

Castleplunkett N.S.



# Castleplunkett NS

## Code of Behaviour

### **Introduction:**

This policy was initially drafted by the staff of Castleplunkett NS and reviewed during November 2023, in consultation with parents (via SSE Review questionnaire and the PA) and pupils in the school. The policy review was ratified by BOM in December 2023.

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school. In Castleplunkett NS we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians. We have adopted a positive Code of Behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school. Our Code of Behaviour applies to all school activities, onsite, as well as offsite activities such as trips, games and events.

The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises. Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school.

### **Aims of the code:**

To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.

- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships.
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour.
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.

- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the parent's handbook, availability of policies and an ethos of open communication.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

### **Responsibility of Adults**

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations.
- Promote positive behaviour, through example, honesty and courtesy.
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment.
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others.
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.
- To discourage physical aggression and encourage 'Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet'.

A Code of Conduct for staff, pupils and volunteers ensures that the rights of all are upheld.

### **Code of Conduct for Parents**

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their children attend school and are punctual.
- Equip pupils with appropriate school materials, a sufficient healthy lunch and full uniform.
- Be courteous towards pupils and staff.
- Use the Aladdin app to communicate with teachers, inform the school about pupil absence and keep up to date with notification. (Parents/Guardians are obliged, by the Education Welfare Act 2000, to explain their child's absence from school. Notification of such absences can be given in advance or when the child returns to school.)
- Make appointments to meet with a teacher/the Principal.
- Respect school property and encourage their children to do the same, including school books and materials provided by the school.
- Label pupils' school uniform jumpers, coats and other personal property.
- Strictly supervise pre-school children, when in the school.

As the Board of Management is responsible for the Health & Safety of all staff and students, parents are requested not to approach or reprimand another person's child on the school premises.

### **School Rules**

1. We show respect for self and others.
2. We show respect for our own property and the property of others.
3. We show respect other students and their learning.
4. We are kind and willing to help others.
5. We follow instructions from staff immediately.
6. We walk quietly in the school building.
7. We show courtesy and good manners.
8. We try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict.
9. We ask permission to leave the classroom/school.
10. We do our best in class.
11. We take responsibility for your own work.
12. We wear the appropriate uniform.
13. We follow our Healthy Eating Policy.

These can be summed up as 6 Golden Rules:

1. We listen. We don't interrupt.
2. We are gentle. We don't hurt others.
3. We are honest. We tell the truth.
4. We are kind.
5. We work hard. We don't waste time.
6. We look after property. We don't damage things.

These 6 "Golden Rules" will be the main ones used for Junior classes. Rules apply during schooltime and during all school related activities.

### **Class Rules;**

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children, based closely on the "Golden Rules". Class rules will be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Where possible they emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. 'Walk' and not, 'Don't run'). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

### **Incentives/Reward Systems:**

Part of the vision of Castleplunkett NS is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and similarly that children use a variety of approaches to solve problems.

Teachers will use incentives and rewards at their discretion and appropriate for class groups or individuals. Any reward system will seek to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

Field trips, school tours and participation in school teams, are all an integral element of any school year for pupils in Castleplunkett NS. If deemed appropriate, for serious misdemeanours, these privileges may be withheld as a consequence for serious unacceptable behaviour.

The following, while not an exhaustive list, are some samples of how praise might be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal.
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation.
- A word of praise in front of a group or class.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.
- 'Bualadh Bos' in class or special mention at an assembly.

### **Unacceptable Behaviour:**

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher, or the supervising teacher at break-times. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of minor misbehaviour include:

- Bringing electronic equipment or mobile-phones to school.
- Not wearing appropriate uniform.
- Chewing gum at school.
- Not following instructions.

Examples of serious misbehaviour include:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation).
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning.
- Threats or physical hurt to another person.
- Damage to property.
- Theft.
- Bringing dangerous equipment to school.
- Leaving school/school activities without permission.

Examples of gross misbehaviour include:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil.
- Serious Theft.
- Serious Damage to property.
- Serious bullying.
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes or vapes to school.

### **Bullying:**

Bullying is *repeated* aggression – physical, verbal or emotional - conducted by an individual or group against another or others.

- PHYSICAL: includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping, etc., damage to property.
- VERBAL: name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates.
- EMOTIONAL: threats or persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Threats to extort money or possessions. Cyber bullying.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying.

