

Parental Complaints Policy

Introduction

From time to time a problem may arise with a child in the school, the Board of Management recommends that parents/guardians speak to the class teacher or principal as soon as the concern arises. Most problems are resolved effectively through an informal discussion with the class teacher and/or the Principal. If the problem cannot be resolved informally the complaints procedure outlined in this policy will be followed.

Aim

- To foster trusting relationships between school and parents.
- To afford parents an opportunity to express grievances/make complaints through the framework of a defined procedure.
- To minimise the likelihood of conflict.

Scope of Policy

This policy does not cover:-

- Complaints that are being dealt with through legal channels.
- Matters of professional competence which comes under the remit of the Department of Education & Skills.
- Complaints which do not relate to the work of a staff member.

Relationship to School Ethos

Stewarts School works with parents as partners in the education of their children.

We promote positive home school contacts and endeavor to respect the views of everyone within the school community.

Complaints Procedure

Stage 1

A parent/guardian who wishes to make a complaint should approach the class teacher with a view to resolving the complaint.

Where a parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher s/he should approach the principal with a view to resolving it.

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

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. The Chairperson should bring the precise nature of the written complaint to the notice of the staff members involved and seek to resolve the matter between the parties within five days of receipt of the written complaint.

Stage 3

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 be required:-

- (a) supply the staff members involved with a copy of the written complaint and

(b) arrange a meeting with the staff members involved 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

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 Stage 3(b).

If the board considers that the complaint is not substantiated, the staff members involved and the complainant should be so informed within three days of the board meeting.

If the board considers that the complaint is substantiated or that it warrants further investigation, it proceeds as follows:

- a) The staff members involved should be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage;
- b) The staff members involved should be supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint;
- c) The staff members involved should be requested to supply a written statement to the board in response to the complaint;
- d) The staff members involved should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of case to the board. The staff members involved 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; and
- 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 Stage 3(b).

Stage 5

When the board has completed its investigation, the Chairperson should convey the decision of the board in writing to the staff members involved and the complainant within five days of the meeting of the board. The decision of the board shall be final.

In this agreement 'days' means school days.

Roles and Responsibilities

The principal is responsible for ensuring systems are in place for the parental complaints policy to be enacted.

Class teachers/staff members are responsible for ensuring that they abide by the complaints policy.

Chairman of Board is responsible for ensuring that the complaints policy is enacted.

Parents/guardians are responsible for abiding by the complaints policy

Implementation Dates

This policy will be implemented following notification by the Board of Management.

Reviewing the Policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the school Board of Management on October 1st 2014.