

## **BAYFIELD HIGH SCHOOL CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY**

1. The school recognises the importance of maintaining good relationships with all members of the school community.
2. Concerns and complaints raised about the school will be dealt with fairly and appropriately, and finalised without undue delays. The standard process outlined below should be followed:
  - 2.1 Concerns/complaints should, in the first instance and whenever possible, be raised directly with the staff member concerned.
  - 2.2 If the concern/complaint remains unresolved after 7 calendar days (or a longer period by mutual agreement), or if the complainant has reason to believe that a direct approach to the staff member concerned will not result in a satisfactory resolution, it should be put in writing and sent to the Principal.
  - 2.3 Upon receipt of a concern/complaint, the Principal will invite the complainant to a meeting to discuss the matters of concern. The Principal will then conduct an initial investigation, and seek to reach a solution acceptable to all parties.
  - 2.4 If the Principal has not been able to adequately progress the matter within 14 calendar days after receipt of the written concern/complaint (or a longer period by mutual agreement), the matter then becomes a formal complaint and may be sent in writing to the Board Chair. The Board Chair will discuss the complaint with the Principal and determine how best to progress the matter. If appropriate, a subcommittee will be formed to investigate and report back.
  - 2.5 The school aims to resolve concerns and complaints within 60 calendar days from the time they were first raised with the school (as per clause 2.1 above), and to keep the complainant informed of progress during any investigation. However, serious matters may take longer to finalise.
3. Concerns and formal complaints against a staff member which are unable to be resolved through the processes envisaged in clauses 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 above, will be dealt with as below:
  - 3.1 The staff member will be given full details of the concern/complaint and asked to respond in writing.
  - 3.2 The matter will be dealt with in a manner consistent with the applicable employment agreement and with employment law generally. Support/guidance, as appropriate, will be offered.
  - 3.3 If the allegation involves serious misconduct (e.g. assault, sexual misconduct, misuse of drugs), the staff member may be suspended on full pay while the matter is investigated.
4. The Principal is responsible for investigating all formal complaints, unless he/she is the subject of the complaint. The Board Chair will be kept informed on a “no surprises” basis, and will advise the rest of the Board if the complaint is considered serious. If the investigation reveals that a criminal offence has been committed, the appropriate agencies may be approached.

5. Concerns/complaints against the Principal, which have not been able to be resolved under 2.1 above, should be addressed in writing to the Board Chair, who will convene a subcommittee of two Board members to investigate the matter. The subcommittee will report back to the rest of the Board with their recommendations.
6. In the case of a concern/complaint against the Board or a member of the Board, or concerning a policy or act of the Board, the Board will be informed and the matter investigated jointly by the Principal and Board Chair. Should the Principal and/or Board Chair be the subject/s of the concern/complaint, other members of the Board will undertake the investigation.
7. Legal or other advice may be sought at any stage at the discretion of the Principal or Board Chair. A mediation process may be followed if this is considered appropriate.
8. All parties to a concern/complaint will be advised of the outcome. If any party is not satisfied with the outcome, they can appeal in writing to the Board within 14 days of being informed of the outcome, giving full reasons why the outcome is not acceptable to them. However, for such a reconsideration to take place, either:
  - new information must be produced that would have been relevant to the Board's initial deliberations; or
  - the complainant has concerns about the process followed by the Board.The decision of the Board following an appeal will be final.

<b>Next Triennial Review Date</b>	November 2020
<b>Policy Area</b>	NAG 6 (Legislation and Administration)
<b>Related Legislation</b>	N/A
<b>Linked Policies</b>	N/A
<b>Linked Documentation</b>	N/A