

BELLAGHY PRIMARY SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Procedure for dealing with complaints

We welcome suggestions for improving our work in school. Be assured that, no matter what you want to tell us, our support and respect for your child will not be affected in any way. Please tell us of your concern as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to investigate an incident or problem properly if it took place some time ago. We do appreciate the assistance we receive from parents in addressing any problems that arise. We receive very few complaints at Bellaghy Primary School. Problems sometimes arise from misunderstandings which are easily addressed. Most concerns and complaints can be sorted out quickly by speaking with your child's class teacher.

When parents and teachers treat each other with mutual respect and support, this provides a very good role model for all our children.

If, having spoken to the class teacher, you still have concerns, you should see the Principal. She will investigate the problem and discuss her findings with you so that we can find a way forward together which serves the best interest of both the school and your child. In the unlikely event of the problem remaining unresolved you can put your complaint in writing and, if necessary, could subsequently refer it to the Chair of Governors. –

Mr Robert Overend, 2 Drumanee Road, Bellaghy, BT45 8LE

The procedure to be followed in the event of a complaint being made is summarized in the following stages:

Stage 1: Informal Action

- Parents discuss concerns with the class teacher
- If the teacher is unable to deal immediately with the matter, a clear note is made, including complainant's name, contact number and date, and the parent is contacted as soon as the matter has been investigated. The teacher may also consult the Principal at this stage.

- The teacher ensures that the parent is clear what action or monitoring of the situation has been agreed.
- If no satisfactory solution has been found, parents are asked if they wish their concern to be considered further.

Stage 2: Referral to the Principal

- The Principal acknowledges the complaint, orally or in writing, within 3 working days
- A meeting is arranged with the complainant to clarify and supplement any information given.
- The Principal investigates further, interviewing witnesses as appropriate. If the complaint centers on a pupil, the pupil would normally be interviewed with a parent present or, if this is not possible, with a member of staff who is not directly involved.
- The Principal keeps written records of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation.
- Once all relevant facts have been established, the Principal responds. If the complaint was in writing, a written response will be sent.
- If the complainant is not satisfied, they are advised to write to the Chair of the Board of Governors (B.O.G.).

If the complaint is against the Principal, the Stage 2 procedures are carried out by the Chair of the B.O.G.

Stage 3: Review by the B.O.G.

- The Chair acknowledges receipt of the written complaint, informing the complainant that the complaint is to be heard by a Committee of three members of the School's B.O.G. within 20 working days.
- The Chair arranges to convene a Complaints Panel elected from members of the B.O.G.. The members should have no prior involvement with the complaint and they should elect a Chair for the committee. All relevant documentation regarding the complaint should be given to the members of the committee as soon as possible.
- The Chair of the Committee will write and inform all concerned of the date, time and place of the meeting at least 5 working days in advance. The notification to the complainant should also inform him/her of the right to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend and the right to submit further written evidence.

- It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Committee to ensure that the meeting is properly minuted.
- After the meeting, the Committee will consider the evidence and a written decision will be sent to the Principal and the complainant within 15 working days.

Stage 4: Beyond the School's Board of Governors

- If the complainant remains unsatisfied with the outcome, he/she may write to the Education Authority at County Hall, Ballymena.

Policy reviewed– March 2018 - MLR