



**NEWCASTLE WALDORF SCHOOL**  
**GRIEVANCE POLICY**

Date of Implementation:	April 2019
Date of Next Review:	April 2023
Approved by:	Co-Principals
Modification History:	May 2010, May 2014, April 2019, Feb 2021

## **POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Newcastle Waldorf School acknowledges that from time to time parents and students may raise concerns, complaints or allegations about matters regarding their experiences with the School. The following policy and procedures outline processes that are designed to address concerns before they turn into complaints or allegations. If parents raise concerns early, and they are addressed informally by class and subject teachers or a Co-Principal, the likelihood that they will turn into formal complaints may be greatly reduced.

Concerns or complaints about the conduct of a staff member must be raised with a Co-Principal.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Concerns**

If a parent has concerns about any aspect of their child's education at the School, their first port of call should be their child's Class Teacher/Guardian or subject teacher, or, if it relates to the conduct of a staff member, a Co-Principal. Parents should expect that concerns raised informally will be taken seriously by teachers and referred to the College of Teachers or a Co-Principal if necessary.

It is important that both parties follow up concerns to ensure that everyone is satisfied with the resolution. If there is no satisfactory resolution, a Co-Principal should be included in the concern to assist in achieving a satisfactory resolution.

### **Complaints**

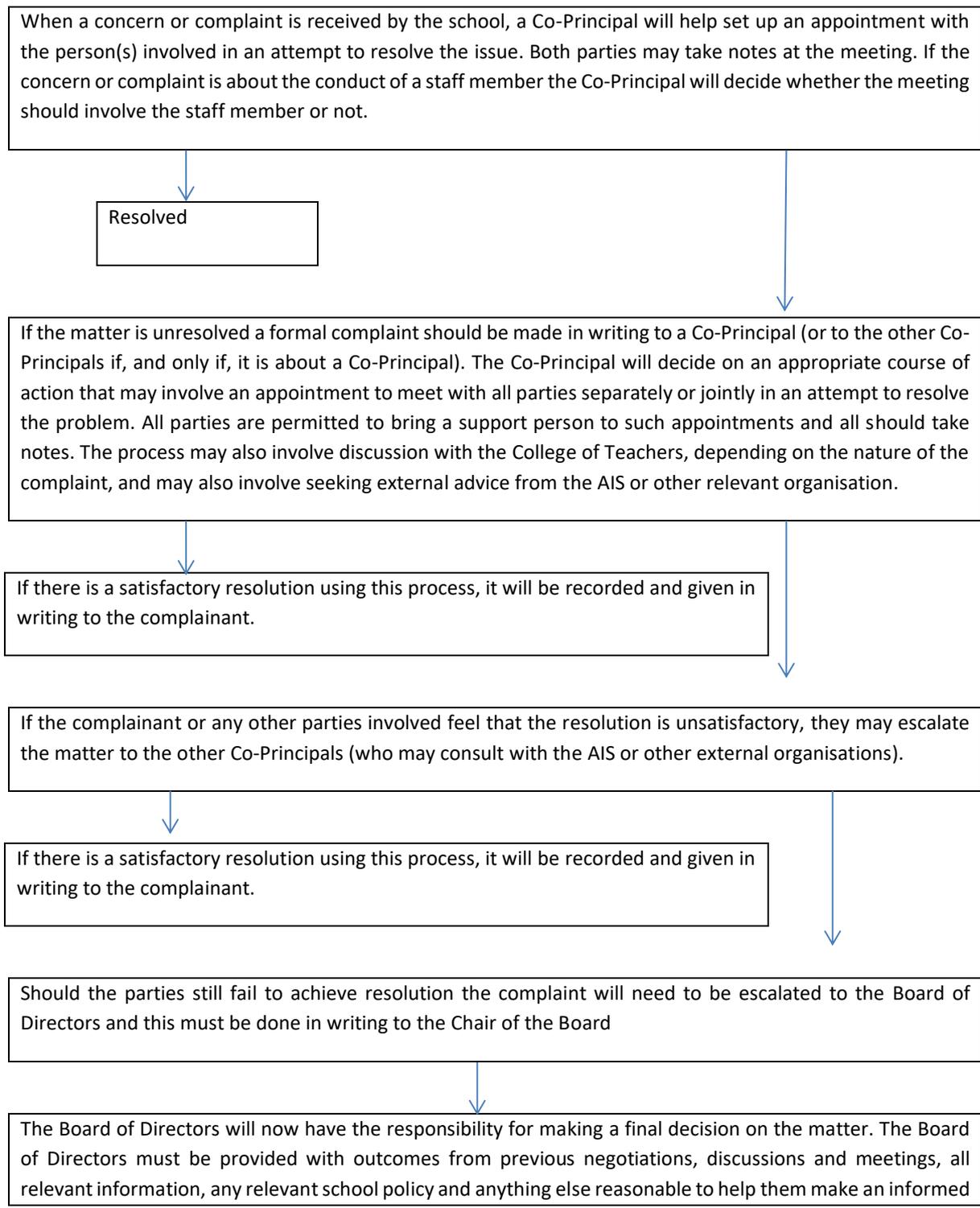
If a concern is not dealt with to the satisfaction of the parent, the parent may choose to make a formal complaint. Formal complaints may also be appropriate when the issue is already perceived to be beyond the level of a concern.

