



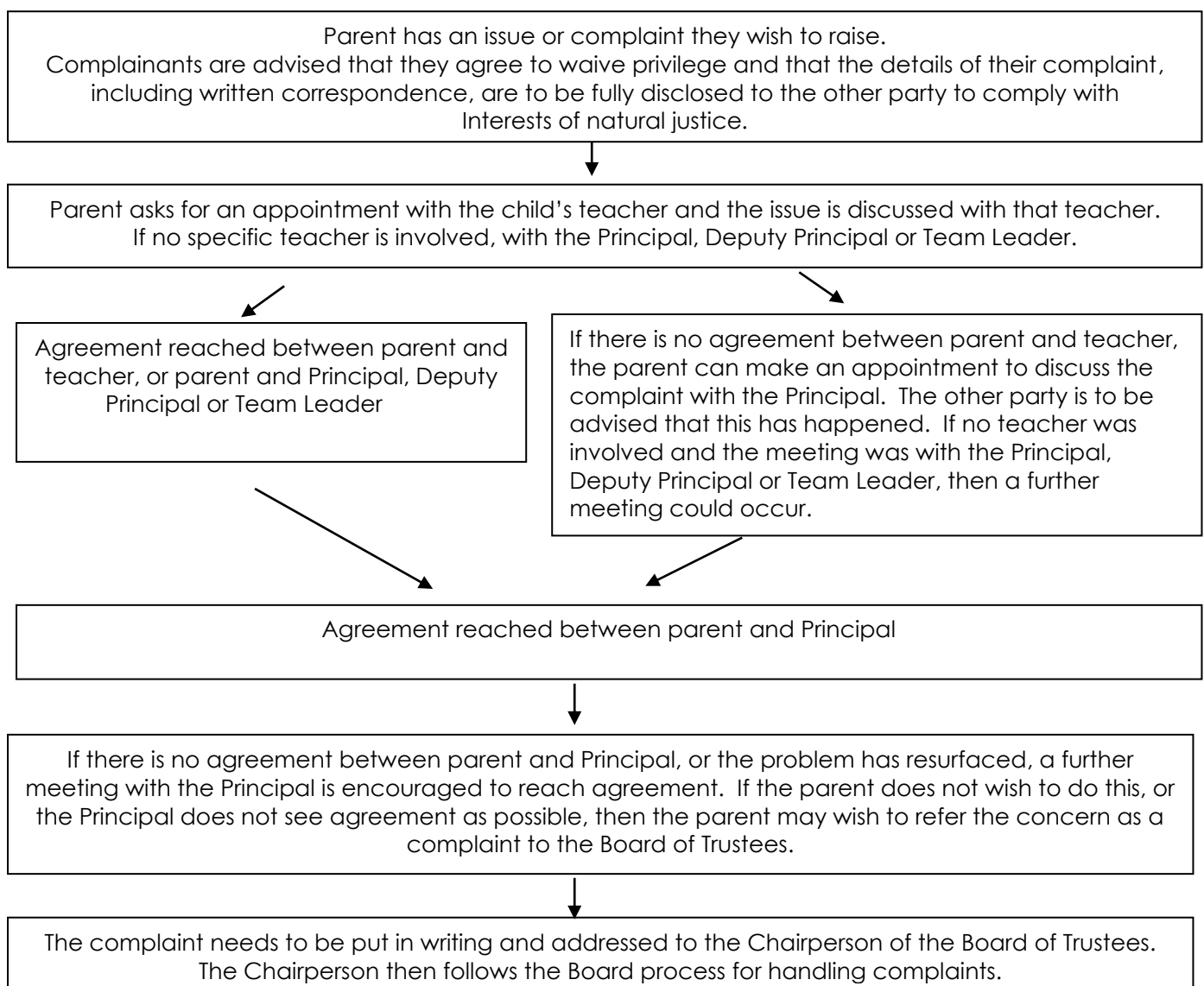
Rationale

Allandale Primary School encourages parents and teachers to discuss matters in a positive way so that they can work out what the issues are, and if possible, make decisions together around what will be done about it. Parents are included to mean caregivers and legal guardians.

