



Scoil Mhuire na nGrást, Belgooly, Co. Cork.

Parental Complaints Procedure

CPSMA/INTO Agreed Complaints Procedure as adopted by the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire na nGrást on April 4th, 2017

This procedure is subject to periodic review. The Board of Management will check with the CPSMA office and/or www.cpsma.ie for updates and advice as to how to proceed to deal with such complaints.

The purpose of the complaint's procedure 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.

The Complaints Procedure outlined in the 'Management Board Members' Handbook' which has been agreed between the INTO and the CPSMA will be followed in relation to complaints about teachers made by parents (please refer to Appendix 1).

In addition, it is important to note the following:

- It is expected that under normal circumstances, a parent who has a complaint about a teacher would approach the teacher at a mutually suitable time after an appointment has been made, with a view to resolving the difficulty. All parents/visitors must first report to the office
- Parents will be expected to make an appointment to see the class teacher if the matter needs more than a few minutes to resolve, in view of the fact that classes must have adequate supervision at all times and that corridors are unsuitable venues for discussion purposes

Appendix 1

The INTO and Primary School Management reached agreement in 1993 on a procedure for dealing with complaints by parents against teachers. The purpose of this procedure 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. Please note this is a non-statutory procedure.

Only those complaints about teachers which are written and signed by parents/guardians of pupils may be investigated formally by the Board of Management, except where those complaints are deemed by the Board to be:

- I. On matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education;
- II. Frivolous or vexatious complaints and complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in the school;
- III. Complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure.

Unwritten complaints not in the above categories may be processed informally as set out in Stage 1 of this procedure.

Stage 1

- 1.1** A parent/guardian who wishes to make a complaint should, unless there are local arrangements to the contrary, approach the class teacher with a view to resolving the complaint.
- 1.2** Where the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher she/he should approach the Principal with a view to resolving it.
- 1.3** If the complaint is still unresolved the parent/guardian should raise the matter with the Chairperson of the Board of Management with a view to resolving it.

Stage 2

- 2.1** If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent/guardian wishes to pursue the matter further she/he should lodge the complaint in writing with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.
- 2.2** 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 5 days of receipt of the written complaint.

Stage 3

3.1 If the complaint is not resolved informally, the Chairperson should, subject to the general authorisation of the Board and except in those cases where the Chairperson deems the particular authorisation of the Board to be required:

- (a) supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint; *and*
- (b) arrange a meeting with the teacher and, where applicable, the Principal Teacher with a view to resolving the complaint. Such a meeting should take place within 10 days of receipt of the written complaint.

Stage 4

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 3.1(b).

4.2 If the Board considers that the complaint is not substantiated the teacher and the complainant should be so informed within three days of the Board meeting.

4.3 If the Board considers that the complaint is substantiated or that it warrants further investigation it proceeds as follows:

- (a) the teacher should be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage;
- (b) the teacher should be supplied 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. The teacher would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting;
- (e) the board may arrange a meeting with the complainant if it considers such to be required. The complainant would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting; and
- (f) the meeting of the Board of Management referred to in (d) and (e) will take place within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.1(b).

Stage 5

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 five days of the meeting of the Board.

5.2 The decision of the Board shall be final.

5.3 This Complaints Procedure shall be reviewed after three years.

5.4 CPSMA or INTO may withdraw from this agreement having given the other party three months' notice of intention to do so.

In this agreement 'days' means schools days.

Date of next policy review: April 2020

Ratified by the Board of Management on 04 April 2017

How to Raise an Issue

