**Parental Complaints Policy**

**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.

**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 through affording parents an opportunity to liaise with the class teacher.

**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 Department of Education and Science.
3. Petty complaints which do not relate to the work of a particular teacher.

**In-School Procedures.**

**Stage 1:**

1. A parent / guardian who wishes to make a complaint should approach the class teacher with a view to resolving the complaint. Every effort should be made to resolve the complaint at this stage.
2. Where the parent / guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher he / she should approach the Principal with a view to resolving it.
3. If the complaint is still unresolved the parent / guardian should raise the matter with the Chairman of the Board of Management with a view to resolving it.

**Stage 2:**

1. If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent / guardian wishes to pursue the matter further he / she should lodge the complaint, in writing, with the Chairman of the Board of Management.
2. The Chairman 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 5 school days of the receipt of the written complaint.

**Stage 3:**

1. If the complaint is unresolved informally, the Chairman will, subject

to the general authorization of the Board of Management and except in those cases where the Chairman deems the particular authorization of the Board to be required :

* + supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint
  + arrange a meeting with the teacher and, where applicable, the Principal with a view to resolving the complaint\*. Such a meeting should take place within 10 school days of receipt of the written complaint.

**Stage 4:**

* If the complaint is still unresolved the Chairman will make a formal report to the Board of Management within 10 school days of the meeting referred to in \* Stage 3.
* If the Board of Management considers that the complaint is not substantiated the teacher and the complainant should be so informed within 3 school days of the Board meeting.
* If the Board of Management considers that the complaint is substantiated or that it warrants further investigation it will proceed as follows:
  + The teacher will be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage.
  + The teacher will be supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint.
  + The teacher will be requested to supply a written statement to the Board of Management in response to the complaint.
  + The teacher will be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of his / her case to the Board of Management. The teacher will be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting.
  + The Board of Management 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.
  + The meeting of the Board of Management referred to in points (d) and (e) will take place within 10 school days of the meeting referred to in Stage 3.

**Stage 5:**

* When the Board of Management has completed its investigation, the Chairman should convey the decision of the Board, in writing, to the teacher and the complainant within 5 school days of the meeting of the Board.
* The decision of the Board of Management shall be final.

The timeframes outlined above may change given the circumstances and on a case by case basis. The school and Board of Management will, however, endeavour to draw conclusion on all complaints for all parties concerned.

**Implementation:**

This policy is effective from

**Ratification:**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on

**Review Timetable:**

This policy will be reviewed in the school year 2019 - 2020 and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.

Signed by Chairperson of Board of Management

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**John Hogan.**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**