

COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

PURPOSE

The Complaints Handling Policy provides directives and guidance for the following types of complaints:

- Complaints from school community i.e. students, parents, governing body members, volunteers and service providers to ISWA (direct/indirect)
- Internal Complaints i.e. from staff about another staff member
- Complaints in respect to the School Education Act 1999 (WA) regarding provision of education

A complaint or grievance is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived situation or outcome. The dissatisfaction may be based on a perception that the School has:

- Done something wrong; or
- Failed to do something it should have; or
- Acted unfairly or inappropriately.

OBJECTIVES

To provide clarity, transparency, consistency and timely resolution (e.g. structured processes) regarding the School's Complaint Handling procedures to enable any person(s) to make a complaint based on the nature of their complaint.



PRINCIPLES OF POLICY

Key principles are:

- The School recommends complaints between the respective parties to be resolved through conciliatory means before instigation of formal arbitration.
- All complaints will be investigated on timely basis and outcomes will be provided to the respective parties.
- Natural justice must be exercised in resolving any dispute or complaint; this requires all parties concerned to receive a fair process and final decision to be made without bias.
- All matters raised will be kept private and confidential unless permission is explicitly received from the parties involved.
- Complaints made in good faith are protected from retribution and detrimental treatment such as dismissal, harassment, discrimination, disciplinary action, bias or unfavorable treatment.
- Resolution must appropriately balance the principles of justice with compassion.
- All complaints will be captured in the relevant recordkeeping system.

KEY POLICY REQUIREMENTS

The Director General of the Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that the school observes the registration standards, including the standard about its complaints handling system. Any student, parent or community member is entitled to contact the Director General with concerns about how the school has dealt with a complaint. Information is available on the Department of Education website. While the Director General may consider whether the school has breached the registration standards, she does not have power to intervene in a complaint or override the school's decision."

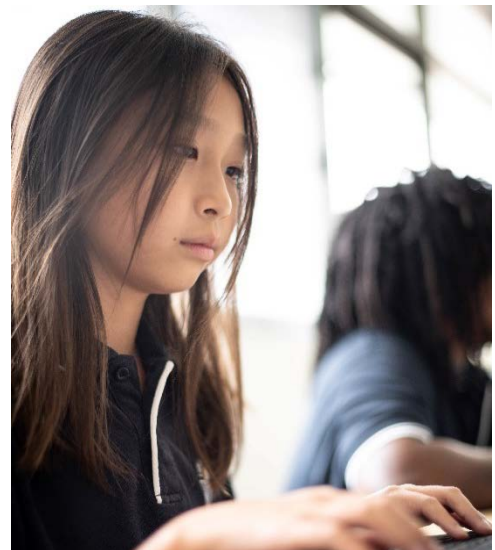
For each type of complaint, depending on the nature and circumstances of the complaint, a designated Officer will be assigned to investigate the complaint and report back to the designated Resolution Officer. This person may be the Principal, HR Manager, Head of Secondary School, Head of Primary School and/or third party.

All complaints captured under this Policy will be formally documented and safeguarded in the prescribed manner outlined in the Procedures to:

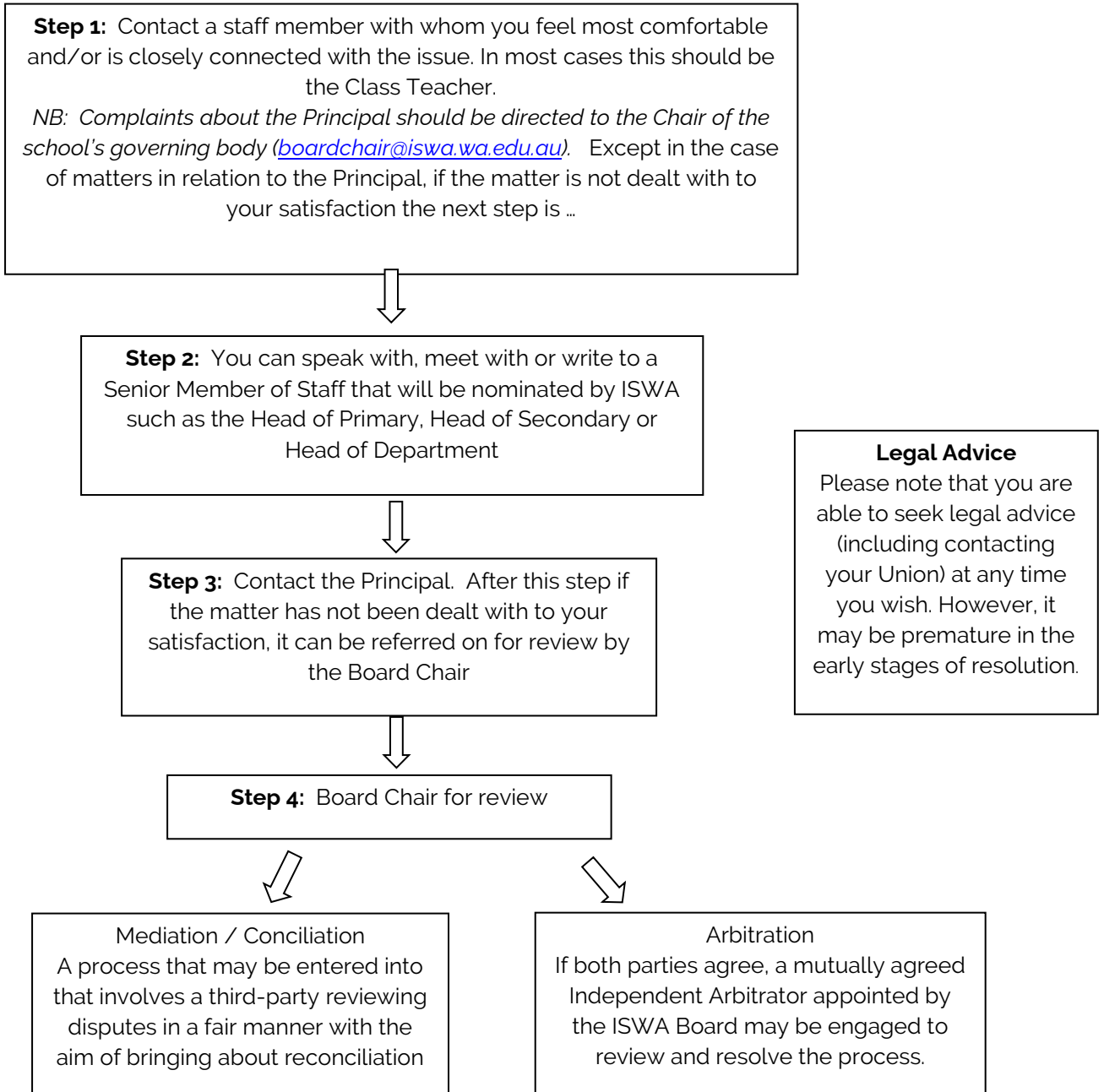
- ensure historical record of the complaint,
- ensure resolution thereof; and
- acknowledgement from the Resolution Officer and complainant that the matter is closed.

The school's records of complaints, allegations and findings related to grooming and child abuse, whether involving former or current staff or students:

- (a) contain as much detail as possible;
- (b) are stored securely; and
- (c) are not destroyed without the approval of the Director General or, where their retention becomes impracticable or unduly onerous, are forwarded to the Director General with her permission for retention in accordance with the State Records Act 2000.



GENERAL PROCEDURE FOR SCHOOL COMMUNITY COMPLAINTS



Procedures associated with the below types of complaints are found in the following documents:

Type of Complaint	Name of Procedure	Other information
Formal complaint from student	Child Friendly Complaints Procedure	SEQTA
Internal Staff Complaint	Employee Grievance Resolution Procedure	Employee Formal Grievance Form on SEQTA

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following are the prescribed roles and responsibilities in the implementation of this Policy:

Designated role	Responsibilities of role	Other information
Parent/Student Complaints		
Recipient Teacher of complaint	Resolve directly with complainant within 5 days.	Ideally this should be face to face and confirmed in writing (email). Written response must be provided to complainant with outcomes of the complaints process.
Head of Primary/Head of Secondary	Understand facts from parties involved; escalate to Principal if complaint remains unresolved.	
Principal	Aims to resolve issues to the satisfaction of the complainant. If this is not achieved, the complainant can raise the matter with the Board Chair.	
Board Chair	Respond to complaints involving the Principal and/or issues which have not been satisfactorily resolved. Board Chair refers the matter for mediation/conciliation or arbitration.	Email address: boardchair@iswa.wa.edu.au
Staff Complaints		
Executive, Middle Leadership Team	Listen and support staff; direct staff member(s) to relevant Policies and Procedures (where applicable). Acknowledge complaint within 5 days and keep informed all relevant parties informed.	Refer Employee Grievance Resolution Procedure; if unresolved, staff can go direct to Board Chair. Complaints about Board Members should be directed to the Principal.
OS&H Committee	Conduct investigations involving workplace safety and psychosocial hazards.	Refer OS&H Policy
Fraud	If staff suspect or witness behaviour that is not appropriate, they should report to the Business Manager or any member of the Executive team.	Refer Code of Conduct Code of Business Practice

POLICY BREACHES

There are no formal penalties or consequences for breaching this Policy. All parties are reminded that vexatious and/or malicious complaints are not within the ethos of ISWA.



RECORDKEEPING

Name of document	File Location	Security Level
Complaints Register	One Note / Complaints Register	Restricted Access on a 'needs to know basis'
Employee formal Grievance Form	Human Resources / Staff Complaints Register	Restricted Access on a 'needs to know basis'

Policy Category	Operational / Governance
Date Approved	August 2020
Frequency of review	As required
Policy Owner	Principal
Amendment History	
Date	Amendment
February 2020	New
August 2020	Minor amendments to provide further clarification
September 2020	Amendments as suggested by DES

