



Whole School Policy on Parent/Teacher Communication

Introductory Statement

This policy was formulated by the staff of Scoil Naomh Íde, Clonpriest NS in consultation with the Board of Management and the Parents' Association. Its purpose is to provide information and guidelines to parents/guardians and staff on parent/teacher communication, including formal and informal parent/teacher meetings in Clonpriest NS.

The family and home are central to the development of the child. The school and the family strive to be mutually supportive and respectful of each other, and aim to work for the benefit of the child and their learning so that the child's education can be effective.

Clonpriest N.S. Board of Management and Staff are committed to:

- Developing close effective links with parents/guardians.
- Participating in meetings in a positive and respectful manner, affirming the fundamental role of parents as primary educators of their children.
- Maintaining the ethos and values of Clonpriest N.S.
- Supporting and facilitating the Parents' Association.
- Encouraging and facilitating the participation of parents in school policy development.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to:

- Develop close links with the school
- Collaborate with the school in enabling the full potential of their children to be achieved
- Share the responsibility of seeing that the school remains true to its ethos, values and distinctive character
- Become actively involved in the school and Parents' Association
- Participate in policy and decision-making processes affecting them

It is vital that the school is immediately informed if family events/situations occur that cause anxiety to your child and therefore may adversely affect his/her education. Please update the school on any changes to parental/guardian contact phone numbers or email addresses.

In all matters pertaining to the wellbeing and education of pupils, only the parents/legal guardians named on the enrolment form will be consulted by the teachers.

Privacy and Respect

Positive and respectful communication is of high importance to our school. This not only extends to the pupils but to all members of the school community. There is a common responsibility to ensure we model the behaviour expected of children. The school values of Respect, Kindness and Friendship should be evident in communication between members of the school community.

The school will respect all children and parents' right to privacy so staff should not be asked to speak about any child except your own.

Structures in place to facilitate open communication and consultation with Parents/Guardians:

Annual Consultation:

- Information Meeting for parents of new Junior Infants in May/June each year.
- Parent/teacher meetings one-to-one in November or January.
- Class teacher/Special Education Teacher (S.E.T.) meetings with parents/guardians whose children have additional educational needs.
- Class meeting in September for parents/guardians of children whose class is being taught by job-sharers if required.

Written Communication:

- Parents/Guardians receive a school report of each pupil at the end of each school year.
- Regular updates via the Aladdin app to keep parents/guardians up-to-date with school events, holidays and activities.
- Homework diary 1st – 6th class, used to relay messages which are signed between parents/guardians and teachers. Parents may be requested to sign diary each night to certify that homework has been completed.
- Text messages used for communication between parents and staff.
- Emails/notes sent from class teachers to parents.
- Emails from parents/guardians to teachers, either directly or through the school office.
- Updates on school Facebook page.

Other Communication Structures:

- Through the Parents' Association, parents are invited to discuss and contribute to the drafting and review of school policies. Decisions taken to change current policies or to introduce new ones will be made known to all parents through Aladdin notices.
- Meetings with a class teacher/S.E.T. at an agreed appointed time.
- Parents/Guardians are invited to school masses, concerts, Book Fair, activities, events.
- Parents' time, resources and creativity are welcomed for projects such as music, IT, fundraisers, school tours, class talks, demonstrations and other such school events.

Formal Meetings

Formal timetabled parent/teacher meetings take place in November. However, if a parent/guardian wishes to arrange a meeting at any stage during the year to discuss their child, they may do so by prior appointment:

- All communication sent from the school will be sent to the child's home address as given on the enrolment form, unless otherwise requested by parents/guardians.
- In the case of separated parents, requests can be made by both parents to meet their child's teacher(s) individually for parent/teacher meetings.

Parent/Teacher Meetings

The aim of Parent/Teacher meetings is:

- To let parents/guardians know how their children are progressing in school
- To inform teachers on how children are coping outside school
- To establish an ongoing relationship and communication with parents/guardians
- To help teachers and parents/guardians get to know the children better as individuals
- To help children realize that home and school are working together

Informal Parent/Teacher Meetings

1. Communication between parents/guardians and teachers is to be encouraged.

2. Arranging parent/teacher meetings within the school day while children are in school is difficult.

However, parents/guardians are welcome to speak to the Principal or teacher(s) at an appointed time.