All staff members will be familiar enough with this policy to be able to direct parents who wish to make a complaint to a Co-Principal and to this policy and procedures. The Co-Principal will then be in a position to ensure that the correct procedure is followed.

The following complaints procedure requires a complaint to be made in writing so that it may be resolved effectively and efficiently. All complaints using this procedure will be

acknowledged and considered. If complaints are not put in writing, the School is unable to guarantee efficiency in the resolution process.

### Concerns and Complaints Procedure:



decision. The Board of directors will seek advice from relevant external organisations such as the AIS in finalising the complaint.



Resolved

The Co-Principal's, or if needed, the Board's decision may be one or more of the following: dismiss the complaint, declare that resolution is not possible as the parties are unable to come to an agreement, conclude the complaint has been substantially resolved, uphold the complainant and implement a specific action to address the concerns, determine that the complaint be referred for investigation or disciplinary action if evidence of a serious breach is uncovered.

The complaints procedure requires:

- The Co-Principal to consult with and be the representative of the College of Teachers wherever appropriate and the AIS or relevant external organisation if required.
- Acknowledgement to the complainant from a Co-Principal in a timely manner.
- Resolution to be achieved within a reasonable timeframe
- Both parties to be notified of any decision in writing, in a timely manner.

## Complaints about Staff Conduct

Parents/carers and students should raise any concern or complaint they have about the conduct of a staff member with a Co-Principal, or if it relates to a Co-Principal to another Co-Principal and the Chair of the Board of Directors. If the matter relates to reportable conduct then the School will follow its child protection policy and procedures to handle the complaint.

### Reportable Conduct:

In addition to providing a caring and creative educational environment, the Newcastle Waldorf School is committed to the protection of children from sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse, neglect and domestic violence.

All staff members are aware through the Child Protection Policy that the following legislation applies to their positions:

- the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* ("Care and Protection Act");
- the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* ("WWC Act");
- the *Children's Guardian Act 2019* ("Children's Guardian Act")
- the *Crimes Act 1900* ("Crimes Act").

Allegations of reportable conduct are managed through the School's Child Protection Policy.

### **Confidentiality**

The school regards as crucial the need to protect the safety, privacy and integrity of children, staff and members of the community. As a result, and in accordance with legislation, any information gleaned during a negotiation or an investigation will be treated as confidential in accordance with the Privacy Compliance Manual which is a guide to Independent Schools in regard to the Privacy Act 1988 (as amended).