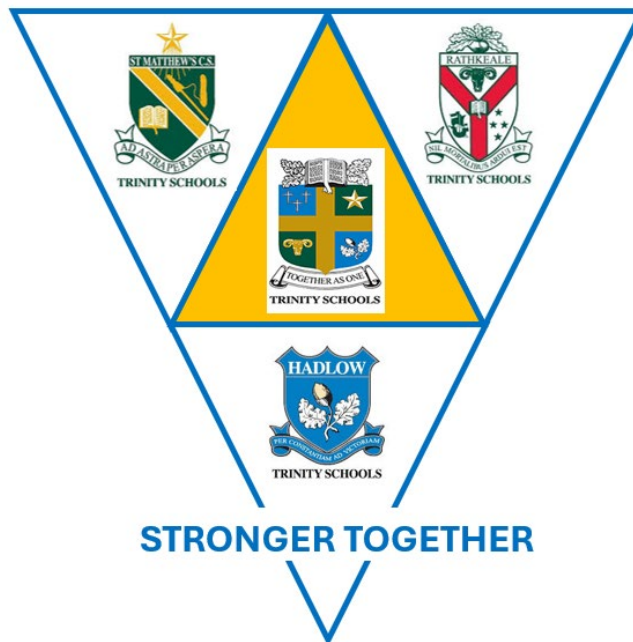




TRINITY SCHOOLS SPORTS DISPUTES AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE 2025

TRINITY SCHOOL SPORT





Contents

Overview	3
Purpose.....	4
Sports Role Definitions.....	5
Restorative Disputes and Complaints Procedure.....	8
Stage 1 – Early Resolution (Informal Complaint).....	9
Stage 2 – Formal Complaint – Restorative Meeting	9
Stage 3 - Formal Investigation and Decision:.....	11
Stage 4 – External Review	11
Concerns and Complaints Process Guide (needs update).....	13
Key Trinity Sports Contact People	14



Overview

This guide is designed to be informative and provide a transparent and up front overview of the code of conduct for sports across the Trinity Schools – using the “Balance is Better” philosophy. Visit: balanceisbetter.org.nz for more guidance.

Wherever possible an integrated approach to conduct is taken across our schools to promote confidence. However, a more bespoke approach may be taken by some of our schools depending on the specific goals and circumstances of a particular sporting code.

Longer term, in response to the vision, values, and principles of the TSSS, we envisage that we will continue to update this document in response to student aspirations and the wider expectations of our school community and stakeholders.

Guided by the recently endorsed TSSS, we also hope to increase the breadth and consistency of documentation to help provide: “Sport opportunities that build a connected school community and provide positive experiences....and a lifelong love of being active”.

The Trinity School’s Restorative Disputes and Complaints Procedure reflects Trinity Schools’ commitment to a respectful, inclusive, and enjoyable sporting environment for everyone involved.

This procedure is designed to align with the principles of restorative practice, and the New Zealand Curriculum’s values, fostering a safe, inclusive, and equitable sports environment.

Core Principles:

- **Manaakitanga:** Upholding the dignity and well-being of all individuals.
- **Whanaungatanga:** Building and maintaining strong relationships.
- **Kotahitanga:** Working together towards a common goal.
- **Rangatiratanga:** Empowering individuals to take ownership of their actions and solutions.
- **Restorative Practice:** Focusing on repairing harm and rebuilding relationships.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Ensuring fairness and access for all students and whānau.



Purpose

The purpose of the Trinity School Sports Disputes and Complaints Procedure is to provide clear guidelines for the school sporting community in raising and resolving concerns and complaints.

We have procedures in place that we follow to ensure that complaints are handled appropriately. Our procedures enable us to:

- maintain the best sporting environment for our students
- resolve matters of concern early, if possible
- respond to feedback and concerns constructively
- deal with complaints fairly, effectively, and promptly
- take into account individual circumstances
- maintain confidentiality
- preserve school/community relationships and communication
- monitor and record complaints and concerns about student safety.

Most complaints can be resolved informally by discussions with the people concerned. See Guidelines for Informal Complaints. The Trinity Schools also have a procedure for making a Formal Complaint if informal discussion doesn't resolve the issue. See Guidelines for Formal Complaints.

