

Subject: Conflict - V Turnbull
From:
Sent: 11/03/2015 8:53:47 pm
To: russell.wallace@ero.govt.nz

Dear Mr Wallace

I am writing as a BOT representative of Ruru Specialist School, Invercargill. I wish to bring to your attention that I have a 'conflict' in relation to the generic Trustee Response Sheet compiled by Deputy Principal Hera Fisher, that I was emailed recently.

On 2 December 2015 my husband and I withdrew our son from Ruru Specialist School as we felt he was at serious risk. We had one week earlier sent a formal complaint to the BOT in relation to on going concerns not being addressed by school. These concerns related to:

Poor communication
Emotional harm
Treatment

We also highlighted a recent serious incident, that typified all of our concerns.

On 25 November 2014 we also wrote to the BOT detailing serious allegations involving student abuse, passed onto us as parents, by someone in our community. We had verbally advised the Deputy Principal in Principal's absence, of exact details on the 12 November 2014, and received confirmation "Principal was going to deal with it".

I was extremely concerned when the Principal raised the 3rd party allegations at a BOT meeting on 24 November, misrepresenting the allegations, giving incorrect information, prompting me to formalise the allegation information in writing to the BOT.

To my knowledge this letter relating to the allegations has not been viewed by other representatives and was dealt with solely by the BOT Chairperson. The letters have been omitted from Board Correspondence.

On 3 December 2014 my husband and I met with BOT Chairperson, Principal, and Deputy Principal and it was at the conclusion of that meeting we witnessed a seclusion room at Ruru Specialist School, which I had no previous knowledge of as a parent or BOT. We were unhappy with the responses we got at that meeting and made formal complaint to MOE.

The MOE have recently conducted an investigation into:

The BOT handling of complaint and correspondence from parents
Ruru Schools use of a withdrawal space, specific to son, and it's lawfulness
Policies and Procedures for the use of the space in the school

We are currently in consultation with our lawyer and will be taking this matter further.

I believe information is often withheld, and presented to the BOT in a misleading way by Principal and Board Chairperson. The BOT never have robust discussions around decision making, and in

fact, as a group rarely make decisions.

The conflict I have as a parent now hinders my role on the BOT. I have not received any support from other members, as I understand that up until our most recent meeting on 23 February 2015, they have had no knowledge of details in relation to: complaint, 3rd party allegations, existence of a seclusion room, investigation.

I am available for discussion, but have lost all trust in School Management and Governance. I will not be attending the meeting tomorrow, because of my 'conflict'. My son remains withdrawn from school.

Yours faithfully
Victoria Turnbull