Kinsalebeg National School

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Revised Parental Complaints Procedure

This policy was reviewed in April 2024 and ratified by the Board of Management on 12^{th} June 2024

Geraldine Veale, Chairperson.

For and behalf of Board of Management

Date- 12 6 2024

Karen Walsh, Principal.

For and behalf of Board of Management

Date-12 6 24

Revised Parental Complaints Procedure

















Note:

- A copy of this procedure will be available for parents/legal guardians on the school website and/or on request from the school.
 This procedure comes into effect on the 1st of January 2024.
- · Under the Education Act 1998, legally, all schools are managed by the school's Board of Management, on behalf of the school patron.

Purpose/Objective

The parental complaints procedure was revised and agreed by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation and the management bodies of primary schools, the Catholic Primary Schools Management Association, the Church of Ireland, An Foras Pátrúnachta, the Muslim Primary Education Board, Educate Together and the National Association of Boards of Management in Special Education in 2023. It is designed to provide an open and clearly defined process to facilitate parents/legal guardians in raising concerns about their own child/children in an agreed, fair and transparent manner.

It is recognised that parents/legal guardians are the primary educators in a child's life and as such from time-to-time concerns may arise which they may need to engage with the school. It is expected that engagement will be timely, courteous and resolution focused to ensure that the important relationship between the parent and school can be preserved and respected. It is expected that all parties concerned will engage proactively.

Procedural Points

The procedure is a staged procedure where every effort is made to resolve matters at the earliest possible stage. In most cases, concerns will be dealt with either informally or formally at the earlier stages of the procedure. Where it has not been possible to agree a resolution at the earlier stages, the procedure does allow for the escalation of the matter to the Board of Management. This procedure sets out, in four stages, the process to be followed in progressing a complaint and the specific timescale to be followed. It is expected the parties will follow each stage in sequence.

- Where the term written correspondence is used, this refers specifically to a letter or email correspondence from a parent/legal guardian(s).
- Only complaints about a teacher which are written and signed by a parent/legal guardian, and which relate to their own child, will be investigated.
- Where a complaint raised by a parent/legal guardian is deemed by the employer/board of management to relate to the following, this procedure will not apply;
 - matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education;
 - frivolous or vexatious complaints and complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in a school; or
 - complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure.
- In all circumstances, any form of written correspondence for the attention of the Board of Management must be supplied to the Chairperson of the board of management <u>only</u>. Any deviation from

- this could be deemed prejudicial and as acting outside the scope of this agreement.
- Days in this procedure refer specifically to school days. A school day is a day on which the school is in operation. Holiday periods, school closures and leaves of absences are not counted as school days for the purpose of this procedure.
- Group/collective complaints are not provided for and each parent/legal guardian raising a concern will be dealt with separately through this process.
- The procedure is a domestic forum and accordingly, neither management nor the INTO intends that there would be legal representation at any stage.
- Issues should be raised in a timely manner. It is in the
 best interests of the child that issues are raised to
 achieve early resolution at the earliest possible stage
 with the teacher, ideally while the pupil is in that
 teacher's class.

Revised Parental Complaints Procedure | 1



Formal Stage 1 Discussion

Formal Stage 2 Written (10 days)

Formal Stage 3 **Board of Management**

Formal Stage 4 Decision

(5 days)

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1.1 Parent/guardian meets teacher

2.1 Written complaint sent to Chairperson If the complaint has not been

legal guardian who wishes

to pursue the matter further

should submit the complaint

in writing to the Chairperson

of the Board of Management.

This commences stage 2.

resolved at stage 1, the parent/

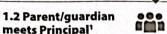
following stage 2 and the parent/ legal guardian wishes to pursue the matter, they should inform the Chairperson in writing of this fact. The Chairperson should make a formal report to the Board of Management within 10 days of receipt of this the Board can decide to proceed

A parent/legal guardian who wishes to make a complaint in respect of their own child, should, seek an appointment with the teacher concerned with a view to resolving the complaint, Further meetings with the teacher can be convened as appropriate.

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2.2 Chairperson provides a

The Chairperson should provide a copy of the written complaint to the teacher against whom the complaint has been made, without delay.



Where the parent/legal guardian

1.3 Parent/guardian

Where the complaint remains

unresolved, the parent/legal guardian

Management with a view to resolving

the complaint. Further meetings can

should seek an appointment with

the Chairperson of the Board of

be convened by the Chairperson

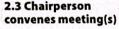
meets Chairperson

is unable to resolve the complaint

with the teacher, they should seek an appointment with the Principal with a view to resolving the complaint. Further meetings can be convened 2.3 Chairperson by the Principal as appropriate.

copy to the teacher

Where the Board considers the



a) The complaint is frivolous/vexatious:

resolve the complaint between the teacher and the parent/ legal quardian within 10 school days of the commencement of stage 2.1. This may require one or more meetings to be convened by the Chairperson with the teacher/ parent/legal guardian and other school personnel as deemed appropriate by the Chairperson.

convenes meeting(s) The Chairperson should seek to

Complaint resolved

as appropriate.

The complaint may be resolved during this stage.

Complaint resolved

The complaint may be resolved at this stage.

3.1 Chairperson makes a formal report to the Board

If the complaint remains unresolved written statement. At this meeting, to either stage 3.2 or 3.3.

3.2 Complaint concluded

complaint, the process may be concluded at this stage, if the board considers that:

- b) The complaint has already been investigated by the board;
- c) The complaint is more appropriately dealt with through a more relevant DE circular,
- d) where recourse to law has been initiated.

Where the Board determines the complaint is concluded at this stage, the parent/legal guardian should be so informed within five days of the Board meeting.

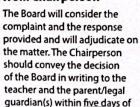
3.3 Proceed to a hearing

(20 days)

Where the Board decides to proceed to a hearing, it should proceed as follows:

- a) the teacher should be informed that the complaint is proceeding to a full hearing and the Chairperson must ensure the teacher has been supplied with all documents which are being considered by the Board.
- b) the Board should arrange a meeting with the parent/legal quardian if it considers such to be required. The parent/ legal quardian is entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting.
- the teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of their case to the Board. The teacher is entitled to be represented by a friend or a union representative, who may be accompanied for the purpose of assistance and note taking.
- d) the teacher should be requested to supply a written statement to the board as the employer in response to the complaint. This written statement will be confidential to the employer and will not be shared with any third party.
- e) the meeting of the Board of Management referred to in 3(b), (c) and (d) will take place within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.1. in so far as possible.

4.1 Written decision from Chairperson



4.2 Complaint concluded

the meeting held at stage 3.3.

The decision of the Board shall be final.

'Where a complaint is received about a principal the above process commences at Stage 1.2.