

Te Awamutu Primary School

14 June 2007

Policy Domains:

NAG 3 – Employer Responsibility/Personnel

NAG 5 – Health and Safety

## **Procedures for Managing Complaints, Concerns and Compliments**

Te Awamutu Primary School strives to provide the best, most inclusive learning environment possible. In order to achieve this we are committed to building and maintaining positive relationships within the school community – with children, parents, caregivers, family, whanau, staff and local community.

Complaints often arise when people's expectations are not met. Te Awamutu Primary School will – as far as possible in the circumstances – manage people's expectations by clearly describing the philosophies, policies and practices of the school and advising staff, parents, caregivers and our community of what to expect.

Managing complaints and concerns quickly and effectively is an important aspect of providing a safe and positive learning environment. Complaints and concerns are gifts that create opportunities for reflection and improvement. Likewise, compliments allow the school to acknowledge those actions and activities that work well.

Everyone has the right to complain or raise a concern when they feel that Te Awamutu Primary School is not living up to the standards it should.

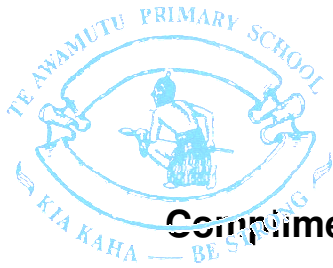
### **Is it a complaint or concern?**

The person complaining has the right to decide if their complaint is something they wish to have formally investigated or is just an issue they wish to raise.

Concerns are considered less serious than a formal complaint and the procedure for managing them is slightly different. A concern is something that worries a person, is about quality and is not necessarily connected to any one event.

However, if the issue of concern is likely to affect the school as a whole or is about the quality of education provided to a child, it will be deemed to be a complaint and the appropriate procedure will be followed.

Concerns and complaints forms are available at the school office or staff room.



## Compliments

Compliments provide important feedback about where and how the school, students and staff are performing positively.

Compliments can be used to give specific feedback and acknowledgement to students and staff both informally and as part of staff performance appraisals, school assemblies and certificates of acknowledgement to children.

Compliment forms are available at the school office or staff room.

## Concerns, Complaints and Compliments Register

Te Awamutu Primary School will keep a register of all concerns, complaints and compliments.

The register will record key details of each issue including the date of resolution. This information will make it possible for the school to identify areas for improvement and any recurring issues over time.

A *complaints officer* will be identified and will have overall responsibility for ensuring that the concerns, complaints and compliments procedures are being implemented correctly. The complaints officer (Janine Margetts) will maintain the complaints register.

The principal will provide regular updates to the board of trustees regarding complaints, concerns and compliments as part of the monthly reporting process.

## Complaints from staff

If a staff member has a complaint

- They should raise it with their Team leader or one of the two Deputy Principals as soon as possible.

If the complaint is about their Team Leader or Deputy Principal

- Then they need to go to a management team member (either the DP or Principal)

If the complaint is about the Principal

- They can go to another management team member or the chairperson of the board
- NZEI – New Zealand Education Institute
- MOE - Ministry of Education



If the complaint is about the board or a board member

- They can take it to the principal or another member of the board
- They can go to the Principal
- NZSTA – New Zealand School Trustees Association
- Complaints Officer – Janine Margetts

Staff are required to fill in the complaints form and take it to an appropriate person (refer above).

Complaints involving staff members will be dealt with by a management team member using the following process;

1. Log the complaint on the complaints register
2. If the complaint involves another staff member, inform that staff member that a complaint about them has been lodged within two working days. Ensure that;
  - The staff member's rights are respected
  - The staff member is involved in, and kept informed of, all aspects of the complaints resolution
  - The staff member is advised how to access employee assistance through NZEI field officer – Rob George or Staff Rep Jessie Monk
3. Inform Principal that complaint has been lodged and detail the nature of the complaint.
4. Decide who the best person to investigate the complaint.
5. Investigate the complaint within five working days.
6. If the investigation cannot be completed within the required timeframe inform all parties in writing with the reasons for the delays outlined.
7. Interview those concerned individually and in private.
8. Take notes.
9. Take any necessary remedial action.
10. Notify those concerned of the resolution/s to the complaint within ten working days.
11. Complainant and investigator sign off the complaint form.
12. Complete the complaints register.



