

# Parental Complaints Policy

## Introduction

This policy was drafted by B.O.M. based on recommended guidelines from CPSMA Guidelines 2007 pg 318 and effective from October 2008. The procedures that follow were already in place in the school since 2003 but may not have been made accessible to all parents thereafter. It is proposed to reissue this policy in writing as follows to all parents and thereafter issue it to all parents of new pupils upon enrollment.

## Rationale

**The need for this policy arises from:-**

Section 28, Education Act 1998 - procedures for processing complaints by parents prescribed for all schools under the Act. Revised procedures for processing complaints by parents will be prescribed for schools under Section 28 of the Education Act 1998 and will be sent to all schools when available. The following procedures are the only agreed procedures between CPSMA and Parents Groups and should be used by schools until the new procedures have been prescribed.

## 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 foster fruitful and trusting relationships between school and parents.

- To afford parents an opportunity to express opinions/grievances through the framework of a defined procedure.
- To minimize the opportunity for conflict.
- Affording parents an opportunity to liaise directly with the class teacher to resolve problems informally and quickly.

### Please Note

This policy does not cover:-

1. Complaints that are being dealt with through legal channels.
2. Matters of professional competence which comes under the remit of the Dept. of Education and Science and the Inspectorate.
3. Petty complaints which do not relate to the work of a particular teacher.

### In-School Procedures

If a parent has a concern in relation to the social or academic progress of their child, or the performance of a teacher the following steps are to be followed:-

1. The parent/guardian meets with the class teacher by appointment. Parents should not contact teachers at home. If the issue is not resolved the parents and class teacher inform the Principal of the nature of the complaint. If the matter remains unresolved the parent/guardian may raise the matter with the chairman of the B.O.M.
2. If the grievance persists, the parent/guardian may pursue the matter by lodging a complaint in writing with the chairperson of the B.O.M. who will bring the nature of the complaint to the notice of the

teacher and seek to resolve the issue within 5 school days of receipt of the written complaint. Only those complaints about teachers which are written and signed by parents/guardians of pupils may be investigated formally by the Board except in the cases as listed above which this policy does not cover.

3. If this process fails, the chairperson will supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint and arrange a meeting with the teacher concerned and the Principal. This meeting will happen within 10 school days of receipt of the written complaint.
4. If the complaint remains unresolved the chairperson will report formally to the B.O.M. within 10 school days of the meeting. If the B.O.M. does not uphold the complaint, both parties will be informed immediately. If the B.O.M. considers the complaint warrants further investigations, the teacher will be informed and supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint.
5. The teacher will be requested to supply a written statement to the B.O.M. and given an opportunity to make an oral presentation to the Board. The parents will be offered a similar opportunity. Both teacher and parents are entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at such a meeting. The process should be completed within 10 days of the first meeting between Chairperson, Principal and Teacher.
6. Within 5 school days, the decision of the B.O.M. which is final and binding is delivered in writing to the Teacher and the complainant.

### **Success Criteria**

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

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed after a 3 year cycle.

### **Implementation**

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management and approved at a meeting on 8/10/2008 will be effective from October 2008 and will be due for review in 2011 or earlier if new procedures are agreed as noted under the Education Act 1998.