

Malfroy School

CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS PROCESS

From time to time, conflict occurs in all communities. This policy has been established in order to ensure that concerns and complaints are resolved appropriately, within a reasonable time frame, using a fair and transparent process.

All members of the school community should know that there is a complaints policy and associated procedures. This policy will be included with enrolment information and attached to a school newsletter (as a reminder), each year, within the first term of each year;

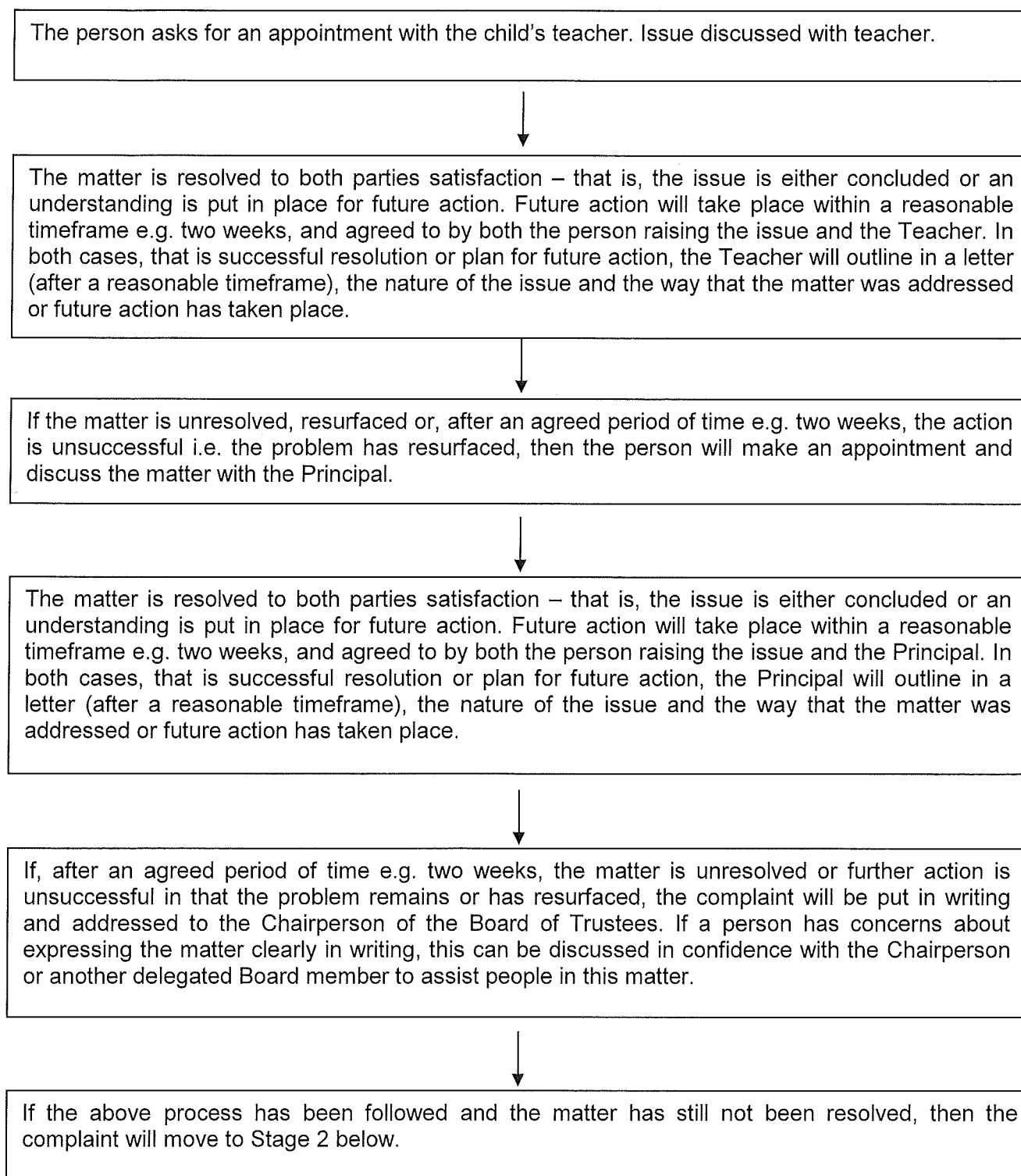
The concerns and complaints policy is made up of two stages. The first stage shows the expected channels that parents [and others] are expected to use. The second process details how the Board will deal with a complaint. This information is outlined below.

