

Rosemount Terrace, Booterstown, Co. Dublin

⊘ 01 2884223 ⊠ ourladyofmercyoffice@gmail.com □ http://www.ourladyofmercy.ie

Parents Complaints Procedure

Introductory Statement:

This policy was formulated following a consultative process which took place over a period of months. The Principal and teachers were involved in drafting this policy, which was created by the below bodies of education.

Rationale:

The parental complaints procedure was revised and agreed by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation and the management bodies of primary schools, the Catholic Primary Schools Management Association, the Church of Ireland, An Foras Pátrúnachta, the Muslim Primary Education Board, Educate Together and the National Association of Boards of Management in Special Education in 2023. It is designed to provide an open and clearly defined process to facilitate parents/legal guardians in raising concerns about their own child/children in an agreed, fair and transparent manner. It is recognised that parents/legal guardians are the primary educators in a child's life and as such from time-totime concerns may arise which they may need to engage with the school. It is expected that engagement will be timely, courteous and resolution focused to ensure that the important relationship between the parent and school can be preserved and respected. It is expected that all parties concerned will engage proactively.

Mission Statement:

The Mission Statement of Our Lady of Mercy Convent School is:

To educate, encourage and celebrate our children and the wider school community as together we grow in body, mind and spirit. Tá ár dTiarna linn.

Content of policy:

The procedure is a staged procedure where every effort is made to resolve matters at the earliest possible stage. In most cases, concerns will be dealt with either informally or formally at the earlier stages of the procedure. Where it has not been possible to agree a resolution at the earlier stages, the procedure does allow for the escalation of the matter to the Board of Management. This procedure sets out, in four stages, the process to be followed in progressing



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a complaint and the specific timescale to be followed. It is expected the parties will follow each stage in sequence.

Where the term written correspondence is used, this refers specifically to a letter or email correspondence from a parent/legal guardian(s).

- Only complaints about a teacher which are written and signed by a parent/legal guardian, and which relate to their own child, will be investigated.
- Where a complaint raised by a parent/legal guardian is deemed by the employer/board of management to relate to the following, this procedure will not apply;
- matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education;
- 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.
- In all circumstances, any form of written correspondence for the attention of the Board of Management must be supplied to the Chairperson of the board of management only. Any deviation from this could be deemed prejudicial and as acting outside the scope of this agreement.
- Days in this procedure refer specifically to school days. A school day is a day on which the school is in operation. Holiday periods, school closures and leaves of absences are not counted as school days for the purpose of this procedure.
- Group/collective complaints are not provided for and each parent/legal guardian raising a concern will be dealt with separately through this process.
- The procedure is a domestic forum and accordingly, neither management nor the INTO intends that there would be legal representation at any stage.
- Issues should be raised in a timely manner. It is in the best interests of the child that issues are raised to achieve early resolution at the earliest possible stage with the teacher, ideally while the pupil is in that teacher's class.

Please see appendix 1 for a formal staged approach to the process of dealing with a complaint.

Roles and Responsibilities

All school personal share in the co-ordination and implementation of this policy.

Evaluation



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This policy is monitored on an ongoing basis.		

<u>Implementation</u>

Ratified by Board of Management and communicated to the school community.

Signed: Waire W& Hugh

(Chairperson, Board of Management)

Dated: __05/03/2024

Proposed date of review: March 2028



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Appendix 1

Formal Stage 4 Decision (20 days)

Board of Management

Formal Stage 3

Formal Stage 2

Formal Stage 1

Discussion

Written

3.3 Proceed to a hearing

X

4.1 Written decision from Chairperson

> should proceed as follows: to proceed to a hearing, it Where the Board decides

> > f the complaint remains unresolvec

following stage 2 and the parent/

resolved at stage 1, the parent/

f the complaint has not been

egal guardian wishes to pursue

the matter, they should inform

the Chairperson in writing

should submit the complaint in writing to the Chairperson

eacher concerned with a view to

eek an appointment with the

esolving the complaint. Further

neetings with the teacher can

se convened as appropriate.

espect of their own child, should

vishes to make a complaint in

parent/legal guardian who

of the Board of Management

This commences stage 2.

to pursue the matter further

legal guardian who wishes

formal report to the Board

3.1 Chairperson makes a

2.1 Written complaint

1.1 Parent/guardian

neets teacher

sent to Chairperson

provided and will adjudicate on

complaint and the response the matter. The Chairperson

The Board will consider the

- a) the teacher should be informed
- that the complaint is proceeding teacher has been supplied with all documents which are being Chairperson must ensure the to a full hearing and the considered by the Board.

written statement. At this meeting

within 10 days of receipt of this

should make a formal report to the Board of Management of this fact. The Chairperson

the Board can decide to proceed

2.2 Chairperson provides a

1.2 Parent/guardian

neets Principal¹

copy to the teacher

to either stage 3.2 or 3.3.

guardian(s) within <u>five days</u> of the meeting held at stage 3.3.

of the Board in writing to the

should convey the decision

teacher and the parent/legal

legal guardian is entitled to be meeting with the parent/lega accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting. b) the Board should arrange a guardian if it considers such to be required. The parent/

3.2 Complaint concluded

teacher against whom the complaint copy of the written complaint to the

vith the teacher, they should seek an

s unable to resolve the complaint

Where the parent/legal quardian

ppointment with the Principal with urther meetings can be convened

view to resolving the complaint.

has been made, without delay.

The Chairperson should provide a

Where the Board considers the

be concluded at this stage, i complaint, the process may

the board considers that:

Board shall be final. The decision of the

4.2 Complaint concluded

- be accompanied for the purpose Board. The teacher is entitled to presentation of their case to the be represented by a friend or a union representative, who may the teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a
- to the employer and will not be of assistance and note taking. requested to supply a written statement will be confidential the employer in response to statement to the board as the complaint. This written the teacher should be

appropriately dealt with through

c) The complaint is more

a more relevant DE circular,

by the Chairperson with the teacher

Aanagement with a view to resolving

he complaint. Further meetings can

be convened by the Chairperson

is appropriate.

parent/legal guardian and other appropriate by the Chairperson.

school personnel as deemed

or more meetings to be convened

d) where recourse to law

has been initiated.

b) The complaint has already been

legal guardian within 10 school

the teacher and the parent/

days of the commencement of stage 2.1. This may require one

inresolved, the parent/legal guardian

Where the complaint remains

1.3 Parent/guardian neets Chairperson hould seek an appointment with

he Chairperson of the Board of

frivolous/vexatious;

The complaint is

The Chairperson should seek to

convenes meeting(s)

2.3 Chairperson

by the Principal as appropriate.

resolve the complaint between

investigated by the board;

10 days of the meeting referred Management referred to in 3(b) (c) and (d) will take place within to in 3.1. in so far as possible. shared with any third party. the meeting of the Board of

ive days of the Board meeting.

The complaint may be

Where the Board determines the stage, the parent/legal guardian

complaint is concluded at this should be so informed within

resolved at this stage.

Complaint resolved

Complaint resolved

esolved during this stage he complaint may be