



Parental Communications/Complaints Policy

Introduction

This policy was first drafted in September 2006 and revised in September 2009 and 2014. This policy was drafted by staff/B.O.M. and reviewed by Parents Association.

Rationale

The need for this policy arises from:-

- Section 28, Education Act 1998 – procedures for processing complaints by parents prescribed for all schools under this Act.
- The need to provide channels for parents to communicate in a positive, constructive manner regarding the welfare of their children.
- The need to provide teachers and school staff with a meaningful forum in which to respond to parental communications/concerns.

Relationship to School Ethos

Our school motto is “Ní Neart go cur le Chéile” and the school promotes positive home – school contacts. We endeavour to enhance the self esteem of everyone within the school community. The policy contributes towards those ideals.

CAIRDEAS is the structure through which parents in the school can work together for the best possible education for their children. The parent association works with the Principal, Staff and the Board of Management to build effective partnership between the home and school. Partnership between the home and school is important because with positive and active partnership the child gets the best that primary education can offer. Educational research on the involvement of parents in schools shows that children achieve higher levels when parents and teachers work together.

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 conflict.
- To afford parents an opportunity to liaise with the class teacher.

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 Dept. of Education and Science.

Reporting to Parents

Parents are given an opportunity to meet with their children at a formal Parent/ Teacher Meeting in the month of November each year. Approximately 10 minutes are allocated for each child. If parents have particular concerns in relation to their child's progress or welfare, they are invited to make a further appointment to discuss the issues. In addition, parents receive a written report on their child's progress in June of each year.

Scoil Mhaoilíosa welcomes parental involvement and interest.

The following channels of communication are open to parents:

- Letter
- Email: knockavillaschool@gmail.com
- Phone: 021 4775662 (prior notification if issues to be discussed over phone)
- In person by prior appointment

Procedures to be followed

If a parent has a concern in relation to the **social, behavioural or academic progress** of their child, or the performance or actions of a teacher the following steps are to be followed:-

1. The parent/guardian contacts the school by letter, email or phone to arrange a meeting with the relevant teacher. This communication **must state the nature of the concern or query**. A meeting will be arranged as soon as possible following receipt of this request.
2. **Parents/Guardians should not contact teachers at home or arrive unannounced or without prior notification to the school to discuss any item other than to deliver brief messages of an urgent nature to the teacher or school. This is to ensure that all parties have ample opportunity to give issues due consideration and to afford staff time to make themselves aware of all the facts relating to an incident.**
3. If the issue is not resolved the class teacher or the parent will inform the Principal of the nature of the complaint.
4. If the matter still remains unresolved the parent/guardian may raise the matter with the chairperson of the B.O.M.
5. If the grievance persists, the parent/guardian may pursue the matter by lodging a complaint in **writing** with the chairperson of the B.O.M. who will bring the nature of the complaint to the notice of the teacher and seek to resolve the issue.
6. If this process fails, the chairperson will supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint and arrange a meeting with the teacher concerned and the Principal. This will happen within 10 school days of receipt of the written complaint.
7. If the complaint remains unresolved the chairperson will report formally to the B.O.M. within another 10 school days. If the B.O.M. does not uphold the complaint, both parties will be informed immediately.

8. If the B.O.M. considers the complaint warrants further investigations, the teacher will be informed and supplied with any written evidence in support of the complaint.
9. The teacher will be requested to supply a written statement to the B.O.M. and given an opportunity to make an oral presentation to the Board. The complainant will be offered a similar opportunity. The process should be completed within 10 days of the first meeting between Chairperson, Principal and Teacher.
10. Within 5 school days, the decision of the B.O.M. which is final and binding is delivered in writing to the teacher and the complainant.

Success Criteria

- Swift and efficient resolution of grievances.
- Parent/Teacher satisfaction.
- Positive school community feedback.
- Reviews of school policies as issues arise

Implementation & Review

Reviewed and updated March 2014

Next review: As necessary

Signed: _____

Nancy O Donovan, Chairperson Board of Management

Date: _____

