

ST PATRICK'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
NAG 6 – ADMINISTRATION/LEGAL
COMPLAINTS

RATIONALE

Occasionally there will be times when aspects of a school's performance is perceived to fall below an acceptable standard. Early recognition of the warning signals is most important.

PURPOSES

1. To ensure the requirements of the National Administration Guidelines.
2. To foster a school culture open to communication, collegiality, support and respect for each member of the team.
3. To ensure complaints are
 - recorded clearly,
 - effectively and fairly researched,
 - actions determined and followed through,
 - outcomes recorded, and
 - reporting completed.
4. To ensure effective communication so that all concerned parties are given the opportunity to be fairly heard and treated.

GUIDELINES

Many complaints will be able to be resolved by discussion and conciliation, in accordance with the school's Special Character.

1. Complaints against teachers or pupils or classroom administration by parents need sympathetic and tactful handling. Much will depend on the circumstances, but staff should always endeavour to reach a satisfactory conclusion. Teachers should try to gain the complainants' confidence so they are willing to co-operate to solve the problem.
2. Should consensus not be reached or if the complaint is serious, it should be referred to the Principal.
3. Complaints should never be dealt with away from the school premises.
4. Where a staff member expects a complaint may be made, they should notify the Principal and discuss the matter with the Principal or Board Chair as soon as possible.
5. Staff should make the Principal (in the first instance, or if unavailable or of sufficient gravity, the Board Chair,) and vice versa, aware of any complaint made to them.

6. At any time complaints are made, teachers should try to obtain full information as to the nature of the complaint and try to gain the confidence of the complainant as in 1 above . If a teacher feels an interview is getting out of control, they should terminate it, and refer the matter to the Principal. If a complaint concerns the Principal the matter will be referred to the Board Chair.
7. Complaints about teachers should initially be made to the Principal, who will investigate them. Consultation will precede any action.
8. The procedures as outlined in attached Appendix will be followed, where necessary.
9. Any complaints directed through a Board of Trustees member should follow the procedure as set out in Appendix I and referred to the Principal in the first instance.
10. A complaint directly to a Board of Trustees member does not preclude procedures as set out in Appendix I.
11. Appendix III refers to guidelines dealing with disruptive, threatening adults.

Prepared: April 1997

Board of Trustee Approved: 12 June 1997

Reviewed: September 1999/December 2003/November 2005/February 2006/May 2007

Signed: _____
Chairperson



STRATEGY FOR TRUSTEES
DEALING WITH PARENT/PUBLIC CONCERNS

Date of conversation: _____ Time: _____

(Stay calm. Avoid argument. Remain neutral. Key task is to listen.)

Name of Caller: _____ Phone No.: _____ (h)

Address of Caller: _____ Phone No.: _____ (w)

* *Ask for name(s) of student(s) attending St Patrick's Catholic School (if relevant).*

* *Ask caller to tell you specifically his/her concerns (list carefully).*

* *Advise caller of procedure as per Appendix I of Complaints Policy and will be referred to the Principal in the first instance.*

* *Suggest that the caller put his/her concerns in writing (if appropriate).*

(You are not obliged to answer any personal questions or divulge personal attitudes on any issue. Considerations: damage control/Privacy Act/matters confidential to the Board of Trustees/school prospectus/school policies. Keep cheerful, sincere and interested where possible).

Note any abusive language or extreme allegations:

Contact Margaret Beck as soon as possible.

Work: 378 0205

Home: 377 0674

School Fax: 378 0293

DISRUPTIVE, THREATENING ADULTS

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

On rare occasions an adult may behave in a manner that is contrary to NAG 5 where the Board is required to “provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students.....” and (in ii) employees”. This behaviour may include loud verbal confrontation, foul language, intimidation of staff, aggression towards staff or behaviour that compromises the teacher’s ability to teach and for children to learn and feel safe. The Board also has a responsibility under the State Sector Act to act as a “good employer” and for children to feel safe in accordance with its Special Character. In such cases we will:

- Request the adult move from hearing of children to an office to ascertain the nature of the issue causing concern and endeavour to resolve the issue quietly and rationally. Where this isn’t possible guidelines and procedures for “Concerns/Complaints” will be implemented.
- If the adult continues to behave in a manner that is disruptive, offensive or threatening, they will be asked to leave the school grounds. If they choose not to do as requested they will be informed that the police will be called if they still choose not to. If this option is still not chosen the police will be called.
- Should the same adult behave in a similar manner on a second occasion a trespass notice will be served by the Board of Trustees banning the adult from the school site for two years. This action would be taken to ensure student and staff safety both physical and emotional.

HANDLING COMPLAINTS

