

St. Patrick's Primary School Portrush



*Together Everyone
Achieves More*

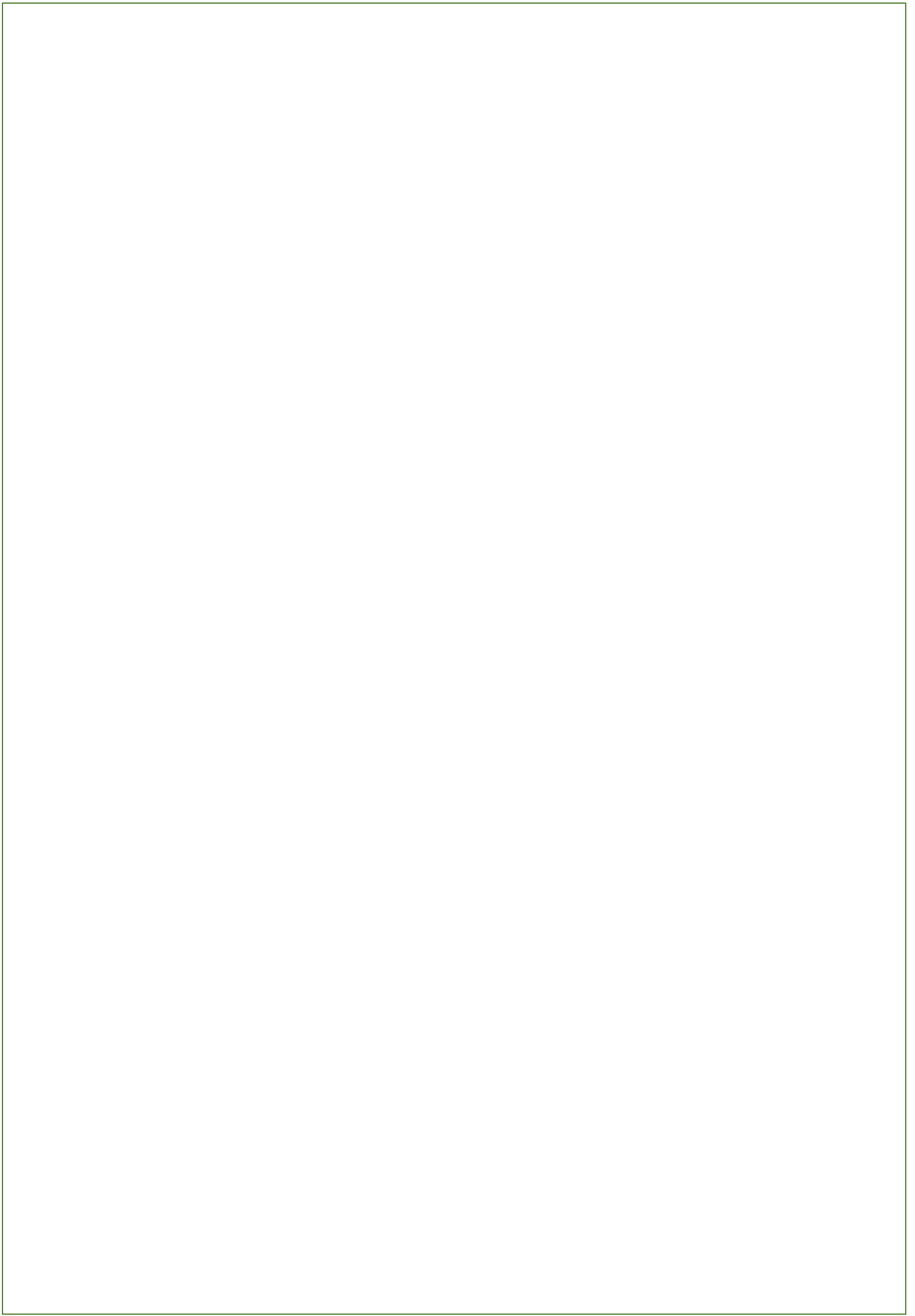
Complaints Procedure

Policy No	Signed by Chair BOG	Date Ratified by BOG
11		
Agreed Date	Review Date	Person Responsible for Review
	August 2024	Principal Mr. Dinsmore

Mission Statement

As a partnership of Children, Parents, Staff, Governors and the wider Community we aim to

- Promote equality of opportunity for all children and staff.
- Ensure that everyone will experience an inclusive education where tolerance and understanding are promoted.
- Meet children's individual and collective needs.
- Provide a stimulating, secure and nurturing environment.
- Promote an ethos that is highly motivating and encourages all to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Provide an environment where we all feel secure, valued, respected and understood.
- Encourage all to have a positive self-image, high self-esteem and increasing confidence.
- Provide an environment which encourages active learning, investigation, creativity and challenge.
- Value and celebrate the richness and diversity of cultures and beliefs in our community.
- Celebrate achievement and progress in all areas of development.
- Display high standards of courtesy at all times.
- Encourage all to have a sense of responsibility for themselves, for each other and for their environment.