### **Harassment:**

Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct in relation to any person on discriminatory grounds. It is conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for the person. (as defined by the Schools and the Equal Status Acts, The Equality Authority)

All concerns are dealt with in a dignified, meaningful manner, without infringing on valuable teaching time. Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same manner as breaches of discipline. The procedures for dealing with bullying behaviour are detailed in the school's Anti-Bullying policy, devised using guidelines outlined in the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013). Copies of this policy are available from the school and can be viewed on the school website.

In cases where a parent reports a bullying incident, the school reserves the right to inform the relevant parties of the identity of the person making the complaint, when this is deemed necessary.

**Sanctions:**

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others.
- helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences.
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in the Code of Behaviour.
- signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning.
- keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the circumstances involved. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupil devise strategies for this.

1. Reasoning with pupil.
  2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
  3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class.
  4. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened.
  5. Loss of privileges.
  6. Detention during break or after school.
  7. Communication with parents.
  8. Referral to Principal.
  9. Principal communicating with parents.
  10. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).
- Usually sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

**Suspension and Expulsion:**

Before serious sanctions such as detention, suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Where it is proposed to detain a pupil after school hours, the parents or guardians will be notified. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking

that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period.

Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

#### **Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement):**

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s/guardians may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s/guardians must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school Code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

#### **Children with Special Needs:**

All children are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, support teacher, and or principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological support will be invaluable.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

#### **Communicating with Parents:**

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school. A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly. Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life (in the past or present), which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following methods of communication are to be used within the school:

- Regular Notices and updates via the Aladdin App.
- Informal and formal parent teacher meetings.

- Through children's homework journal (Junior Room children do not have a homework journal, regularly check Aladdin for updates).
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school, (usually sent via Aladdin, but hard copy format will be sent for matters deemed of significant importance).
- School notice board.
- Monthly Newsletters.

#### **Conclusion:**

The essence of our Code of Behaviour is valuing people and encouraging them to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and to develop self-discipline.

#### **Success Criteria: (by which the policy will be judged)**

- Atmosphere of discipline within the school.
- Children are aware of school rules.
- Children apply school rules.
- Growth in self-discipline.
- Co-operation between parents, teachers and pupils in maintaining the code.
- Comments or compliments on behaviour.
- Children working to the best of their ability.
- Class working to the best of their ability.
- Improvements in behaviour.
- Parents follow the school complaints procedures if they have a complaint.

#### **Review:**

This Policy will be reviewed yearly.

#### **Ratification:**

This Policy was ratified by the chairperson of the school Board of Management.

Signed: Josella Fitzmaurice Date: 13<sup>th</sup> Dec 2023  
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: Kathrina Grayan Date: 13<sup>th</sup> Dec 2023  
Principal



## **Appendix 1:**

### **Mission Statement and Vision:**

Castleplunkett NS is a caring and inclusive school, rooted in the local parish community which forms a central part of everyday life. Committed to the development of the whole person, we hand on Christian values and a shared Irish culture to the next generation.

We aim to provide an appropriate, stimulating and broadly challenging education for all of our pupils. We aim to encourage language learning and the appreciation of languages and their place in our culture and heritage.

Castleplunkett NS encourages the involvement of parents through home-school contacts and through their involvement in the development and growth of the Parents' Association.

In Castleplunkett NS we endeavour to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community, to imbue in the pupils respect for themselves, for other people and for property and to encourage the development of personal responsibility. We aim to prepare our pupils for their place in a modern intercultural society by actively promoting equality and by celebrating the diversity we have within our school community.

We strive to promote, both individually and collectively, the professional and personal development of teachers through staff development programmes.

Castleplunkett NS encourages pupils to have respect for diversity, environmentally awareness and appreciation of our community.



## Appendix 2:

### Incident Report Form

Name of Pupil: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Class Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ (Tick if Substitute) ☐

Staff member reporting: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Details of Incident:

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

How did the incident occur?

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What was the presenting complaint/injury?

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What action was taken and by whom? (If pupil's parents/guardians were contacted, give details)

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Witnesses (if any):

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Other person (s) to whom the incident was reported:

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Action taken to prevent recurrence (if applicable):

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Were any after effects noticed/reported later on/after the incident? Yes ☐ No ☐

(If yes, give details of same and of any further action taken):

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Was any resulting after effect reported by parent/guardian in days following the incident?

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Tick if Substitute ☐) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 3:

# Complaints Procedure

## Revised Parental Complaints Procedure



### Note:

- A copy of this procedure will be available for parents/legal guardians on the school website and/or on request from the school.
- This procedure comes into effect on the 1st of January 2024.
- Under the Education Act 1998, legally, all schools are managed by the school's Board of Management, on behalf of the school patron.

