



# Don Buck School

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Next review: Term 3 2026

## Concerns and Complaints Policy

At Don Buck School we promote a school culture where it is safe to raise concerns and complaints and where we assess and respond to these with due care. This is in keeping with our responsibility to provide a safe environment for students, staff, and the school community (Education and Training Act 2020; Health and Safety at Work Act 2015). This also enables us to monitor our policies and processes and ensure that the school is operating effectively.

Anyone can raise a concern or complaint with the school, including staff members, parents, caregivers, students, the wider school community, and members of the public. The response to any concern or complaint is determined by the nature and seriousness of the matter, and who is involved. Concerns or complaints may relate to a specific or general matter associated with the school, or involve a staff member, board member, parent or caregiver, student, or someone else within the responsibility of the school.

This policy includes the following procedures:

- **Raising Concerns and Complaints**
- **Assessing and Responding to Concerns and Complaints**

For an overview, see **Concerns and Complaints Process** .

When responding to concerns and complaints, we meet legal obligations, including employment, health and safety, and privacy requirements, and follow the principles of **natural justice**.

At Don Buck School, we:

- treat people fairly and seek to protect their mana and dignity in line with our inclusive school culture
- ensure those involved have the opportunity to be heard
- ensure decision-makers are unbiased and outcomes are not predetermined (e.g. ensure there are no conflicts of interest)
- take cultural considerations (e.g. tikanga and kawa) into account
- maintain privacy and confidentiality
- aim to prevent **victimisation**
- communicate with all people involved in a timely manner
- take steps to resolve the matter
- implement measures to prevent further concerns or complaints of the same nature
- keep good documentation
- may consult with NZSBA or seek legal advice at any time.

### Privacy

At Don Buck School, we expect all parties involved with a concern or complaint to respect **privacy and confidentiality**. This includes not publicly sharing information about the matter (e.g. on social media). See **Privacy Policy**.

We follow our privacy policies at all times when managing concerns and complaints. This includes:

- limiting access to information about concerns and complaints to those who need to know
- maintaining confidentiality
- informing all participants in advance if a school meeting (in person, online, or by phone) is to be recorded, and telling everyone how the recording will be used and how long it will be kept for
- ensuring all participants in a meeting are aware of who is present (i.e. on speaker phone or online).

## Record-keeping

Don Buck School keeps a register of concerns and complaints. This includes employment-related matters. Generally, only concerns and complaints that come to the attention of the principal or board are recorded. This includes documenting the concern or complaint, conversations, steps for resolution, dates of contact with anyone involved (including any external agencies), actions taken (including reasons), and any follow-ups needed.

Any recorded information is stored securely and confidentially and only staff who need to access the register as part of their role are permitted access. The register is monitored and updated by the principal or their delegate. The board reviews the register annually to analyse any patterns or identify measures that could be taken to ensure the school is a safe environment and is operating effectively.

We acknowledge that individuals may wish to access personal information held about themselves in relation to a concern or complaint. See [Personal Information](#).

Information is held securely for the appropriate length of time in accordance with our records retention policies. See [School Records Retention and Disposal](#).

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## Related policies

- [Inclusive School Culture](#)
- [Conflicts of Interest](#)
- [Student Wellbeing and Safety](#)
- [Staff Wellbeing and Safety](#)
- [Bullying and Harassment](#)
- [Recording Photos, Video, and Sound](#)

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## Legislation

- Education and Training Act 2020
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- Employment Relations Act 2000
- Privacy Act 2020

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## Resources

- Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga:
  - [Managing complaints](#) 
  - [Dealing with complaints](#)  (Educational Leaders)
- New Zealand School Boards Association | Te Whakarōputanga Kaitiaki Kura o Aotearoa:  
[Handling complaints effectively](#) 
- Ombudsman | Kaitiaki Mana Tangata: [Good complaints handling by school boards](#) 

### Hei mihi | Acknowledgement

SchoolDocs appreciates the professional advice of the Anderson Lloyd legal team (Dunedin) in reviewing our Concerns and Complaints policy and procedures.

**Release history:** [Term 1 2025](#), [Term 2 2024](#), [Term 1 2023](#), [Term 1 2022](#)

### IN THIS SECTION

[Raising Concerns and Complaints](#)

[Assessing and Responding to Concerns and Complaints](#)

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<b>Last review</b>	Term 3 2024
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<b>Topic type</b>	Core
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