The Trinity schools' sports disputes and complaints procedure sits within and is consistent with School's wider concerns and complaints policies. One of the main aims of the sports disputes and complaints procedure is to resolve issues quickly and at a level of intervention consistent with the grievance, if resolution cannot be found, the relevant school Board of Trustees is responsible for making a final decision. This is only done after all stages of the complaints and disputes procedure have failed to reach a resolution.

The disputes and complaints procedure has been developed so that it sits within the school's concerns and complaints policies. These can be found on each school's School Docs websites:

- Hadlow: [Hadlow Preparatory School Policies and Procedures](#)
- St Matthew's: [St Matthew's Collegiate](#)
- Rathkeale: [Rathkeale College](#)



Principles

The Trinity Sports Disputes and Complaints Process is modelled on clear principles that can

- be easily understood and followed
- be clearly communicated to students and their parents, staff and coaches
- cover a range of grievances
- provide recourse if people are not satisfied with how their concern was dealt with

In developing these procedures, the Trinity Schools should apply the principles of fairness, consistency, objectivity, and promptness when responding to grievances

- **Accessibility** - The process should be user friendly, well communicated and easily found by stakeholders.
- **Responsiveness** - Complaints should be acted on as soon as possible and the complainant kept informed of progress.
- **Fairness** - Any complaint should be respected and assessed on its own merits with those reviewing the complaint having an open mind and unbiased approach to possible resolutions.
- **Alignment** - Processes should be aligned to wider school complaints processes, maintain confidentiality and act to preserve school/community relationships.

Accessibility

- The process is clear and unambiguous.
- The Final Trinity School Sport Complaints Process is communicated in a newsletter to parents, caregivers, coaches and students, is available on school websites (sports section), is included in the Trinity Schools Sports Handbook and referred to in associated documents.
- The procedures are easy to understand by using a visual flow chart, and step by-step instructions, outlining the Sport Complaints and Dispute procedure.
- The process can be understood and applied by all staff and coaches who may be approached by students with concerns
- The process includes clear direction on who to go to for support, and where they can be found – and identifies individuals within or outside of the school, who may be appropriate advocates for students who wish to talk to the school about a complaint.

Responsiveness

- All complaints and issues raised should be immediately acknowledged and an explanation of what will happen provided. This should be communicated in a positive manner that indicates that the complaint is respected.
- Identify the points at which parties will be updated on progress, and how they will be informed of these updates
- Provide all parties with a written summary of the outcome of the complaint



Fairness

- Those receiving complaints should respond warmly and positively to convey the genuine manner in which the complaint will be reviewed.
- The Sport Complaints Process must at all times maintain confidentiality.
- Any person that is involved as the subject of a complaint must be informed and provided the opportunity to respond but should not have any part in determining the outcome.
- Both the complainant and those subject to the complaint must be supported through the process.
- Principles of “natural justice” must be applied in reviewing every complaint on its own merits with an open mind, every person has a right to be heard and reviewers should be unbiased.
- Where possible, in particular for the final step in the process, a degree of independence should be included in the review process.

Alignment

- All complaints should be recorded and analysed to reveal any problems or trends and used to inform improved sport programmes.
- Where sufficient cause exists, the Sport Disputes Committee may refer any matter to the BOT of the school involved for its consideration eg. related to employment contracts, of sufficient seriousness to invoke wider sanction etc.
- The Sport Complaints and Disputes process must at all times act to preserve school/community relationships.
- A flow chart outlining the Sport Complaints and Dispute process is consistent and compatible with wider Trinity School Complaints Processes and wider school procedures.
- Gather feedback on the effectiveness and comprehension of the procedures and make changes as necessary as part of the school’s regular review process



Sports Role Definitions

Sport Team Coach (Coach)

A sports team coach helps athletes develop their skills and knowledge of a sport, and encourages them to reach their potential. They also manage the team, including organizing practices, selecting players, and motivating the team.

Sport Team Manager (Manager)

The sports team manager is primarily responsible for the day-to-day operations of a team, including managing schedules, travel arrangements, team budgets, communication and compliance. May be a parent or staff member.