MALFROY SCHOOL COMMUNITY PROCESS – STAGE 1

If parents, caregivers, guardians or members of the wider school community have a concern about something happening at the school;

1. The person asks for an appointment with the child's teacher. Issue discussed with teacher. While minor issues may be able to be discussed in a quick informal chat, in order for both parties to give the matter full attention, arranging a time to discuss the issue is the preferred option as soon as practicable;
2. The matter is resolved to both parties satisfaction – that is, the issue is either concluded or an understanding in place for future action. Future action will take place within a reasonable timeframe, e.g. two weeks, and agreed to by both parties. In both cases, the teacher will record the following information in the school student management system: i) the nature of the issue; ii) the way the matter was addressed; and/or iii) future action that is to take place and by when. The teacher should also offer to provide this information to the other party.
3. If the matter is unresolved, resurfaced or, after an agreed period of time e.g. two weeks, the action is unsuccessful i.e. the problem has resurfaced, then the person will make an appointment and discuss the matter with the Principal;
4. The matter is resolved to both parties satisfaction – that is, the issue is either concluded or an understanding is put in place for future action. Future action will take place within a reasonable timeframe e.g. two weeks, and agreed to by both the person raising the issue and the Principal. In both cases, that is successful resolution or plan for future action, the Principal will outline in a letter (after a reasonable timeframe), the nature of the issue and the way that the matter was addressed or future action has taken place;
5. If, after an agreed period of time e.g. two weeks, the matter is unresolved or further action is unsuccessful in that the problem remains or has resurfaced, the complaint will be put in writing and addressed to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. 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 a person has concerns about expressing the matter clearly in writing, this can be discussed in confidence with the Chairperson or another delegated Board member to assist people in this matter;
6. If the above complaints process has not been followed and the Board receives a letter of complaint, the Board will return any letter of complaint to the writer and ask that they follow the process (steps 1-5 above) first. If the above process has been followed and the matter has still not been resolved, then the complaint will move to Stage 2 below.
7. All parties to a complaint may bring a support person to any meeting where the issue is to be discussed.

Concerns and Complaints from Community Flowchart



MALFROY SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES COMPLAINTS PROCESS – STAGE 2

1. Where a letter of complaint is received by the Board, this will be acknowledged by the Chairperson within one week of receipt of a letter, and the complainant will be advised of the next steps in the Boards process (i.e. to complete steps outlined in Stage 1 above or the next steps related to this process – Stage 2). Where the Stage 2 process is outlined it will include the date of the Board meeting that the letter will be tabled, or the date of the special meeting (see below);
2. The Board will contact NZSTA personnel/industrial advisers, or any other applicable personnel as necessary;
3. The letter of complaint will become part of the correspondence that will be dealt with at the next Board meeting, while the public is excluded. In cases of a serious matter, e.g. allegations of physical abuse, this may require a special meeting of the Board to be called;
4. It should be noted that all letters of complaint addressed to the Chairperson of the Board are for the whole Board. The Chairperson cannot decide independently as to what action will be taken unless delegated authority to do so by the Board;
5. The letter of complaint will be tabled at the next Board meeting (with the public excluded) or special meeting, if this is deemed necessary. The letter will be referred to all relevant parties for reporting back to the Board. This includes information from the relevant school staff, including the Principal;
6. At the Board meeting, the Board decides whether to deal with the matter as a whole or appoint a committee to investigate and recommend to the Board. In the case of a committee, a clear Terms of Reference will be identified to clarify the extent of the delegated powers to this committee;
7. At the Board meeting, any conflicts of interest will be determined, including whether the complaint involves the actions of any Trustee;
8. The first meeting of the Board/Committee to specifically address the complaint, will be conducted as soon as practicable. At the meeting of the Board/Committee regarding investigation of the complaint, the reports are received and the parties may be invited to speak to their complaint or answer questions. The Board/Committee considers the evidence and/or information and comes to a decision or recommendation;
9. Subject to agreement between the parties, resolution or dismissal of the complaint will not occur before all the information is to hand;
10. Depending on the delegated powers of the Committee, either they or the Board as a whole come to a resolution as to how the Board will respond and/or what action will be taken;
11. The Board's response is communicated to the parties to the complaint. This may be either publically or confidentially, depending on the case;
12. Any of the parties may request the Board to reconsider their decision. However normally for such a reconsideration to take place, new information that would have been relevant to the Board's deliberations must be produced;
13. All parties to a complaint may bring a support person to any meeting where the issue is to be discussed;
14. In the case of complaints relating to teaching staff and the Principal, cognisance must also be taken of management processes relating to this issue and awareness of NZEI provisions, contractual arrangements and so forth.

(Board members please note: management policies have not been completed with Nicky yet, and there is likely to be a specific teacher/management process similar to an 'internal' process for complaints as well).

Concerns and Complaints to Board of Trustees Flowchart

Letter of complaint is received by the Board and acknowledged by the Chairperson within one week of receipt of a letter. Complainant advised of the next steps in the Board process (either Stage 1 or Stage 2). The letter becomes part of the correspondence that will be dealt with at the next Board meeting while the public is excluded.



Letter is tabled at Board meeting (with the public excluded). The Board decides whether to deal with the matter as a whole or appoint a committee to investigate and recommend to the Board. In the case of a committee a clear Terms of Reference will be identified. Conflicts of interest will also be determined.



At the meeting of the Board/Committee, the reports are received and the parties may be invited to speak to their complaint or answer questions. The Board/Committee considers the evidence and/or information and comes to a decision or recommendation.



Depending on the delegated powers of the Committee either they or the Board as a whole come to a resolution as to how the Board will respond and/or what action will be taken.



The Board's response is communicated to the parties to the complaint. This may be either publicly or confidentially depending on the case.



Any of the parties may request the Board to reconsider their decision – however normally for such a reconsideration to take place new information that would have been relevant to the Board's deliberations must be produced.

 Shaded area denotes "public excluded meetings"

Review schedule: **Annually**

Approved by the Board May 2018