



# Concerns and Complaints Procedure

At Dunedin North Intermediate we believe it is vital to foster strong and positive home/school communication. Therefore, it is really important to discuss any concerns or questions you have, as often issues can be resolved quickly when the parties involved are made aware.

## Purpose:

To ensure that concerns and complaints are handled in a fair, consistent, timely and equitable fashion, mindful of natural justice principles, and in accordance with the relevant employment agreements, legislation and codes of conduct.

## Concern:

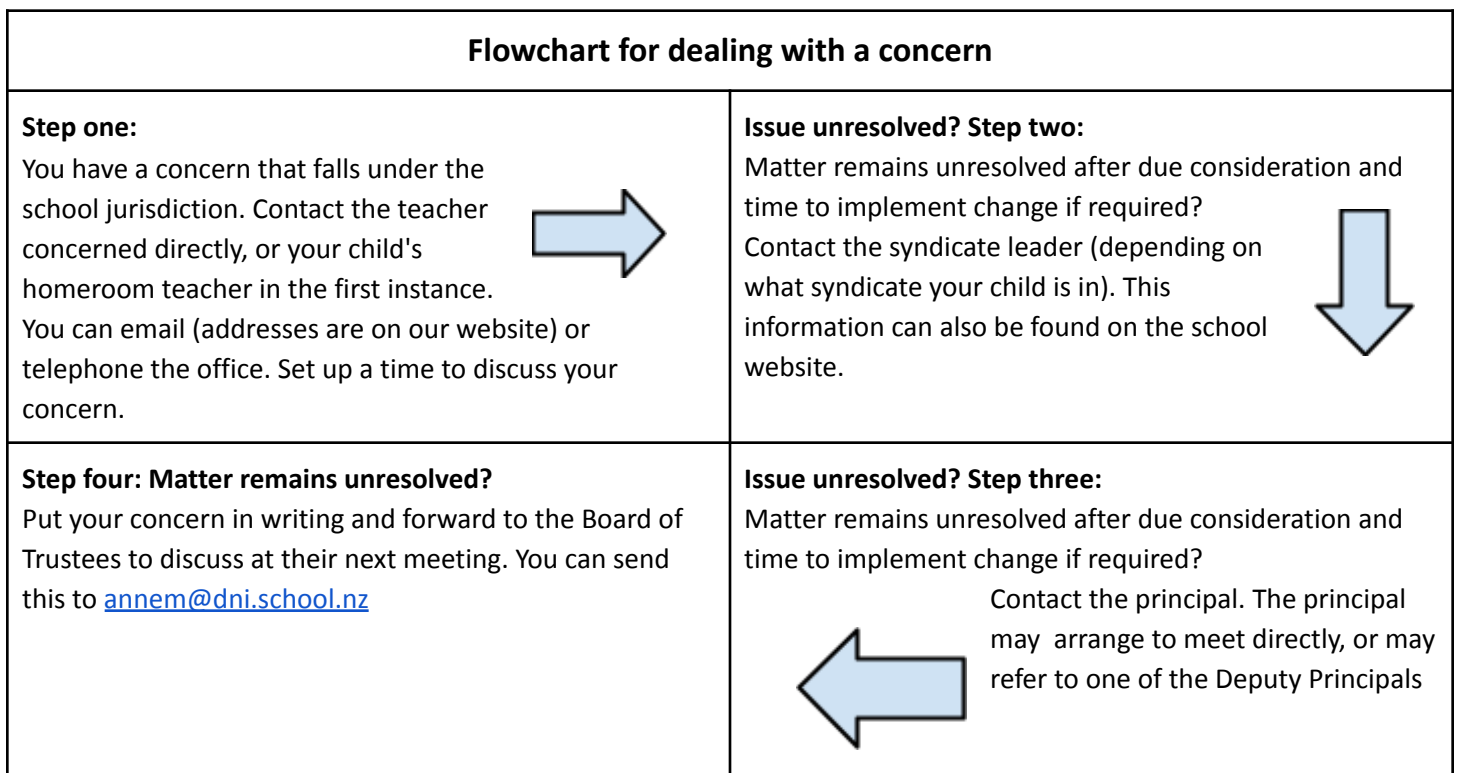
An issue that can be resolved between the parties involved and is unlikely to involve the consideration of disciplinary, legal or employment consequences.

The flowchart below is designed to help you decide who to make contact with to discuss your concern.

## Formal Complaint:

There are two likely scenarios for a formal complaint (see note below).

1. An issue is likely to involve the consideration of disciplinary, legal or employment consequences.
2. An unresolved or repeated concern might be escalated to a complaint.



## Procedure for receiving a complaint

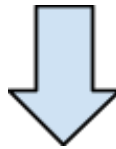
A letter of complaint, that will be attended to by the whole DNI School Board, is the only method of making a complaint. Your letter will be acknowledged by the Presiding Member of the Board and the complainant advised of the next steps in the Board process (as per this flow chart). The letter becomes part of the

correspondence that will be dealt with at the next Board meeting and the public will be excluded at this time. Note, a complaint must be presented at least three working days before the board meeting or it will be deferred to the next meeting. A complaint of a serious nature (allegations of abuse, gross misconduct or harassment may require a special meeting sooner).

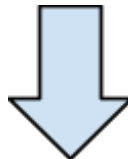


If the complaints and concerns procedure has not been followed, the Board will normally return any letter of complaint to the writer.

**Formal Complaint - An issue is likely to involve the consideration of disciplinary, legal or employment consequences.** In this scenario the formal complaint should first come to the principal for initial investigation. The principal must involve NZSTA personnel/industrial advisor in cases concerning staff, if it is likely employment processes might be involved and will need to consider the relevant staff disciplinary policies and employment agreements. If the issue can not be resolved the complaint will then be transferred to the Board of Trustee as per the procedure below.



The letter of complaint is tabled at the next Board Meeting (or sooner if the matter requires a special meeting). Anyone with a conflict of interest will declare such at the beginning of proceedings and the Board will decide if it is appropriate for this person to remain involved in this decision. You are welcome to attend the meeting to speak to your complaint or concern.



The Board may seek further information. Once they have come to a decision this will be communicated to you in writing. The Board is likely to involve the regional NZSTA Industrial Advisor in cases concerning complaints that involve staff, if it is possible that an employment issue may be involved.

Any of the parties may ask for the matter to be reconsidered if new information has come to light. If the decision of the Board does not resolve the matter the mediation may be useful.

## **Guidelines for Board Members in dealing with Serious Complaints**

- All letters of complaint are for the whole Board of Trustees and will be disseminated as such.
- No complaint can be dealt with outside of a board meeting.
- The Board must involve the regional NZSTA personnel/industrial advisor in cases concerning staff, if it is likely employment processes might be involved. The Board will need to consider the relevant staff disciplinary policies and employment agreements.
- If a review of process is requested, the NZSTA helpdesk can assist by giving an objective assessment of a Board's processes in dealing with complaints.
- A complaint regarding compliance in relation to a previously agreed complaint resolution will be treated as a serious matter and actioned with urgency.
- Board members need to be clear about the difference between a complaint they have as a parent (ie regarding their own child) and a complaint they have as a trustee. In the former they are invited to follow the concern and complaints procedure.
- Trustees who are approached directly by other parents, students or community members need to direct them to this policy. They cannot 'hear' a complaint through any other process.
- No concern or complaint can be considered anonymously. There is a protected disclosures procedure for sensitive matters. An anonymous concern or complaint will not be opened.