



# REIGNIER CATHOLIC SCHOOL POLICY

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## COMPLAINTS POLICY

### **Rationale:**

In line with the Catholic Character of our school the Board of Trustees will ensure that there are clear, correct and transparent procedures for dealing with all complaints.

### **Purpose:**

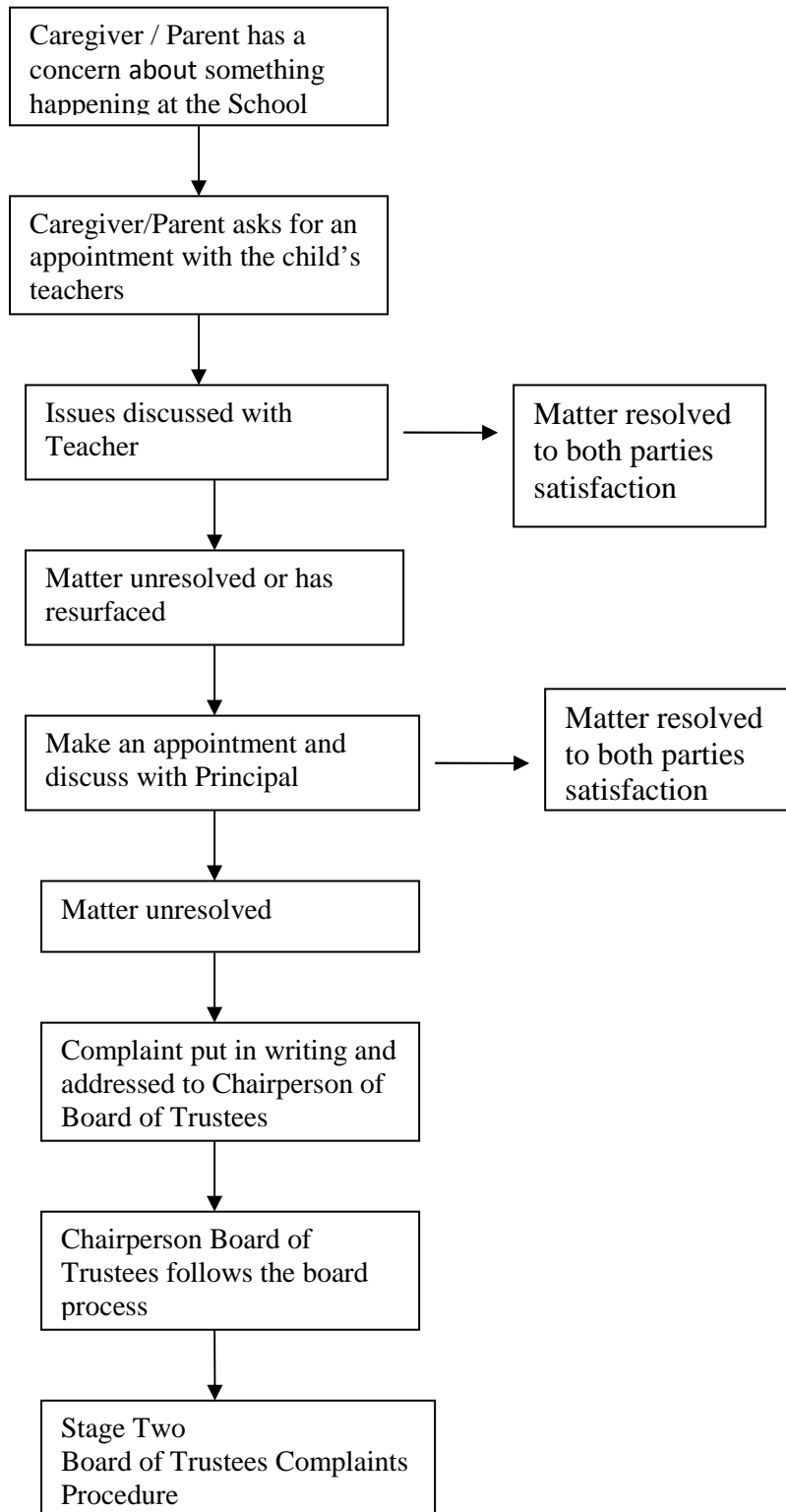
1. To ensure the procedure for parents / caregivers is clear when intending to make a complaint.
2. To detail the Board of Trustees obligation when dealing with a complaint.
3. To ensure that staff members rights are respected and protected.

### **Guidelines:**

- Stage One: School Community  
Process Complaints Procedure
- Stage Two: Board of Trustees,  
Process Complaints Procedure.

