the information already gathered. After consultation with the Syndicate Leader a written decision will be made and given to the parties involved.
7. If the complainant is satisfied with the written decision, the matter may be referred to the Board of Trustees.
8. If the complainant is not satisfied with the way in which the Board has dealt with the complaint, a written complaint can be made to the NZ Teachers Council (see below).

Group C (Complaints of a minor nature)

1. All complaints of a non-curriculum nature to be referred to the Principal for resolution.

Group D (Staff grievances/complaints)

1. Where there is a serious complaint by a teacher, it must be referred in the first instance, in writing, to the Syndicate Leader for resolution.
2. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response of the Syndicate Leader, or if Step 1 is inappropriate, then the complaint shall be made in writing to the Principal for resolution.
3. If the complainant is still not satisfied, or if it is inappropriate for the Principal to deal with the matter, then the complaint may be laid before the Board through the Staff Representative, with a copy for the Principal or vice versa, if inappropriate.
4. The Board may at its discretion, appoint an independent person
 - a. To investigate the complaint and to report back to the Board.and/-or
 - b. To act as a mediator to resolve the issue.

5. The Board will make a decision on what action to take based on all evidence presented if the matter has not been resolved by mediation. The Board will inform the complainant and the person against whom the complaint has been made (if applicable) of its decision in writing.
6. If the complainant is not satisfied with the way in which the Board has dealt with the complaint, a written complaint can be made to the NZ Teachers Council (see below).
7. **Oral complaints** are to be dealt with within the school. If unresolved on an informal basis then the procedures outlined above are to be followed *provided the complaint is put in writing*.

Teachers Council

A written complaint can be made directly to the NZ Teachers Council if:

1. The teacher is not currently working as a teacher
2. If you think the Board will not be able to deal with the complaint effectively because of a conflict of interest
3. If you are not satisfied with the way in which the Board is dealing or has already dealt with the complaint
4. In any other exceptional circumstance.

CONCLUSION

With the set procedures as outlined above, any serious complaint will be solved in a manner which is professional and so allows justice not only to be done but to be seen to be done.