

## **Glounaguillagh National School - Parental Complaints Procedure**

### **Introduction:**

In Glounaguillagh National School we value and encourage the important role played by Parents/Guardians in their child's education. From time to time, a parent may have a concern relating to their child at school.

### **Rationale:**

This policy has been formulated to meet its obligations under the Education Act 1998 to provide procedures to address concerns that may be raised by parents.

The purpose of this policy is to facilitate the resolution of difficulties where they may arise in an agreed and fair manner. The agreement lays out the stages of the process to be followed in progressing a complaint and the specific timescale to be followed at each stage.

### **Relationship to School Ethos:**

In Glounaguillagh NS, we aim to treat every child fairly and with respect. We also strive to promote positive home – school relationships 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 concerns they may have.
- To assist the early resolution of Parent/Guardian concerns that may arise.
- To minimise the opportunity for conflict.

**Summary of Complaints Procedure:**

We request Parents/Guardians to adhere to the following procedure should they have a concern:

1. A Parent/Guardian who has a concern about their child should firstly approach the Class Teacher to discuss the issue. Your child's Class Teacher is best placed to solve the problem for your child.
2. If the Parent/Guardian is not able to resolve the concern with the Class Teacher, s/he should contact the Principal to discuss the matter further.
3. Where the concern is still unresolved the Parent/Guardian may contact the Chairperson of the Board of Management to try and resolve the matter.
4. If the concern is still unresolved at this point, the Parent/Guardian may lodge the concern in writing with the Chairperson of the Board of Management. The Chairperson follows a set out procedure, which is detailed below, to investigate the concern and following this will inform the decision of the Board of Management in writing to the Teacher and the complainant within 5 days of the meeting of the Board.
5. The decision of the Board shall be final.

**CPSMA/INTO Parental Complaints Procedure:**

The Catholic Primary School Management Association (CPSMA) and the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) reached agreement on the following procedure for dealing with complaints by Parents/Guardians. 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.

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:

- matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education and Science;
- 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.

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

### **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:

#### **Stage 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.
2. Where the Parent/Guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the Class Teacher s/he 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 Chairperson 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 s/he should lodge the complaint in writing with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.
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**

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.
- b) 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 days of receipt of the written complaint.

#### **Stage 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(b).
2. If the Board considers that the complaint is not substantiated the Teacher and the complainant should be so informed within 3 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 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.
  - 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(b).

#### **Stage 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 5 days of the meeting of the Board.
2. The decision of the Board shall be final.

In this agreement 'days' mean school days.

**Implementation:**

The Parental Complaints Procedure is an agreed procedure and must be adhered to by the Parents/Guardians of pupils in Glounaguillagh NS.

**Ratification:**

19<sup>th</sup> February 2019

**Communication:**

This policy will be available in hard copy upon request and will also be posted on the school's website.

**Review:**

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Review Due: February 2021