Translate this document at:

Przetłumacz ten dokument na: <https://translate.google.co.uk/>

Преведете този документ на адрес:

Governors Forward

1. This procedure outlines the schools' procedures for making a complaint. Being able to make a complaint with confidence that it will be dealt with impartially, fairly, professionally and promptly is essential to making our school be the best it can be for our children and wider school community.
2. We encourage anyone with a concern to speak to a teacher as soon as possible. If concerns are dealt with at an early stage, then they are more likely to be resolved.
3. Listening, supporting and responding to each other ensures that:

'Together Everyone Achieves More'

4. This procedure reflects the Catholic Council for Maintained Schools (CCMS) Circular 2017/10 - *Introduction of a revised Model School Complaints Procedure*.

Who is this Procedure for?

5. This procedure is for the entire school community. It informs parents/carers or other non-staff members of the school community how to make a complaint and how a complaint will be dealt with. It also informs staff how they must deal with complaints.
6. **This Procedure does not cover Child Protection issues. These are set out in the Safeguarding Children Policy.**
7. This policy does not relate to staff complaint procedures. Staff must use procedures as set out by their relevant employing authority.

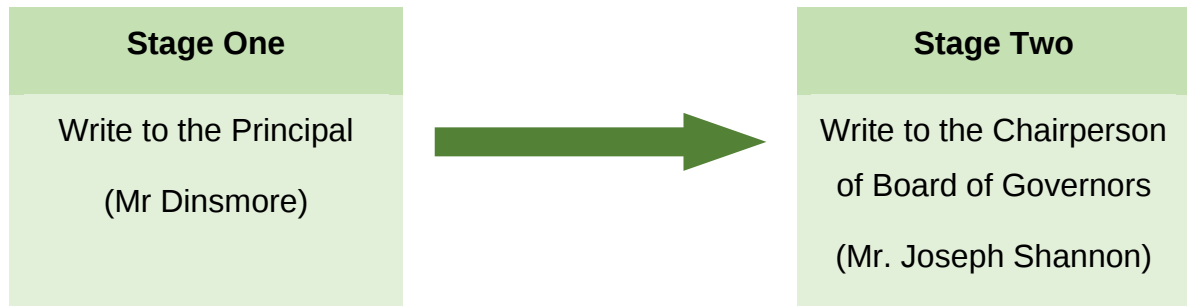
Our Guiding Principles

8. When dealing with complaints the school will:
 - a. act in the best interests of the children
 - b. act in accordance with statutory requirements and policies and procedures of relevant authorities (such as the CCMS, EA and DE);
 - c. encourage resolution of all concerns as quickly as possible and at an appropriate level;
 - d. provide timely responses to concerns and complaints;
 - e. keep you informed of progress;
 - f. ensure a full and fair investigation of your complaint where appropriate;
 - g. have due regard for the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved;
 - h. respect confidentiality;
 - i. fully address complaints and provide an effective response;
 - j. take appropriate action to rectify the issue and prevent it happening again where appropriate; and
 - k. be responsive to learning from outcomes which will inform and improve practice within the school.

Removing Barriers to Making Complaints

9. The school wants to remove any barriers to raising your concerns. We would encourage you to follow these procedures and make your complaints in writing. However, if for any reason you do not wish to make a complaint in writing you may wish to talk informally to Mr Dinsmore in the first instance or any other teaching staff member you are comfortable with.
10. Please note for the school to effectively deal and respond to some complaints you may need to make your complaint in writing, if this is the case you will be informed. If you wish a written response to your complaint you will need to make your complaint to the school in writing.

Complaints Procedure – At a glance



Time Limits for Complaints

11. We will always listen to your concerns; however you should always contact the school as soon as possible with any complaints.
12. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, complaints will normally only receive a response if they are made within 6 months of the origin of the complaint.

Anonymous Complaints

13. The school will not normally investigate anonymous complaints, unless deemed by the Chairperson of the Board of Governors to be of a serious nature. The decision of whether to deal with such complaints will be at the discretion of the Board of Governors.

Stage One Complaints

14. When making a complaint, contact the Principal who will arrange for the complaint to be investigated. If the complaint is about the Principal, you should proceed to Stage Two.
15. The school may require a complaint to be made in writing, where this may present difficulties, the school will make reasonable arrangements to support you with the process.
16. When making a complaint in writing please provide as much information as possible including:
 - a. name and contact details;
 - b. what the complaint is about;

- c. what has already been done to try to resolve it; and
 - d. what you would like the school to do to resolve the complaint.
17. A written complaint will normally be acknowledged within 5 school working days and a response normally made within 20 school working days of receipt of the complaint. This response will be issued in writing by the Principal and will indicate with reasons whether the complaint has been upheld, partially upheld or not upheld.
18. These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.
19. If you remain unhappy with the outcome at Stage 1, the complaint may be progressed to Stage 2 which is overseen by the Board of Governors.