## Purpose/Objective

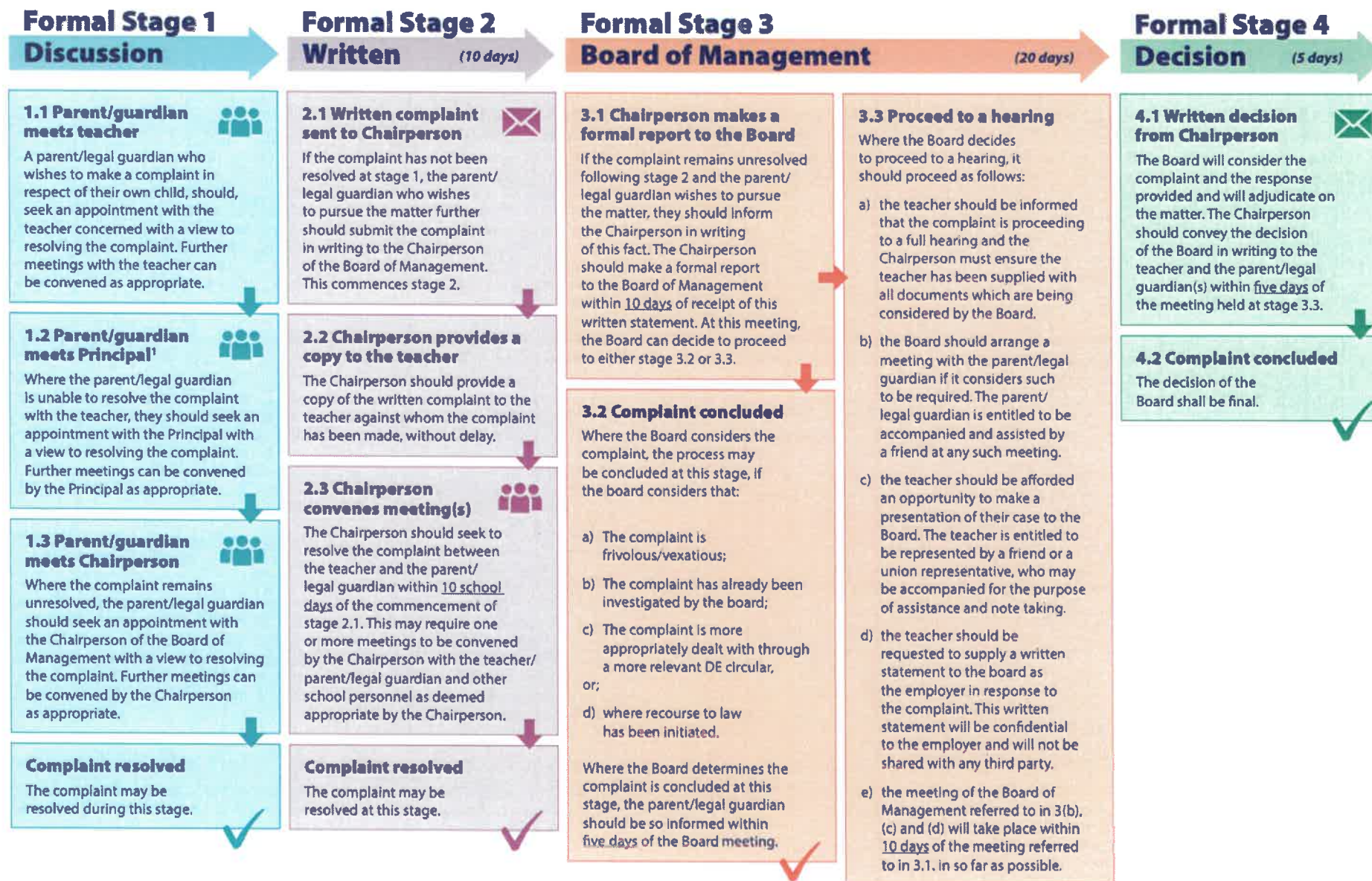
The parental complaints procedure was revised and agreed by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation and the management bodies of primary schools, the Catholic Primary Schools Management Association, the Church of Ireland, An Foras Pátrúnachta, the Muslim Primary Education Board, Educate Together and 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-to-time 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.

## Procedural Points

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 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.



<sup>1</sup>Where a complaint is received about a principal the above process commences at Stage 1.2.