

St. Mochta's National School

Parental Complaints Policy

Mission Statement

The mission of St. Mochta's National School is for every child to learn, develop and grow in a safe, secure and stable learning environment.

This School's Code of Behaviour supports the principles, initiatives and procedures for good practice as outlined in the two documents:-

- Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (NEWB 2008)
- Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties: A Continuum of Support (NEPS 2009)

A Code of Behaviour helps the school community to promote the school ethos, relationship, policies procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour and prevent unacceptable behavior. The Code of Behaviour helps teachers, other members of staff, pupils and parents to work together for a happy effective and safe school.

Relationship to School Ethos

The school promotes positive home - school contacts and endeavours to enhance the self esteem of everyone within the school community. Everyone gets opportunities to succeed, Everyone is treated with respect.

Rationale

The need for this policy arises from Section 28 Education Act 1998- procedures for processing complaints by parents for all schools under the Act.

Aims/Objectives

- To foster fruitful and trusting relationships between school and parents where the rights and responsibilities of each party are accommodated in a mutually respectful way.
- To afford parents an opportunity to express opinions/ grievances through the framework of a defined procedure.
- To minimise the opportunity for conflict
- To afford parents an opportunity to liaise with the class teacher informally, in the first instance.

Please note

This policy does not cover:-

1. Complaints that are being dealt with through legal channels
2. Matters of professional competence which come under the remit of the Department of Education and Skills
3. Complaints which do not relate to the work of a particular teacher.

In School Agreed Procedures

The following steps are to be followed if a parent/guardian has a concern in relation to the social or academic progress of their child or any matter other than items numbered 1 to 3 above.

The Accompanying Flow Chart is a quick Guide for Parents and is available in different languages.

1. Parent/Guardian meets with the class teacher on appointment. Please do not approach the teacher in class-line, on the way into class or at the door of the class or in any other way or at any other time. Parents/Guardians should not contact teachers at home or by telephone or any other means.
 - a) A second meeting with the Class Teacher at this stage may facilitate a resolution of the matter.
2. If the matter is not resolved following this second meeting, the parent/Guardian then makes and appointment to see the Deputy Principal.
3. Arrange a meeting with the Principal who will make further efforts to resolve the matter.
4. If the matter still remains unresolved, the parent/ guardian raises the matter with the Chairperson of the Board of Management. If the matter is still unresolved, the parent/guardian can lodge the complaint in writing with the Chairperson of the Board of Management. The Chairperson brings the precise nature of the complaint to the notice of the teacher and seeks to resolve the matter within 5 school days of receipt of the written complaint.
5. If not resolved informally, the Chairperson supplies the teacher with a copy of the complaint and arranges a meeting with the teacher and, if applicable, the Principal teacher with a view to resolving the complaint.
 - (1) If still unresolved, the Chairperson makes a formal report to the Board within 10 school days of the meeting referred to in 4 above. If the Board deems the complaint to be unsubstantiated, the teacher and complainant are informed within 3 school days of the Board Meeting. If the Board upholds the complaint, the Board informs the teacher that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage and provides the teacher with any written evidence supporting the complaint.
 - (2) The teacher is given an opportunity to make their case to the Board and can be accompanied and assisted by a friend. The Board can arrange to meet the parent/guardian if necessary and the complainant can be accompanied and assisted by a friend. The Board meeting must take place within 10 school days of the initial meeting with the teacher referred to in Section 5 above.
 - (3) Within 5 school days, the final decisions of the Board will be delivered in writing to the teacher and the complainant.

Success Criteria

- Swift and efficient resolution of grievances
- Parent/Teacher satisfaction
- Positive School Community Feedback
- Due process is afforded to all parties where matters cannot be resolved informally