Stage Two Complaints

20. All Stage Two Complaints must be made in writing.
21. If the complaint is unresolved after Stage One, write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors (care of the school and marked 'private and confidential'). Where this may present difficulties the school will make reasonable arrangements to support you. The Chairperson will convene a committee to review the complaint. Please provide as much detail as possible as indicated above.
22. The complaint will normally be acknowledged within 5 school working days and a final response normally made within 20 school working days from date of receipt of the complaint. The response will be issued in writing by the Chairperson of the committee and will indicate with reasons whether the complaint has been upheld, partially upheld or not upheld.
23. These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO)

24. If following Stage Two you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can refer the matter to the Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO).

- 25.** The Ombudsman provides a free, independent and impartial service for handling complaints about schools in Northern Ireland. You have the right to complain to the Ombudsman if you feel that you have been treated unfairly or have received a poor service from a school and your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction.
- 26.** A complaint should normally be referred to NIPSO within six months of the final response from the School. The school must advise in its concluding letter that the complaint may be referred to the NIPSO if you remain dissatisfied.
- 27.** Contact details for NIPSO are:

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman
Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman
Progressive House
33 Wellington Place
Belfast
BT1 6HN
Freepost: FREEPOST NIPSO
Telephone: 02890 233821
Freephone: 0800 34 34 24
Email: nipso@nipso.org.uk
Web: www.nipso.org.uk

Scope Of Complaints Procedure

- 28.** The Complaints Procedure sets out how any expression of dissatisfaction relating to the school will be managed. By taking concerns raised seriously at the earliest possible stage, it is hoped that issues can be resolved quickly and effectively.
- 29.** Some examples of complaints dealt with;
- a. not following school policy
 - b. communication delays / lack of communication
 - c. difficulties in staff / pupil relationships.

Complaints with separate established procedures

30. Some examples of statutory procedures and appeal mechanisms are listed below. The list is not exhaustive. The Principal/ Chair of Governors will advise on the appropriate procedure to use when the complaint is raised.
31. Matters may still be referred to NIPSO, if it is felt that maladministration has occurred.

Exceptions	Contact
Admissions / Expulsions / Exclusion of children from school	Contact www.eani.org.uk Director of Operations and Estates
Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN)	Contact www.eani.org.uk Director of Children and Young People's Services
School Development Proposals	Contact www.eani.org.uk Director of Education
Child Protection / Safeguarding	Contact www.eani.org.uk Director of Children and Young People's Services

What to Expect Under This Procedure

Your rights as a person making a complaint

32. In dealing with complaint we will ensure:
- fair treatment;
 - courtesy;
 - a timely response;
 - accurate advice;
 - respect for privacy – complaints will be treated as confidentially as possible allowing for the possibility of consultation with other appropriate parties about the complaint; and
 - clear reasons for decisions.

Your responsibilities as a person making a complaint

- 33.** In making a complaint it is important to;
- a. raise issues in a timely manner;
 - b. treat our staff with respect and courtesy;
 - c. provide accurate and concise information in relation to the issues raised;
 - d. use these procedures fully and engage with them at the appropriate levels.

Rights of parties involved during the investigation

- 34.** Where a meeting is arranged the complainant may be accompanied but not represented by another person.
- 35.** This Procedure does not take away from the statutory rights of any of the participants.

Timeframes

- 36.** Where concerns are raised with the relevant Teacher or Principal, a response will normally be provided during the meeting or within an agreed timeframe.
- Stage 1 – Normally acknowledge within 5 school working days, response normally within 20 school working days
- Stage 2 – Normally acknowledge within 5 school working days, response normally within 20 school working days
- 37.** If, for any reason, the review of a complaint takes longer to complete, you will be informed of revised time limits and kept updated on progress.
- 38.** These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.

Unreasonable Complaints

- 39.** The school is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain.
- 40.** There will be occasions when, despite all stages of the complaints procedure having been completed and the complaint having been reviewed by the Ombudsman, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If they try to re-open the

same issue, the Chair of Governors will inform them that the procedure has been completed and that the matter is now closed.

41. If the complainant repeatedly continues to contact the school with the same issue we may choose not to respond.

Procedure Monitoring and Evaluation

42. This procedure must be reviewed by the principal every two years, or as required, and a report made to the Board of Governors.

Policy Accessibility Statement

43. The following steps have been taken to make the document accessible. We have:
- used clear and direct language wherever possible;
 - used correct tagging, formatting, numbering and use of headings for e-readers; and
 - followed [government guidance](#) on document accessibility.
44. If you need this document in another form, such as large print or you have any suggestions as to how we could improve the accessibility please contact the school office.