How will we do it?

Where parents are concerned about their child's schooling or life at school, the first discussion should be directly with the teacher involved. If this does not relate to a specific teacher or staff member, then contact should be made with the Principal, Deputy Principal or Team Leader. A parent may bring a support person to any meeting, that person can assist the parent or staff member to discuss the issue or complaint.

Dealing with Issues or Concerns



Stage One: The Complaint Process

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| Public excluded meetings | <p>Letter of complaint is acknowledged by the Chairperson and the complainant advised of the next steps in the Board process. The letter becomes part of the correspondence that will be dealt with at the next Board meeting. The public is excluded.</p> |
| | <p>Letter is formally acknowledged at the Board meeting (with the public excluded). The Board decides whether to deal with the matter as a whole Board or approves a committee to investigate and recommend to the Board.</p> |
| | <p>At the meeting of the Board/committee the reports are received and the complainant may be invited to speak about their complaint and/or may be asked questions. The Board/committee considers the evidence and/or information and the Board comes to a decision.</p> |
| Public meetings | <p>The Board respond with the action it is decided will be taken.</p> |
| | <p>The Boards' response is communicated to the parties to the complaint. This may be either publicly or confidentially depending on the Board considering all relevant matters. The parties may comment on whether it should be made public.</p> |
| | <p>Any of the parties may request that the Board reconsider its decision. It is unlikely to do so unless new information that would have been relevant to the Boards' deliberation is available and would have been substantially helpful in making a decision.</p> |

Stage Two: The Board of Trustees Process

Guidelines:

1. If the Chairperson of the Board considers the complaint in the category of serious, then a special meeting of the Board should be called.
2. All letters addressed to the Chairperson of the Board are for the **whole Board**. The chairperson cannot decide independently what action will be taken.
3. Resolution or dismissal of a complaint must not be discussed until all relevant information is available.
4. Any conflicts of interest must be disclosed by Board members. This is because decisions need to be made as a result of all parties being offered a fair hearing and to make sure that bias is not part of the process.
5. The Board must respect the confidentiality of the process where it relates to complaints against staff. The principles of natural justice must apply. The Board should consider whether to contact the Regional NZSTA Personnel/Industrial Adviser when considering any complaint involving staff. The Board must consider any relevant staff disciplinary policies and employment agreements where they have relevance to the complaint.
6. The Board recognises that not all complainants will be satisfied with the outcome of a complaint. After reconsideration, if the Board is confident of its decision, it will refuse to enter into further discussion/correspondence regarding the decision.
The NZSTA helpdesk can assist by giving an objective assessment of the board's processes in dealing with a complaint.
7. A complaint about the Board's lack of compliance in relation to an agreed outcome will be treated as a new complaint rather than as a reconsideration of the previous one.
8. Trustees need to be clear in their mind of the difference between a complaint they have as a parent (i.e. regarding their own child) and a complaint they have as a trustee (e.g. obstruction of staff preventing them carrying out Board work). In the first instance they are required to follow the normal procedures and are excluded from decision making due to conflict of interest. The latter case is dealt with as an agenda item for the whole Board (possibly with the public excluded).
9. If a party requests that the Board reconsider its decision, the Board must consider any advice from the NZSTA on the need to use an independent investigation.

Procedures for complaints regarding the Principal or Board of Trustees matters

Where issues or concerns raised with the Principal have not been addressed using the criteria set out in the flow chart above then the formal process of writing to the Board Chair applies.

Where issues or concerns regarding the Board of Trustees or its deliberations need to be raised then the party concerned shall use the provisions for 'deputations' and 'petitions' set out in the current edition of "Model Standing Orders; for meetings of public bodies"

Complaints about School Processes

Parents may complain to the school or the Ministry of Education about the school's complaints process.

Reference: Ministry of Education website:

<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/Schools/StanddownsSuspensionsExclusionsExpulsions/PartTwo/Section3ActionsOfLastResort/ManagingComplaints.aspx>

Contact the Senior Adviser for the school at Ministry of Education Central North Region.

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