13.2 Documentation filed in the complaints, concerns and compliments file  
(NB. not in individual personnel files)

If a complainant is still not satisfied with the outcomes they will be advised to take the complaint to:

Department of Labour Mediation Service  
Phone: 0800 20 90 20

NZEI field officer – Rob George

MOE – Ministry of Education

NZSTA – New Zealand School Trustees Association

ERO – Education review Office

NZTC – New Zealand Teaching Council

### **Complaints from any other source – children, parents, care-givers, whanau, members of the public**

If a student has a complaint, this can be raised anywhere in the school, including via another student or family member, through the office, directly to their teacher, other teachers or school personnel.

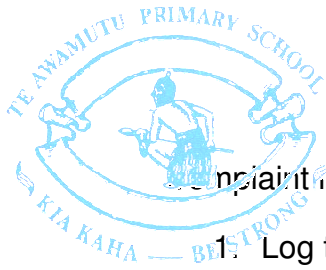
Regardless of how a complaint is received it will be acknowledged and followed up on. The complainant can complete a complaints form, verbally provide the details to someone else who can complete the form or tell their story directly.

The complaint form and any other relevant documentation will be forwarded to the complaints officer.

If parents, care-givers, family, whanau or members of the public have a complaint they will be asked to complete a complaints form and send it to the complaints officer. The complaints officer or another staff member may complete the form for the person if necessary/appropriate.

The principal will be advised of any complaint involving staff and the complaint will be investigated by a member of the management team. If the complaint is about the principal, it will be investigated by a board member.

The complaints officer will investigate all other complaints unless determined inappropriate due to a conflict of interest or the issue being raised. In this instance a suitable person will be identified by the principal (or the board) to complete the investigation.

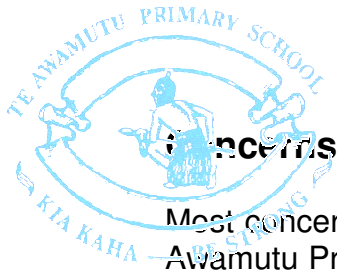


Complaint investigations will use the following process;

1. Log the complaint on the complaints register
2. Transfer the number onto the complaints form
3. Acknowledge in writing within two working days of receipt, advising of impending investigation and how they will receive follow up information.
4. Investigate within five working days of receipt using a process that is sensitive to, and respects, the values and beliefs of the person and their family/whanau or staff member. This will involve a Maori resource person in the resolution of complaints made by, or involving, Maori.
5. If the investigation is unable to be completed within the required timeframes, all parties will be informed in writing with the reasons for the delays outlined.
6. Record the details of the investigation.
7. Hand over documentation to a management team/board member within ten working days of receipt of complaint.
8. The management team/board member will notify all concerned of the resolution/s to the complaint within twelve working days of initial receipt of complaint.
9. All parties sign off the complaints form
10. The management team/board member will update complaints register
11. Documentation filed in the complaints, concerns and compliments file
12. A complaint shall not adversely affect the experience of a child, their care-giver, family, whanau or member of the public in future dealings with the school.

If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcomes of the investigation, the issue will be referred to the complaints sub-committee of the board of trustees for a review of the investigation and findings of the complaint.

If following this, the complainant is still not satisfied, they will be referred to the up to date resources that identify options for taking their complaint further.



## Concerns

Most concerns will be verbal and easily resolved. However to ensure that Te Awamutu Primary takes every opportunity to enhance the effectiveness of the school, a concern form will be filled out either before or after the issue is resolved. This may be completed by the person listening to the concern.

The process;

1. The concern can be dealt with immediately or referred to a more appropriate person.
2. A concern form is completed.
3. The concern form can be given to anyone in the school.
4. They forward it to the complaints officer who informs a management team member.
5. The complaints officer logs the concern on to the complaints register (without any reference to names if desired).
6. File the concerns form in the complaints, concerns and compliments register.

## Compliments

Compliments received shall be recorded on a compliments form and forwarded to a member of the management team.

Compliments are recorded on the complaints, concerns and compliments register.

Compliments are not required to be acknowledged in writing, but may be acknowledged where it is felt appropriate to do so.

The form is filed in the complaints, concerns and compliments file.