



Palmerston North Girls' High School

Te Kura Kōhine O Papaioea

Complaints Guidelines and Procedures

Rationale

It is important that concerns are recognised and resolved to ensure the best educational outcomes for our students.

Guidelines

1. The school will make a genuine effort to acknowledge and resolve promptly all concerns and complaints, which may manifest themselves in various forms and through various channels.
2. The school adheres to the basic principle that concerns and complaints be dealt with by the most appropriate person, in the most informal way, at the earliest opportunity.
3. Concerns and complaints will normally follow the process set out in the Complaints Procedures contained in the Appendices to this policy unless there are culturally specific circumstances that require a different process.
4. The Principal will decide who should deal with a concern or complaint and may delegate investigations to enable an independent recommendation to the Board.
5. Complaints must be made in writing and addressed to the Principal (or to the Board if it is about the Principal) who will follow the process set out in the Complaints Procedures.
6. Where an initial investigation identifies the complaint as a matter of serious misconduct, the Principal will report the complaint to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. Legal requirements and the procedures of any related employment contracts will be adhered to.
7. Anonymous complaints will not be acted upon.

Outcomes:

1. All concerns and complaints will be addressed and resolved wherever possible.
2. All parties involved in any complaint will be treated with respect, and in confidence.

Implementation Date: 22 July 2014

Review Date: 22 July 2015

Board Chairperson:

Appendix 1

Procedures for addressing a concern

All concerns will be dealt with in the first instance:

- By the most appropriate person
- In the most informal way
- At the earliest opportunity

1. For Students

Students are encouraged to talk directly to their teachers whenever a problem arises. They should approach the teacher at a suitable time (e.g., at the end of the lesson) or make an appointment. If the concern is not resolved a student should approach their form teacher, or the Head of Department of the subject area, or their year level dean for assistance.

Students may write about their problem using an incident form, which is available at the Student Centre.

2. For Parents

Parents who have a concern about any matter should contact their daughter's Dean who will ensure the parent is directed to the most appropriate person, or will proceed to investigate and resolve the concern.

If the response provided does not fully address their concerns, parents may take the matter further by contacting the Deputy or Assistant Principal with responsibility for their daughter's year level.

3. Contacting the School

Telephone the school office (06) 357 9194 and leave a message for the person you wish to speak with, requesting them to return your call. Staff are unlikely to be immediately available but will aim to return your call by at least the end of the following day.

Appendix 2

Procedure for making a formal complaint

If you are not satisfied with the school's response to your initial concerns, or you believe your concern to be a matter of misconduct, you may wish to make a complaint as set out below:

1. Write down your complaint giving details of what it is you are complaining about. Include details of efforts that have been made to resolve the matter. Include your name and contact phone number.
2. Address your written complaint to the Principal, or to the Board if it is about the Principal, or to another member of the school's senior leadership team if the Principal is absent. Your written complaint can be posted to the Principal, Palmerston North Girls' High School, Fitzherbert Avenue, Palmerston North, or delivered to the school, or emailed to principal@pnghs.school.nz.
3. When the Principal, or Board of Trustees, receives a complaint, they will discuss the matter with you before deciding what further action should be taken and the person who should lead the investigation.
4. The complaint will be investigated by talking to the person about whom the complaint has been made and interviewing other people relevant to the incident. Written statements may be taken and meeting notes will be recorded. You may wish to have a support person with you when you discuss the complaint. You will be contacted if additional information is required.
5. The Principal, or Board of Trustees, will decide what steps will be taken as a result of the investigation.
6. You will be advised of the outcome of the investigation in writing.
7. Your complaint will be treated with respect and in confidence. However, in the interests of natural justice, any person subject to a complaint must have the opportunity to hear all details about the complaint and reply to it. A support person may accompany them during discussion of the complaint if they wish. Information may be obtained from other parties.
8. Throughout this process, students will have access to a support person in school if they wish.