

THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
St. Attracta's Junior National School
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— *Tús Maith* —

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE
(Parents/Guardians)

January 2015



Green-Schools

MISSION STATEMENT

“St. Attracta’s Junior National School has a Catholic ethos inclusive of pupils of different persuasions whose religious outlook is respected.

Acknowledging that parents are the primary educators, we are inspired by a shared vision of excellence and we espouse a partnership approach.

While we value high academic achievement, the social, personal and moral development of our pupils is of primary importance and we view the school as a learning organisation which is open to change and innovation while cherishing the best educational, cultural and religious traditions of our society.”

INTRODUCTION

In keeping with our mission statement and ethos, St. Attracta’s Junior School aims to create a school community which is welcoming, safe, respectful and inclusive of all its members.

We believe that putting procedures in place to create a positive relationship between teachers and parents/guardians is essential for achieving that goal. To that end this policy outlines procedures where a complaint can be dealt with effectively with a view to a positive resolution.

The Board of Management of St. Attracta’s Junior National School has adopted the INTO/CPSMA Complaints Procedure, which provides a mechanism for dealing fairly with parental complaints against a teacher. The purpose of this procedure is to facilitate the resolution of difficulties where they may arise in an agreed and fair manner.

Complaints Procedure in St. Attracta’s Junior National School

INTO/CPMSA COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE GUIDELINES FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Irish National Teachers’ Organisation and the Catholic Primary School Managers’ Association reached agreement in 1993 on a procedure for dealing with complaints by parents against teachers. The purpose of the procedure is to facilitate the resolution of difficulties where they may arise in an agreed and fair manner. The agreement lays out in five stages the process to be followed in progressing a complaint and the specific timescale to be followed at each stage.

Introduction

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

- (i) on matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education;
- (ii) frivolous or vexatious complaints and complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in a school; or
- (iii) Complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure.

Unwritten complaints not in the above categories may be processed informally as set out in Stage 1 of this procedure.

Stage 1

- 1.1 A parent/guardian who wishes to make a complaint should, unless there are local arrangements to the contrary, approach the class teacher with a view to resolving the complaint.
- 1.2 Where the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher she/he should approach the Principal with a view to resolving it.
- 1.3 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 wishes to pursue the matter further she/he should lodge the complaint in writing with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.
- 2.2 The Chairperson should bring the precise nature of the written complaint to the notice of the teacher 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 general authorisation of the Board and except in those cases where the Chairperson deems the particular authorisation of the Board to be required:
 - (a) supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint; and
 - (b) arrange a meeting with the teacher and, where applicable, the Principal Teacher 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 the meeting referred to in 3.1(b).

- 4.2 If the Board considers that the complaint is not substantiated the teacher and the complaint should be so informed within three days of the Board meeting.
- 4.3 If the Board considers that the complaint is substantiated or that it warrants further investigation it proceeds as follows:
- (a) the teacher should be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage;
 - (b) the teacher should be supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint;
 - (c) the teacher should be requested to supply a written statement to the Board in response to the complaint;
 - (d) the teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of case to the Board. The teacher would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting;
 - (e) the board may arrange a meeting with the complainant if it considers such to be required. The complainant would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting; and
 - (f) the meeting of the Board of Management referred to in (d) and (e) will take place within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.1(b).

Stage 5

- 5.1 When the Board has completed its investigation, the Chairperson should convey the decision of the Board in writing to the teacher and the complainant within five days of the meeting of the Board.
- 5.2 The decision of the Board shall be final.
- 5.3 This Complaints Procedure shall be reviewed after three years.
- 5.4 CPSMA or INTO may withdraw from this agreement having given the other party three months' notice of intention to do so.

In this agreement 'days' means schools days.

MONITORING/EVALUATION/REVIEW

This policy was adopted and ratified by St. Attracta's Junior School Board of Management on:

Signed: Oliver Fenton

Date 13th January 2015

Chairperson, B.O.M.

Signed: Eithne Roycroft

Date 13th January 2015

Eithne Roycroft, Principal

This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily accessible to parents on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron, if requested.

This policy was first ratified in 2005 in accordance with Department of Education & Skills and CPSMA Guidelines and will be reviewed as deemed necessary. The views and opinions of the partners in education are welcome at all times