

Parental Complaints Procedures

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to facilitate the resolution of difficulties where they may arise in an agreed and fair manner. The agreement lays out in five stages the process to be followed in progressing a complaint and the specific timescale to be followed at each stage.

Rationale

This policy is necessary so that

- compliance with Section 28, Education Act 1998 is ensured.
- parents, guardians and teaching staff are clear as to the procedures regarding complaints directed towards teaching staff or school activities.

Relationship to School Ethos

The school promotes positive home – school contacts and endeavours to enhance the self-esteem of everyone within the school community. The policy contributes towards those ideals.

Aims/Objectives

- To create harmony between teaching staff and parents/guardians and to regulate school atmosphere to its highest potential.

In-School Procedures

Stage 1

1. A parent/guardian who wishes to make a complaint should approach the class teacher, by prior appointment with a view to resolving the complaint during school hours.
2. Where the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher s/he should then approach the principal, by prior appointment.
3. If the complaint is still unresolved the parent/guardian should raise the matter with the chairperson of the Board of Management

Stage 2

1. If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent/guardian wishes to pursue the matter further s/he should lodge the complaint, *in writing* with the chairperson of the BOM
2. The chairperson should bring the precise nature of the written complaint to the notice of the teacher and seek to resolve the matter between the parties within five days of receipt of the written complaint.

Stage 3

If the complaint is not resolved informally, the chairperson should,

- a) supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint;
- b) Arrange a meeting with the teacher and, where applicable, the principal teacher within 10 days of receipt of the written complaint.

Stage 4

1. If the complaint is still not resolved the chairperson should make a formal report to the board within 10 days of the meeting referred to in stage 3.
2. If the board considers that the complaint is not substantiated the teacher and the complainant should be so informed in writing within 3 days of the board meeting.
3. If the board considers that the complaint is substantiated or that it warrants further investigation it proceeds as follows:
 - a) Inform the teacher of proceedings
 - b) Supply the teacher with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint;
 - c) the teacher should be requested to supply a written statement to the board in response to the complaint;
 - d) the teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of case to the board.
 - e) the board may arrange a meeting with the complainant if it considers such to be required.
 - f) Both parties to the complaint would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend/colleague (non-legal) or Trade Union representative at any such meeting.
 - g) the meeting of the board of management referred to above will take place within 10 days of the meeting referred to in stage 3.

Stage 5

1. When the board has completed its investigation, the chairperson should convey the decision of the board in writing to the teacher and the complainant within 5 days of the meeting of the board.
2. The decision of the board shall be final.

In addition;

1. The Complaints Procedure shall be reviewed after three years.
2. In this agreement 'days' means school days.

Success Criteria

- Swift and efficient resolution of grievances.
- Parent/Teacher satisfaction.
- Positive school community feedback.
- Reviews of school policies as issues arise.

Ratification:

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on; _____

Signature of Chairperson: _____