Teacher in Charge of the Sport (TIC)

A teacher in charge of a sport team, or TIC, manages a school's sports program and/or a particular sports team and the people who participate in it. Must be a teacher or a Director of Sport. Can also be known as Head of Sports Code.

Director of Sports (DOS) & Sports Coordinator (Hadlow)

The Director of Sports manages the school's sports department, including sports programs, facilities, and staff. They also oversee budgets, safety, and logistics.

Senior Manager Responsible for Sport (SMR)

A Senior Manager Responsible for Sport (may be the Deputy Principal) who manages and provides professional direction for a faculty's sports program and headship for the Sports Director.

Chairperson of the Trinity Schools Sports Disputes Committee (SDC Chair)

The Chairperson is- responsible for guiding the Trinity Schools Sports Disputes Process and appoints the Sport Disputes Committee members on a case-by-case basis to review a particular formal complaint.

Trinity Schools Sports Disputes Committee (SDC)

An independent body that can help resolve sport related disputes in and across the Trinity Schools. The Sport Disputes Committee consists of a minimum of three people and a maximum of five, including a BOT member and the Sport Director of a school not involved in the complaint, a respected member of the local community and other people as deemed appropriate by the Chair.

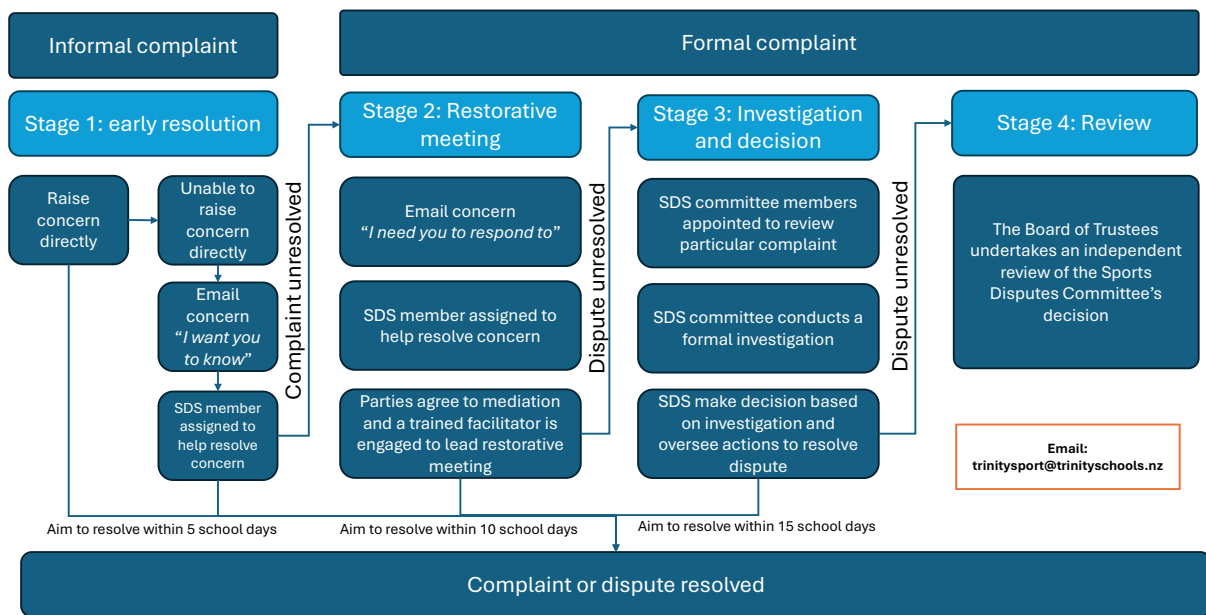


Disputes and Complaints Procedure

Our primary goal is to create the best sporting environment for the students across the Trinity Schools. We encourage open communication and prefer that people come to us to talk through a problem rather than discuss it in the community. Most complaints can be resolved informally by discussions with the people concerned but a formal complaints process is available where required. A staged approach is used so that minor issues can be resolved quickly and that the final option for considering matters is not overwhelmed or reached too quickly in the process.

Another aim of the disputes and complaints procedure is to help coaches and managers navigate informal complaints effectively, and to ensure that the informal complaints procedure supports a constructive resolution of minor issues that may occur through a sports season.

