

# **KIMBOLTON SCHOOL**

## **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

This policy and procedure are designed to ensure that complaints and concerns are resolved in a manner that accords fair process to the complainant and persons complained about whether they are school staff, Board of Trustee members or parents. It aims to protect the rights of any person who is the subject of a complaint and of the complainant, and to ensure compliance with all obligations under the Board of Trustees liability insurance cover.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

To provide a framework by which all complaints made be satisfactorily resolved and to achieve an outcome which is accepted by the parties involved.

### **POLICY:**

1. The Board will ensure that complaints are dealt with at the appropriate level.
2. Parents/caregivers/staff will be informed of the school procedure relating to the handling of complaints.
3. All parties to the complaint should be involved in the resolution.
4. The Principal's role of manager and professional leader requires that the Principal will have a key role in complaint resolution. He/she will ensure that procedures are conducted in accordance with policy.
5. The Principal will inform the Board Chairperson of complaints that are unable to be resolved satisfactorily or have potential disciplinary considerations. If the Chairperson and Principal are unable to resolve the matter the Board will be informed. The Board will determine what further action to take which may include further investigation.
6. The requirements of employment contracts, natural justice, obligations under the Board of Trustees liability insurance cover and relevant legislation will be complied with.
7. Staff members must respect the authority of the Principal to make decisions on the administration and management of the school.
8. Complainants have the right to refer the complaint to the Board of Trustees. The Board will only receive complaints in writing, signed by the complainant. Assistance will be given to complainants who have difficulty expressing their complaint in writing.
9. Complaints to the board will normally be accepted if the complainant has followed the earlier steps of the procedure and is not satisfied with the outcome, or the matter is sufficiently serious to warrant the Board's involvement as the first step.
10. All written complaints are acknowledged, as having been received, to the complainant.
11. The Board may refer written complaints to the Principal to resolve or investigate. The Principal shall report back to the board with recommendations.
12. Potential disciplinary matters will be addressed in accordance with relevant disciplinary provisions.
13. Complaints against the Principal, which are not resolved through discussions between the complainant and the Principal shall be referred to the Board in writing.

14. Complaints against the Board, individual members or Board policy/actions, or individual parents shall be made to the Board Chairperson in writing.
15. Board members are to regard complaints against individuals made to the Board as confidential and shall not express personal opinions on the matter.
16. Board members with personal involvement or a conflict of interest should exclude themselves from participating in the complaints procedure.
17. Where a complaint may have a potential disciplinary consequence for an employee they should be advised of their right to representation.

### **UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES:**

1. Any person who is the subject of a complaint is "innocent until proven guilty"
2. Any person who is the subject of a complaint has a right to be listened to and respected regardless of the circumstances
3. Any person who is the subject of a complaint has a right to know the details of the complaint including the source of the complaint
4. Any person who is the subject of a complaint has a right to be heard in connection with the complaint
5. Every person who is the subject of a complaint has the right to be represented

### **GUIDELINES:**

It is important that:

1. The problem is defined. A concise statement of the facts or circumstances of the complaint is made. Establish an agreement on the facts if possible.
2. The problem is owned. Establish respective responsibilities for action. to resolve the complaint e.g. Principal's role, staff member's role, complainant's role.
3. Reflection is carried out on possible courses of action, including remedy and/or redress, strategies to prevent repetition of the situation and constructive alternative actions if the situation reoccurs.
4. Action is taken. Work for agreement between the parties. Work for acceptable remedy or redress. Evaluate action taken.
5. Record agreement on action and evaluation. Provide copies of agreements, where appropriate, to the complainant, staff member, and Principal.
6. If agreement cannot be reached, the Principal should decide on action that is consistent with the appropriate school policy, job description and employment contract. This may include informing the matter to the Board for resolution.

### **EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

It is envisaged that this policy and procedure will see most complaints resolved without formally coming to the attention of the Board.

REVIEWED \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_