

# **Carriglea National School Parental Complaints Policy**

## **Rationale**

**The need for this policy arises from:-**

Section 28, Education Act 1998 - procedures for processing complaints by parents prescribed for all schools under the Act.

## **Relationship to School Ethos**

The school promotes positive home - school contacts and to enhance the self-esteem of everyone within the school community. This policy contributes towards those ideals.

## **Aims/Objectives**

- To foster fruitful and trusting relationships between school and parents
- To afford parents an opportunity to express opinions/grievances through the framework of a defined procedure
- To minimise the opportunity for conflict
- Through affording parents an opportunity to liaise with the class teacher.

## **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 Dept. of Education and Science
3. Petty complaints, which do not relate to the work of a particular teacher.

Only those complaints about teachers, which are written and signed by parents/guardians, may be investigated formally by the B.O.M, 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 Dept of Education;
- (ii) Frivolous or vexatious complaints and complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in a school;
- (iii) Complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure
- (iv) The Department of Education and Science supports the principle that complaints regarding schools should be resolved at school level whenever possible and will only become involved in the investigation of specific complaints after every effort has been made to resolve the matter at local level.

### **In-School Procedures**

If a parent has a concern in relation to the social or academic progress of their child, or the performance of a teacher the following steps are to be followed:

#### Stage 1:

1. The parent/guardian meets with the class teacher. An appointment should be arranged to meet at a time convenient to both parties. Teachers need to ensure their classes are supervised. Parents should not contact teachers / staff at home or on their mobiles.
2. If the issue is not resolved the class teacher informs the Principal of the nature of the complaint.

#### Stage 2:

1. If the grievance persists or matter remains unresolved, the parent/guardian may pursue the matter by lodging a complaint in writing with the chairperson of the BOM.
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 two parties.

#### Stage 3:

1. If this process fails, the chairperson will supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint and arrange a meeting with the teacher concerned and the Principal.
2. If the complaint remains unresolved the chairperson will report formally to the B.O.M. If the BOM does not uphold the complaint, both parties will be informed immediately. If the BOM considers the complaint warrants further investigations, the teacher will be informed and supplied with any written evidence in support of the complaint.

3. The teacher will be requested to supply a written statement to the B.O.M. and given an opportunity to make an oral presentation to the Board. The complainant will be offered a similar opportunity. The process should be completed within 10 days of the first meeting between Chairperson, Principal and Teacher.
4. Within 5 school days, the decision of the BOM, which is final and binding, is delivered in writing to the Teacher and the complainant.

Where a teacher is required to submit a written response to his/her board, the teacher should contact his/her INTO District Representative Head Office for advice and assistance.

In advising a teacher, the INTO will be anxious to ensure that there is due process and fair procedures applied, which generally include:

- That the teacher is fully appraised of all matters being considered by the board, including being provided with copies of all relevant documentation;
- The right to respond and adequate time to prepare a response;
- Entitlement to be represented by the INTO, if necessary.

The BOM of Carriglea N.S. has adopted the INTO/CPSMA Complaints Procedure which provides a mechanism for dealing with issues fairly.

### **Success Criteria**

- Swift and efficient resolution of grievances
- Parent/Teacher satisfaction
- Positive school community feedback
- Reviews of school policies as issues arise.

**Review**

This policy will be reviewed after a 2 year cycle or as required.

**Chairperson: Conor Blackwell**

**Date: 21/05/2020**