Chart one: Disputes and Complaints Procedure Guide



School leadership will be kept informed of complaints and disputes as is appropriate, although are not directly involved in the complaints and disputes procedure until Stage 4: Review



Stage 1 – Early Resolution (Informal Complaint)

Purpose: To encourage early, informal resolution through respectful dialogue.

Process

- If the matter is a general issue, or you have a concern, discuss it with the person concerned or the Teacher in Charge of the sport, the Manager, or the Coach in the first instance in a manner that is comfortable – either verbally or via e-mail.
 - It is generally not acceptable or encouraged to approach the coach or manager directly after a game when there is typically a lot going on and the coach / manager are often not able to discuss feedback in detail.
- If the matter is not quickly resolved, or you do not feel able to raise the concern directly with the person please e-mail: trinitysport@trinityschools.nz
- A member of the Trinity Schools Sports Disputes Committee will get in contact with you to resolve the matter. The SDS member will communicate may communicate with the person concerned. Typically, the concern will be allocated to a member of the SDS from the school that the concern is raised.
- Should the matter remain unresolved or should any of the above advise that it is of sufficient seriousness, then move to Stage 2.

Approach

To raise an informal complaint email: trinitysport@trinityschools.nz , please include the following in the subject line include:

I want you to know:

- Once there is a response to the e-mail, the person with the concern will typically be encouraged to engage in a direct, respectful conversation with the person(s) involved.
- If needed, a neutral facilitator can assist in facilitating a conversation.
- Emphasis is placed on active listening, understanding perspectives, and finding mutually agreeable solutions.
- Consider involving kaumātua or other respected community members.

Documentation of the conversation is encouraged, even in informal situations.

Timeframe: The goal should be to resolve the informal complaint within 5 school days.

Escalation: If resolution is not achieved, proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint – Restorative Meeting

Purpose: To address harm through a structured restorative process involving all affected parties.

Process

Complainant

- Put your formal complaint in an email. Give as many details as possible, including details of efforts that have been made to resolve the issue. Include names and contact phone numbers.



- To raise a formal complaint email: trinitysport@trinityschools.nz , please include the following in the subject line include: **I need you to respond to:**

Trinity Schools Sports Disputes Committee

- A member of the Trinity School Sports Disputes Committee will be assigned to the complaint and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint by email to the complainant. Give a copy of the complaint to the staff member concerned.

Typically, the complaint will be allocated as follows:

- Director of Sport if complaint is about a player, coach, manager or teacher in charge
- Senior Management Team member responsible if complaint is about the Director of Sports
- Chairperson of the Trinity Schools Sports Disputes Committee (if complaint is about the Senior Manager responsible for sport.)

The restorative process provides an impartial process that the Sports Disputes Committee will retain oversight of and assist the allocated member as needed.

Approach:

- Once a formal complaint is lodged and allocated to a member of the Sports Disputes Committee, the designated member assesses the complaint and determines if a restorative meeting is appropriate.
- If appropriate, a trained facilitator is agreed by both parties who organises and leads the restorative meeting.
- The restorative meeting involves:
 - Sharing stories of what happened and how it affected everyone.
 - Identifying the harm caused (impacts).
 - Developing a plan to repair the harm and rebuild relationships (enabling people to take ownership for their own impacts – acknowledge etc).
 - Agreeing on actions to be taken (individuals offer / participants evaluate and where needed negotiate appropriate commitments to make things right (empowerment + accountability)
 - Identify and plan for support needed to achieve commitments.
- No blame process / philosophy and all discussions confidential with outcomes shared only as agreed by all participants.
- All parties must be willing / consent to this process, or this approach is very unlikely to work constructively
- Whānau involvement is strongly encouraged.
- The school will provide support for parties



- If the complaint involves a breach of legal requirements, the principal will follow mandated reporting procedures.

Documentation: A written record of the restorative meeting, including the agreed plan.

Timeframe: The aim should be to hold a restorative meeting within 10 school days of receiving the formal complaint.

Escalation: If the restorative meeting does not result in a satisfactory resolution, or if restorative practice is inappropriate for the situation, proceed to Stage 3.

Stage 3 - Formal Investigation and Decision:

Purpose: To conduct a thorough investigation and make a fair and impartial decision.

