



Complaints Procedure

Updated May 2021

Introduction

Only those complaints about staff members/parents/guardians which are written and signed by parents/guardians/staff member may be investigated formally by the Board of Management, except where those complaints are deemed by the Board to be:

1. On matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education
2. Frivolous or vexatious complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in the school
3. Complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure.

Unwritten complaints in which the above categories may be processed informally as set out in Stage 1 of this procedure.

Stage 1

- 1.1 A parent/guardian/staff member who wishes to make a complaint should first approach the **staff member /parent/guardian** with a view to resolving the complaint, following the guidelines mentioned in the Parent/Staff Communication Policy.
- 1.2 Where the parent/guardian/staff member is unable to resolve the complaint with the parent/guardian/staff member, they should approach a member of middle management with a view to resolving it.
- 1.3 Where the parent/guardian/staff member is unable to resolve the complaint with the member of middle management, they should approach the principal with a view to resolving it.
- 1.4 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

- 2.1 If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent/guardian/staff member wishes to pursue the matter further, they should lodge a **complaint in writing** with the chairperson of the Board of Management.
- 2.2 The chairperson will bring the precise nature of the written complaint to the notice of the staff member/parent/guardian, and seek to resolve the matter between the parties, within 5 days of receipt of the written complaint.

Stage 3

- 3.1 If the complaint is not resolved informally, the chairperson should, subject to the authorisation of the Board:
 - a) Supply the staff/parent/guardian with a copy of the written complaint and
 - b) Arrange a meeting with the staff member/parent/guardian, and where applicable, the principal/member of middle management with a view to resolving the complaint. Such a meeting should take place within 10 days of receipt of the written complaint.

Stage 4

- 4.1 If the complaint is still not resolved, the chairperson should make a formal report to the Board within 10 days of meeting.
- 4.2 If the Board considers that the complaint is not substantiated, the staff member/parent/guardian and the complainant should be so informed within 3 days of the Board meeting.
- 4.3 If the Board considers that the complaint is substantiated or that it warrants further investigation, the following steps should be followed:
 - a) The staff member/parent/guardian should be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage.
 - b) The staff member/parent/guardian should be supplied with copies of any written evidence in support of the complaint.
 - c) The staff member/parent/guardian should be requested to supply a written statement to the Board in response to the complaint, and should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation to the Board and to be accompanied by another person to that meeting.
 - d) The Board may arrange a meeting with the complainant, who may be accompanied by another person to this meeting.
 - e) The meetings of the Board of Management referred to in (c) and (d) will take place within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.1(b).

Stage 5

- 5.1 Following the Board's investigations, the chairperson shall convey the decision of the Board in writing to the staff member/parent/guardian and the complainant within 5 days of the meeting of the Board.
- 5.2 The decision of the Board shall be final.

Implementation and Review

The implementation of this policy will commence in _____. It is intended that it will be implemented in full during this school year. The policy will be reviewed in _____ and at the end of every third school year thereafter.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Crehana NS in _____. This policy may be viewed at the school on appointment with the Principal and School Secretary.

Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: _____