3. Meetings with the class teacher at the class door to discuss a child's concern/progress is discouraged on a number of grounds:

- i. A teacher cannot adequately supervise his/her class while at the same time speaking to a parent/guardian
- ii. It is difficult to be discrete when so many children are standing close by
- iii. It can be embarrassing for a child when his/her parent/guardian is talking to the teacher at a classroom door

4. Meetings outside of school hours, 9.00am-2.40pm, can only be facilitated if they are arranged in advance.

Occasions occur where a parent/guardian needs to speak to a teacher urgently or in the event of an emergency. Sometimes these meetings need to take place without prior notice. The Principal will attempt to facilitate such meetings making every effort to ensure that the children in the class do not lose out on any of the teaching/learning time. If it is not possible to speak with the Principal/Teacher, a phone call will be arranged for the most immediate suitable time.

If parents/guardians wish to drop in lunch boxes, sports gear etc, this can be done through the secretary's office. All visits to the school should be through the main front door.

Complaints Procedure

The updated complaints procedure to be followed in primary schools was issued in December 2023. It is available in Appendix 1.

Success Criteria for Parent/Teacher Communication Policy

- Positive relationship between staff and parents/guardians, with the best interests of the child always placed at the forefront of decision making.
- Swift and efficient resolution of grievances
- Parent/Teacher satisfaction
- Positive school community feedback
- Reviews of school policies as issues arise

Implementation

The procedures outlined in this policy will be implemented from Sept. 2025.

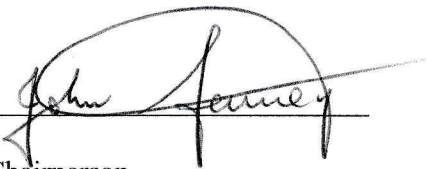
Review

These procedures will be evaluated at the end of the first year of implementation and reviewed regularly thereafter. The next review date is September 2025.


Any amendments necessary as a result of such reviews will be undertaken.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was approved by the Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Íde, Clonpriest NS on 2/12/2025

Signed: 
Chairperson

Date: 2-12-2025

Signed: 
Principal

Date: 2/12/2025

Revised Parental Complaints Procedure



Note:

- A copy of this procedure will be available for parents/legal guardians on the school website and/or on request from the school. This procedure comes into effect on the 1st of January 2024.
- Under the Education Act 1998, legally, all schools are managed by the school's Board of Management, on behalf of the school patron.

Purpose/Objective

The parental complaints procedure was revised and agreed by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation and the management bodies of primary schools, the Catholic Primary Schools Management Association, the Church of Ireland, An Foras Pátrúnachta, the Muslim Primary Education Board, Educate Together and the National Association of Boards of Management in Special Education in 2023. It is designed to provide an open and clearly defined process to facilitate parents/legal guardians in raising concerns about their own child/children in an agreed, fair and transparent manner.

It is recognised that parents/legal guardians are the primary educators in a child's life and as such from time-to-time concerns may arise which they may need to engage with the school. It is expected that engagement will be timely, courteous and resolution focused to ensure that the important relationship between the parent and school can be preserved and respected. It is expected that all parties concerned will engage proactively.

Procedural Points

The procedure is a staged procedure where every effort is made to resolve matters at the earliest possible stage. In most cases, concerns will be dealt with either informally or formally at the earlier stages of the procedure. Where it has not been possible to agree a resolution at the earlier stages, the procedure does allow for the escalation of the matter to the Board of Management. This procedure sets out, in four stages, the process to be followed in progressing a complaint and the specific timescale to be followed. It is expected the parties will follow each stage in sequence.

