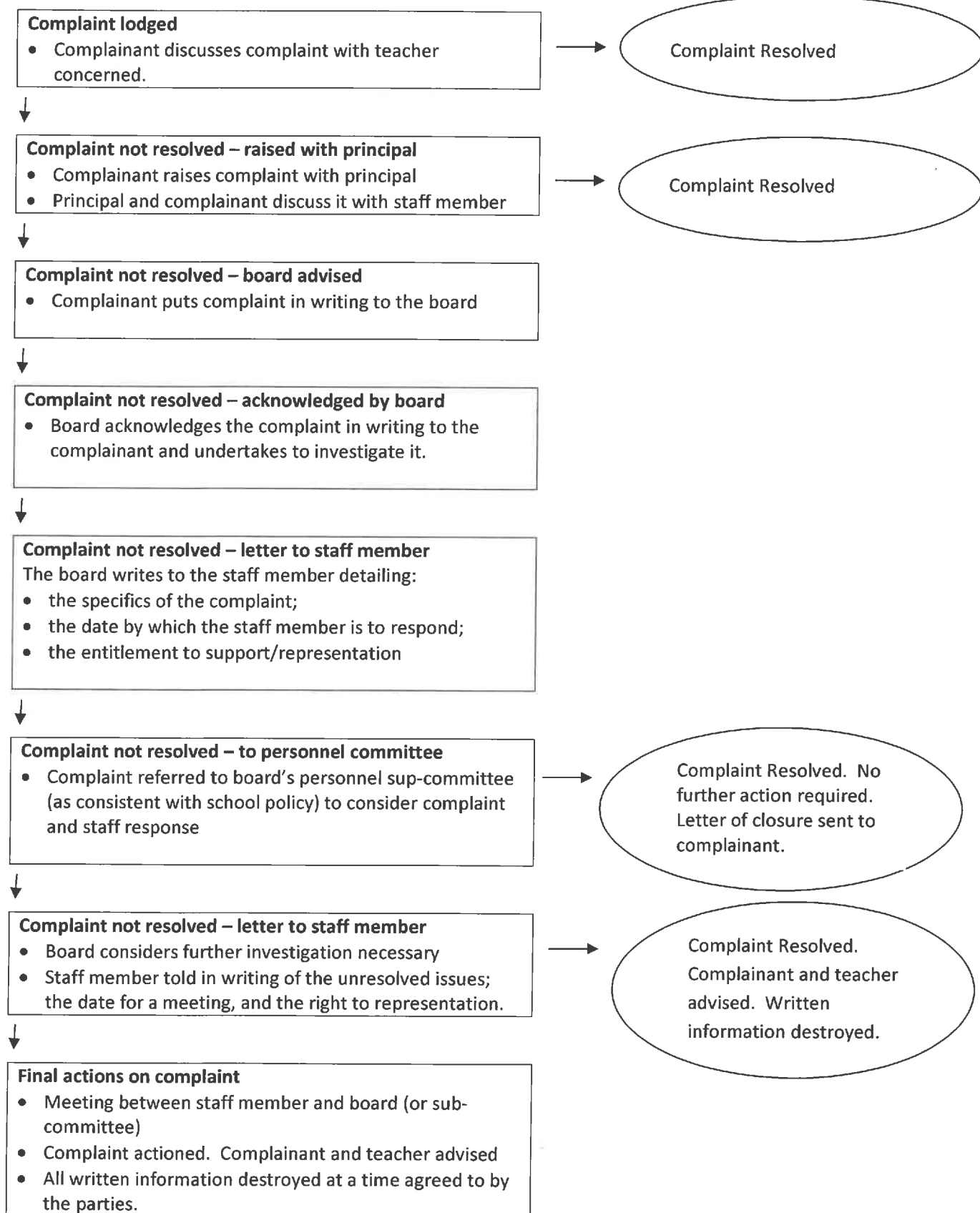


HANDLING COMPLAINTS



**NAG 3 PERSONNEL
PROCEDURES**

CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

(NB: A concern is a verbal comment, a complaint is in writing. Procedures do not begin until a concern becomes a complaint)

REFER EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS ACT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE IN THE STA HANDBOOK

Refer "Handling Complaints" flow chart attached to this document.

PURPOSE

- (a) To resolve concerns and complaints fairly and as quickly as possible and focuses on maintaining open communication.
- (b) To protect the rights of any person who is the subject of a complaint and of the complainant.
- (c) To ensure compliance with all obligations under the Board of Trustees liability insurance cover.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

- (a) Any person who is the subject of a complaint is "innocent until proven guilty";
- (b) Any person who is the subject of a complaint has a right to be listened to and respected regardless of the circumstances and the information remains confidential;
- (c) Any person who is the subject of a complaint has a right to know the details of the complaint including the source of the complaint;
- (d) Any person who is the subject of a complaint has the right to be heard in connection with the complaint; and
- (e) Every person who is the subject of a complaint has the right to be represented.

NOTES

- (a) **IMPORTANT: BEFORE THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES TAKES ANY ACTION ARISING OUT OF A COMPLAINT (apart from dismissing the complaint) IT SHALL FIRST COMPLY WITH THE NOTIFICATION PROVISIONS UNDER ITS LIABILITY INSURANCE COVER.**
- (b) If a complaint relates to a staff member or the Principal and is of such gravity that it would be inappropriate for that person to continue his/her usual duties, then the Board of Trustees may at anytime following receipt of the complaint, pending the investigation of that complaint, suspend that person on full pay.
- (c) Nothing in these procedures shall limit or prevent any rights under the personal grievance procedures of any employment contract.
- (d) The Board of Trustees will advise the option of a support person if needed e.g. to accompany a parent when discussing a concern with the Principal or to help write up a written complaint.

APPENDIX 1:

SETTING UP A COMPLAINTS INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE

- (a) There shall be established a Complaints Investigation Committee made up of the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, the Principal and one other lay person who shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees who shall be a parent of a present or a past pupil of the school;
- (b) The Chairperson of the Board of Trustees shall act as Convenor of the Complaints Investigation Committee;
- (c) Depending on the circumstances and nature of the complaint, the Board of Trustees may also appoint to the Committee one representative of any group which has a legitimate special interest in the matter;
- (d) The lay member of the Committee shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees at the annual general meeting or as soon as practical thereafter;
- (e) If any member of the Committee is the complainant or subject of the complaint personally, then the Board of Trustees shall appoint a substitute member from amongst the remaining members of the

St Teresa's Policies and Procedures

Board to take the place of such person and if the complaint relates to the Chairperson, then the Committee shall appoint the convenor to deal with that complaint.

- (f) If the lay person has a conflict of interest then the Committee has the power to co-opt another suitable lay person, as stated in clause (a) of this Appendix, in consultation with all the affected parties.