

Complaints Procedure

The Board of Management of St Anne's NS has adopted the Complaints Procedure agreed by the INTO and CPSMA which provides a mechanism for dealing fairly with a parent complaint against a teacher.

Introduction

The INTO and Primary School Management reached agreement in 1993 on a procedure for dealing with complaints by parents against teachers. The purpose of this procedure is to facilitate the resolution of difficulties where they may arise in an agreed and fair manner. 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. Please note this is a non-statutory procedure.

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:

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

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 five 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; and
 - b) arrange a meeting with the teacher and, where applicable, the principal teacher 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 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 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;
- c) 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;
- d) 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
- e) 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 five days of the meeting of the board.
2. The decision of the board shall be final.
3. The Complaints Procedure shall be reviewed after three years.
4. Primary School Management or INTO may withdraw from this agreement having given the other party three months' notice of intention to do so.

In this agreement 'days' means school days.

Please note:

The Teaching Council is the professional standards body for teaching that promotes and regulates the teaching profession. It acts in the interests of the public good while upholding and enhancing the reputation of the teaching profession. One of the functions of the Teaching Council is to investigate complaints and, where necessary, hold inquiries about registered teachers.

The Minister for Education and Skills formally commenced Part 5 of the Teaching Council Acts, 2001-2015 on 25 July 2016 which allows the Council to receive complaints about registered teachers and to conduct investigations and hold inquiries, where deemed appropriate.

Any person including members of the public, employers and other teachers may make a complaint about a registered teacher. In addition, the Teaching Council can itself make a complaint about a registered teacher. For further information visit www.teachingcouncil.ie

This policy was reviewed and ratified in the 2016/2017 school year.

Signed: _____

Chairperson, BoM

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Príomhoide

Date: _____