- Where the term written correspondence is used, this refers specifically to a letter or email correspondence from a parent/legal guardian(s).
- Only complaints about a teacher which are written and signed by a parent/legal guardian, and which relate to their own child, will be investigated.
- Where a complaint raised by a parent/legal guardian is deemed by the employer/board of management to relate to the following, this procedure will not apply;
 - matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education;
 - frivolous or vexatious complaints and complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in a school; or
 - complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure.
- In all circumstances, any form of written correspondence for the attention of the Board of Management must be supplied to the Chairperson of the board of management **only**. Any deviation from this could be deemed prejudicial and as acting outside the scope of this agreement.
- **Days in this procedure refer specifically to school days.** A school day is a day on which the school is in operation. Holiday periods, school closures and leaves of absences are not counted as school days for the purpose of this procedure.
- Group/collective complaints are not provided for and each parent/legal guardian raising a concern will be dealt with separately through this process.
- The procedure is a domestic forum and accordingly, neither management nor the INTO intends that there would be legal representation at any stage.
- Issues should be raised in a timely manner. It is in the best interests of the child that issues are raised to achieve early resolution at the earliest possible stage with the teacher, ideally while the pupil is in that teacher's class.

Formal Stage 1 Discussion

1.1 Parent/guardian meets teacher

A parent/legal guardian who wishes to make a complaint in respect of their own child, should, seek an appointment with the teacher concerned with a view to resolving the complaint. Further meetings with the teacher can be convened as appropriate.

1.2 Parent/guardian meets Principal¹

Where the parent/legal guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the teacher, they should seek an appointment with the Principal with a view to resolving the complaint. Further meetings can be convened by the Principal as appropriate.

1.3 Parent/guardian meets Chairperson

Where the complaint remains unresolved, the parent/legal guardian should seek an appointment with the Chairperson of the Board of Management with a view to resolving the complaint. Further meetings can be convened by the Chairperson as appropriate.

Complaint resolved

The complaint may be resolved during this stage.

Formal Stage 2 Written (10 days)

2.1 Written complaint sent to Chairperson

If the complaint has not been resolved at stage 1, the parent/legal guardian who wishes to pursue the matter further should submit the complaint in writing to the Chairperson of the Board of Management. This commences stage 2.

2.2 Chairperson provides a copy to the teacher

The Chairperson should provide a copy of the written complaint to the teacher against whom the complaint has been made, without delay.

2.3 Chairperson convenes meeting(s)

The Chairperson should seek to resolve the complaint between the teacher and the parent/legal guardian within 10 school days of the commencement of stage 2.1. This may require one or more meetings to be convened by the Chairperson with the teacher/parent/legal guardian and other school personnel as deemed appropriate by the Chairperson.

Complaint resolved

The complaint may be resolved at this stage.

Formal Stage 3 Board of Management (20 days)

3.1 Chairperson makes a formal report to the Board

If the complaint remains unresolved following stage 2 and the parent/legal guardian wishes to pursue the matter, they should inform the Chairperson in writing of this fact. The Chairperson should make a formal report to the Board of Management within 10 days of receipt of this written statement. At this meeting, the Board can decide to proceed to either stage 3.2 or 3.3.

3.2 Complaint concluded

Where the Board considers the complaint, the process may be concluded at this stage, if the board considers that:

- The complaint is frivolous/vexatious;
- The complaint has already been investigated by the board;
- The complaint is more appropriately dealt with through a more relevant DE circular, or;
- where recourse to law has been initiated.

Where the Board determines the complaint is concluded at this stage, the parent/legal guardian should be so informed within five days of the Board meeting.

Formal Stage 4 Decision (5 days)

4.1 Written decision from Chairperson

The Board will consider the complaint and the response provided and will adjudicate on the matter. The Chairperson should convey the decision of the Board in writing to the teacher and the parent/legal guardian(s) within five days of the meeting held at stage 3.3.

4.2 Complaint concluded

The decision of the Board shall be final.

3.3 Proceed to a hearing

Where the Board decides to proceed to a hearing, it should proceed as follows:

- the teacher should be informed that the complaint is proceeding to a full hearing and the Chairperson must ensure the teacher has been supplied with all documents which are being considered by the Board.
- the Board should arrange a meeting with the parent/legal guardian if it considers such to be required. The parent/legal guardian is entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting.
- the teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of their case to the Board. The teacher is entitled to be represented by a friend or a union representative, who may be accompanied for the purpose of assistance and note taking.
- the teacher should be requested to supply a written statement to the board as the employer in response to the complaint. This written statement will be confidential to the employer and will not be shared with any third party.
- the meeting of the Board of Management referred to in 3(b), (c) and (d) will take place within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.1, in so far as possible.

¹Where a complaint is received about a principal the above process commences at Stage 1.2.