Process:

- The Sport Disputes Committee members are appointed to review a particular complaint.
- The Sport Disputes Committee immediately acknowledge the complaint and inform all parties involved of next steps and timings in the process, determine and communicate to all parties the process by which the complaint will be reviewed.
- The Sports Disputes Committee conducts a formal investigation.
- The investigation includes:
 - Gathering evidence and information.
 - Interviewing relevant parties.
 - Reviewing relevant school policies and procedures.
- The Sports Disputes Committee makes a decision based on the investigation findings.
- The decision is communicated in writing to all affected parties, including reasons for the decision and any actions to be taken.
- The Sport Disputes Committee oversee and check on the implementation of agreed actions to resolve the dispute.

Approach:

- The Sport Disputes Committee will consist of a minimum of 3 people and maximum of 5, including a BOT member and the Director of Sports/Sports Administrator of a school not involved in the complaint, a respected member of the local community and other persons as deemed appropriate by the Chair.

Documentation: A detailed record of the investigation and decision is kept.

Timeframe: The goal is to investigate within 15 school days of determining restorative practice is inappropriate, or in the event that the restorative meeting did not resolve issues.

Escalation: If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, proceed to stage 4: External Review.

Stage 4 – Review



Purpose: To provide an independent review of the Sports Disputes Committee's decision.

Process:

- The complainant may escalate the complaint to the Board of Trustees.
- The school will provide information to the appropriate external body and its complaints process.
- The school will fully co-operate with any external review.

Note:

- When a formal complaint is received, the school may choose to investigate if it is deemed serious enough after considering the initial response from the person the complaint is about. Not all complaints require an investigation, but all written complaints should be disclosed to the staff concerned at the earliest opportunity, and followed up with the complainant.
- Relevant collective employment agreement provisions for dealing with complaints and discipline must be observed including allowing representation of staff at any meeting to discuss a written complaint. Where possible, for the final step in the process, a high degree of independence should be included in the review process.



Restorative Dispute and Complaints Guide

	Informal Complaint	Formal Complaint		
Stage	Stage 1 – Early Resolution	Stage 2 – Restorative Meeting	Stage 3 – Formal Investigation and Decision	Stage 4 – External Review
Purpose	To encourage early informal resolution through respectful dialogue.	To address harm through a structured restorative process.	To conduct a thorough investigation and make a fair and impartial decision.	To provide an independent review of the Sport Disputes Committee's decision.
Process	A direct, respectful conversation between the parties involved.	A formal complaint is lodged with a designated Disputes committee member who determines if a restorative meeting is appropriate.	The Sport Disputes Committee review a particular complaint and conduct a formal investigation.	The complainant may escalate the complaint to an external body.
Approach	Participants practice active listening, understanding perspectives and finding mutually agreeable solutions.	Participants, with a trained facilitator, share stories, identify impacts and develop plan to repair harm and build relationships. Agree on actions.	SDC gather information, interview parties, make a decision, and oversee implementation of agreed actions to	The school provides information on the appropriate external body and its complaints process.
Documentation	Encouraged.	Required.	A detailed record of the investigation and decision.	School maintains records of all interactions with external body.
Timeframe	Within 5 school days	Restorative meeting within ten days of receiving formal complaint.	Within 15 school days of determining restorative practice either inappropriate or unsuccessful.	
Escalation	If resolution is not achieved, proceed to Stage 2.	If the restorative meeting does not result in a satisfactory resolution or is inappropriate for the situation, proceed to Stage 3.	If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, proceed to Stage 4.	



Key Trinity Schools Sport Contact People

Role	Trinity Wide	Hadlow	St Matthew's	Rathkeale
Director of Sports (DOS)		Robbie Robertson	Rachel Shearing	Neil Perry
Senior Manager Responsible for Sport		Charles Kendall	Alison Glass	Willie Schaefer
Chair of Trinity Schools Sports Disputes Committee	Garry Carnachan			
Trinity Schools Sports Disputes Committee	Garry Carnachan (Chair)	Robbie Robertson Charles Kendall Peter Gardiner	Rachel Shearing Alison Glass Amy Williams	Neil Perry Willie Schaefer Victoria Read