

# Parental Complaints Procedures

## Introduction

This policy was drawn up in accordance with procedures agreed by the CPSMA and INTO for dealing with complaints by parents.

## Rationale

A procedure for processing complaints by parents is prescribed for all schools under Section 28 of the Education Act (1998).

## Relationship to school ethos

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

## Aims and objectives

1. To facilitate the resolution of difficulties where they may arise, in an agreed and fair manner.
2. To foster fruitful and trusting relationships between school and parents.
3. To afford parents an opportunity to express opinions / grievances through the framework of a defined procedure.
4. To minimize the opportunity for conflict.

## In school procedures

Only those complaints, 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 Parent / guardian who wishes to make a complaint should make an appointment to meet with 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 he/she should approach the Principal with a view to resolving it. Again, an appointment can be arranged through the school office, briefly stating the nature of the complaint.
- 1.3 Finally 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 with the sanction of the Board of Management should:
  - 3.1.1 supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint and
  - 3.1.2 arrange a meeting with the teacher and 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 BOM. Within 10 days of the meeting referred to at Stage 3
- 4.2 If the Board considers that the complaint is not substantiated the teacher and the complainant should be 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 it proceeds as follows:-
  - 4.3.1 The teacher should be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage;
  - 4.3.2 The teacher should be supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint;

- 4.3.3 The teacher should be asked to supply a written statement to the Board in response to the complaint;
- 4.3.4 The teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of the case to the Board. The teacher being entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at the meeting.
- 4.3.5 The Board may arrange a meeting with the complainant if it considers it necessary. The complainant would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend.
- 4.3.6 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 5 days of the meeting of the Board.
- 5.2 The decision of the Board shall be final

In this agreement, 'days' means school days.

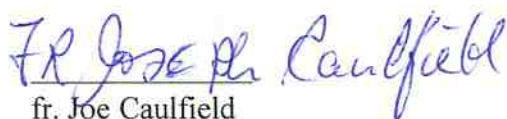
## **Success Criteria**

1. Swift and efficient resolution of grievances
2. Parent / teacher satisfaction
3. Positive school community feedback
4. Review of school policies as issues arise


## **Review**

The revised policy was ratified by the Board of Management in October 2017.

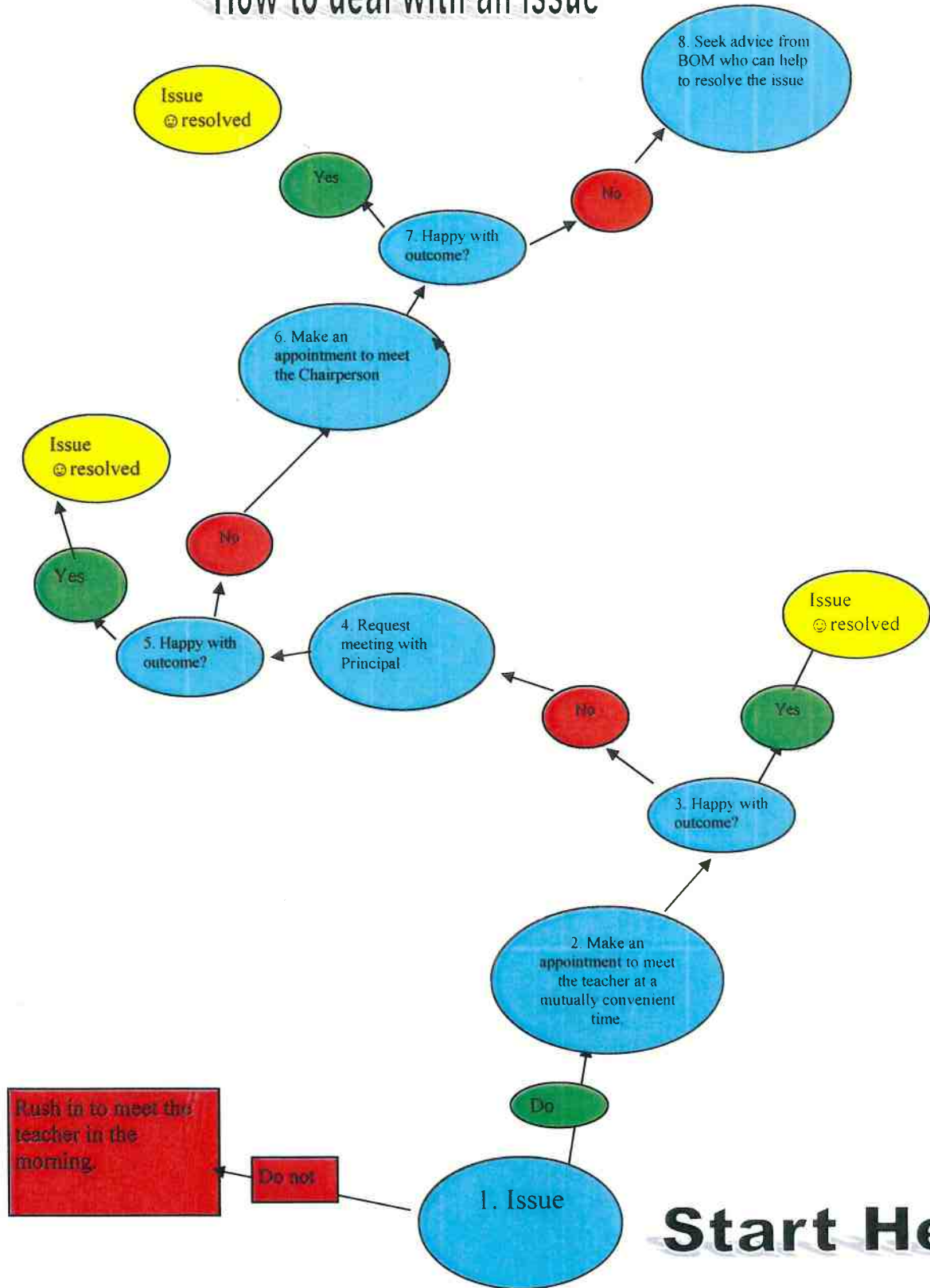
Signed:



fr. Joe Caulfield  
Chairperson BOM

  
Date

# How to deal with an issue



**Start Here!**