## **GUIDELINES:**

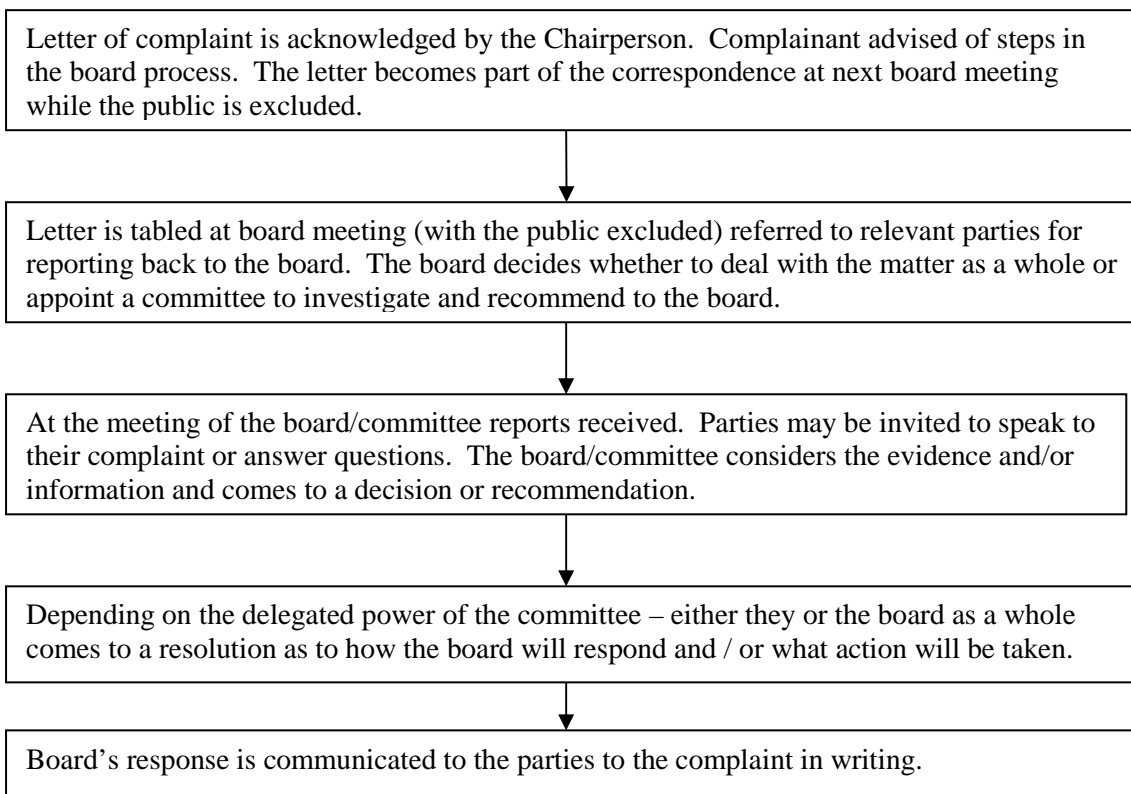
### **Stage One:                      School Community Process Complaints & Procedure**



#### Notes:

1. While minor issues may be able to be discussed in a quick informal chat with a staff member, normally in order for both parties to give the matter full attention, arranging a time to discuss the matter is the preferred option.
2. If the complaints procedure has not been followed the board will normally return any letter of complaint to the writer and ask that they follow the procedure first.
3. The board needs to formally receive a complaint in order to act on it. If a complaint is serious enough for the board to deal with, it is serious enough to be put in writing. If the caregiver has concerns about expressing the matter clearly in writing please discuss the matter in confidence with the board chair (or another delegated board member) to enable them to assist you with this.
4. All parties to a complaint may bring a support person to any meeting where the issue is to be discussed.
5. The Principal will advise the staff member to seek advice from their union.
6. The Principal will consult NZSTA and notify the schools insurer if appropriate.

**Stage Two: Board of Trustee's Complaints & Procedure**



**Guidelines:**

1. Issues of a serious matter eg allegations of physical abuse, may require a special meeting of the board to be called.
2. All letters addressed to the Chairperson of the board are for the whole board. The Chairperson cannot decide independently as to what action will be taken.
3. Resolution or dismissal of the complaint must not be discussed before all the information is to hand.
4. Conflict of interest will be determined on a number of issues, including whether the complaint involves the actions of any trustee.
5. The board must exercise caution when dealing with complaints regarding staff, particularly in relation to confidentiality and process to ensure the principles of natural justice are met. It is advisable to contact the regional NZSTA personnel/industrial adviser in such cases. The board will need to consider the relevant staff disciplinary policies, employment contracts, and expert advice from the NZSTA adviser.
6. The board recognises that not all complainants will be satisfied with the outcome of a complaint. After reconsideration, if the board is confident of its decision it will refuse to enter into further discussion/correspondence. In making such a decision the NZSTA help desk can assist by giving an objective assessment of a board's processes in dealing with the complaint. The principal will notify insurer if appropriate.
7. A complaint regarding lack of compliance in relation to an agreed complaint resolution will be treated as a serious matter and actioned with urgency as a new complaint rather than as a reconsideration of the previous issue.
8. Trustees need to be clear in their mind of the difference between a complaint they have as a parent (i.e. regarding their own child) and a complaint they have as a trustee. (e.g. obstruction of staff preventing them carrying out their work). In the first instance they are required to follow normal procedures and are excluded from decision making due to conflict of interest. The latter case is dealt with in an agenda item for the whole board (possibly with the public excluded).