

Whānau and learner video script, July 2018

The complaints process – information for learners and their whānau

Aotearoa New Zealand has one of the highest quality teaching professions in the world. Our teachers all commit to the Code of Professional Responsibility and the Standards for the Teaching Profession, which set out expectations for how our profession will behave and teach.

Sometimes though, things can go wrong. This can be hard for everyone involved including children, young people and their whānau directly impacted by a teacher's actions.

Most of the time, any concerns you have about a teacher's behaviour can be dealt with at your school or early childhood centre by talking with the principal, head teacher, centre manager or a member of the Board of Trustees. They should have a complaints process to help you do this.

If you're not happy with the outcome of their investigation, you can contact us at the Teaching Council. We want you as a learner, and your whānau, to know how our complaints process works, and what happens if you're involved in a teacher's disciplinary case. You can find more information about this on our website.

The main way we find out about concerns that have been raised about a teacher's behaviour is directly from the school or centre. Most of these issues can be easily resolved but in a few cases we have to investigate and sometimes take action to keep learners safe. Sometimes that means contacting the learners and whānau affected. You might have important information that can help with our investigation, or you might have been affected by the teacher's behaviour which causes you to be concerned about what will happen to them.

If we need evidence from you, an investigator will be in touch. Some people give us information in writing, some prefer to talk face to face, and some want a support person with them.

Even if we don't need information from you, we can offer you and your whānau support to understand how the Council's process works and your role in it.

After our investigation, our Complaints Assessment Committee will consider the case. The committee is made up mostly of qualified teachers. If they find the teacher has done something wrong, they may come to an agreement with the teacher and person who raised the complaint, about putting in place some conditions for the teacher to meet. If it's serious, they may refer the case to the Disciplinary Tribunal.

See our video on the tribunal or visit our website for more information. It's important to us that you're confident in understanding how this process works and your role in it. If you've submitted a complaint, we also have a liaison person available to help and you can find their contact information on our website.

