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Communication and Complaint Policy

Introduction:

The Board of Management and the staff of St Paul's N.S. aim to protect the well being of its pupils and staff by nurturing a safe and caring environment at all times.

Rationale:

The rationale underpinning the formulation of this Communication and Complaint Policy is the requirement of the Education Act (1998), which prescribes for all schools to provide a mechanism for dealing fairly with parental complaints against a teacher. The Board of Management of St Paul's N.S. has adopted the INTO/CPSMA Complaints Procedure to aid the development of this policy.

Relationship to School Ethos:

The school promotes positive home-school contacts and endeavours to enhance the self-esteem of everyone within the school community. The Board of Management encourages good communication between the school and parents, as all partners in the education system must work together for the benefit of the pupils.

Aims of the Communication and Complaints Procedure:

- To foster trusting relationships between school and parents.
- To afford parents an opportunity to express opinions or grievances through the framework of a defined procedure.
- To minimise the opportunity for conflict.

Please Note:

This policy does not cover:

- Complaints that are being dealt with through legal channels.
- Matters of professional competence which come under the remit of the Department of Education and Skills.
- Petty complaints, which do not relate to the work of a particular teacher.

Framework of Procedures:

If a person 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:

1. The parent/guardian meets with the teacher on appointment. Parents should not contact teachers at home. If the issue is not resolved the teacher informs the Principal of the nature of the complaint. If the matter remains unresolved the parent/guardian may raise the matter with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.
2. If the grievance persists, the parent/guardian may pursue the matter by lodging a complaint in writing with the Chairperson of the Board of Management who will bring the nature of the complaint to the notice of the teacher and seek to resolve the issue.
3. 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. This will happen within ten school days of receipt of the written complaint.
4. If the complaint remains unresolved the Chairperson will report formally to the Board of Management within another ten school days. If the Board of Management does not uphold the complaint, both parties will be informed immediately. If the Board of Management considers the complaint warrants further investigations, the teacher will be informed and supplied with any written evidence in support of the complaint.
5. The teacher will be requested to supply a written statement to the Board of Management 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 ten days of the first meeting between Chairperson, Principal and Teacher.
6. Within five school days, the decision of the Board of Management, which is final and binding, is delivered in writing to the teacher and the complainant.

Monitoring and Review:

This policy, in accordance with the Education Act 1998, will be regularly reviewed by representatives of the Patron, the Board of Management, parents and teachers.

Modification Clause:

The Board of Management reserves the right to modify details of the Communication and Complaints Procedure at short notice. Such modification may be needed in an ever-changing environment and social context.

Policy Ratified on: _____

Signed by: _____
Chairperson

Dated: _____



