

Parental Complaints Policy

St.Molua's NS 14075K

Introductory Statement and Rationale

Introductory Statement

This Parental Complaints Policy was formulated in collaboration with parents, teachers, and members of the Board of Management of St. Molua's N.S. Ardagh.

Rationale

The need for this policy arises from procedures for processing complaints by Parents as prescribed under Section 28 of the Education Act 1998.

This policy does not cover:

- Matters of professional competence which come under the remit of the Department of Education and Science
- Complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure
- Frivolous or vexatious complaints and complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in the school

Only those complaints about teachers which are written and signed by parents/guardians of pupils may be investigated formally by the Board of Management.

Unwritten complaints may be processed informally as set out in Stage 1 of the in-school procedures.

Relationship to School Ethos

St. Molua's NS promotes positive home-school links and endeavours to enhance the self-esteem of everyone within the school. We see this policy as contributing towards those ideals.

Aims

- To foster fruitful and trusting relationships between school and parents/guardians
- To afford parents/guardians an opportunity to express opinions/grievances through the framework of a defined procedure
- To minimise the opportunity for conflict

- To afford parents/guardians an opportunity to liaise with the class teacher

In-School Procedures

If a parent/guardian has a concern in relation to the social or academic progress of their child, or the performance of a teacher the followings stages are to be followed:

Stage 1

1. A parent/guardian who wishes to make a complaint will make an appointment with the class teacher with a view to resolving the complaint.
- 1.2 Parents/Guardians should not contact teachers at home.
- 1.3 If the complaint is not resolved the class teacher informs the Principal of the nature of the complaint.
- 1.4 Where the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher she/he should approach the Principal Teacher with a view to resolving it.
- 1.5 If the complaint is still unresolved the parent/guardian will 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 will lodge the complaint in writing with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.
- 2.2 The Chairperson will 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

- 3.1 If the complaint is not resolved informally, the Chairperson will, 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 will take place within ten days of receipt of the written complaint.

Stage 4

1. If the complaint remains unresolved the Chairperson will make a formal report to the Board within ten days of the meeting referred to in Stage 3 (b)
2. If the Board considers that the complaint is not substantiated the teacher and the complainant will be so informed within three 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) The teacher will be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage
 - b) The teacher will be supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complainant
 - c) The teacher will be requested to supply a written statement to the Board in response to the complaint
 - d) The teacher will be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of the case to the Board. The teacher will 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 will be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting
 - f) The meeting of the Board of Management referred to in (d) and (e) will take place within ten days of the meeting referred to in 3.1 (b).

Stage 5

1. When the Board has completed its investigation, the Chairperson will convey the decision of the Board in writing to the teacher and the complainant within five days of the meeting of the Board.
2. The decision of the Board will be final.

Success Criteria

- Swift and efficient resolution of grievances

- Parent/Teacher satisfaction
- Positive school community feedback
- Reviews of school policies as issues arise

Implementation

The procedures outlined in this policy will be implemented from January 2016.

Review

These procedures will be evaluated at the end of the first year of implementation and reviewed regularly thereafter.

Any amendments necessary as a result of such reviews will be undertaken.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was approved by the Board of Management of St. Molua's NS Ardagh on the _____.

Communication

This policy was communicated to staff and parents/guardians in January 2016.

Parents/guardians are welcome to inspect this plan a copy of which is available in the Principal's Office.