

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR
ST PATRICK'S N.S

Aims

St. Patrick's National School. Newbridge

1. To recognise the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional and social potential of each child who attends the school.
2. To equip each child with the abilities to deal with a changing world.
3. To nurture the potential of each child, to help each child to become a fully developed individual.
4. To help each child to recognise his/her worth.
5. To help each child to recognise the rights and needs of others, to respect those rights and to be considerate.
6. To make St. Patrick's a school where children feel secure and empowered.
7. To challenge the academic abilities of the children.
8. To foster a love of learning.
9. To foster a love of excellence.
10. To make St. Patrick's a rewarding place to work, where the skills, effort and commitment of each teacher are recognised and valued.
11. To strengthen partnerships within the Newbridge/Kildare area.

School Ethos

The ethos of St Patrick's is informed by its foundation as a Church of Ireland school with Christian values. It draws from the faith and values of its teachers and from the homes of the children. It is the policy of St. Patrick's to support and nurture family life and to work in harmony with the parents of the children.

The community life is based on:

- Tolerance
- Forgiveness
- Justice
- Courtesy
- Good manners
- Willingness to embrace change
- Love of excellence
- Value of effort
- Honesty
- The beauty of the human spirit
- Belief in the value of the arts

St Patrick's as a community believes it has an important role in exploring, understanding, conserving, respecting and celebrating the environment.

Philosophy of Education

The philosophy which underpins the work of the teachers in St. Patrick's is based on the recognition that each child is born:

To be somebody
To do something
To say something

We want to help children to ask and answer these questions:

Who am I?
What can I do?
What can I achieve?
What is my place in the world?

The work of St. Patrick's is child-centred and tries to meet needs generated by putting children first.

The teachers' roles both collectively and individually are:

Leader
Builder of courage
Builder of confidence
Setter of goals
Challenger
Celebrator of achievement
Interpreter of achievement
Healer
Reconciler
Justice Maker
Artist
Creator
Guide
Keeper of Dreams

WHOLE-SCHOOL APPROACH

Students' behaviour is influenced by school climate, values, policies, practices and relationships. The code of behaviour, on its own, cannot create the environment that makes it possible for students to learn and behave well. In St. Patricks N.S. we strive to create a positive school climate where values, policies, practices and relationships support and promote good behaviour. As a school we recognise the individuality and background of each child, and encourage every child to reach their full potential both in and out of class. All children are encouraged to "Do their best" at what ever task is placed in front of them.

The foundation of positive learning behaviour is effective teaching, and an inclusive and engaging curriculum. The learning programme in St. Pat's is presented in a positive and exploring fashion where the children are engaged and motivated to learn through a variety of teaching methods.

A whole-school approach requires that the BOM, principal, teachers, other school staff, parents and pupils understand and live up to their responsibilities. This means, for example, that parents need to recognise how their commitment to, and their relationship with, the school can impact on behaviour and learning. The children learn how their behaviour and learning, the learning of fellow students, and the wellbeing of staff, are linked together.

In any community, discipline means a willingness to share the environment peacefully. In a school, pupils and teachers have a right to work and learn in an atmosphere free from fear and intimidation. Discipline means that each person recognises and acknowledge the rights of others. The school's concept of discipline is a positive one. The Code of Behaviour for St. Patrick's is a set of supportive measures to help each child grow and develop and is based on the following points of school policy:

- Teachers and parents are partners in education and consultation between parents and teachers is encouraged.
- St. Patrick's is a Church of Ireland school with a Christian ethos.
- St Patrick's is a community and the members of that community will always try to accept and accommodate differences.
- St Patrick's believes in the uniqueness and individual worth of every child.
- All children are equal regardless of gender, ability, creed or social background.
- St. Patrick's is part of the wider community and welcomes links between the school and the community.
- In prompting the good behaviour of pupils there is emphasis on encouragement, praise and reward, rather than on sanctions. When it is necessary to impose sanctions, it should be made clear that it is the behaviour, not the child, which is unacceptable.

1. Pupils are expected to obey all instructions from teachers while in school, in the school grounds or taking part in school activities outside the school.
2. The school rules and Code of Behaviour and the need for them will be explained to each class in terms appropriate to their age.
3. The child is taught that each child can choose to obey or disobey instructions or rules. If a child chooses to disobey then the child will have to accept the consequences.

Responding to inappropriate behaviour.

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- Helping the children to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- Helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- Helping children (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- Helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- > reinforce the boundaries set out in the Code of Behaviour
- > signal to other pupils and staff that their well-being is being protected.

Policy:

4. To give children an opportunity to withdraw as an aid to conflict resolution a child may be sent to another classroom for “time out”
5. **Detention:** If a child has difficulty accepting that the school expects him/her to obey the rules, a teacher or the principal may in order to reinforce the seriousness of that expectation, detain a child for a period of time during lunch times at a place where the child will be supervised. Before detention begins children may eat lunch, use the toilet.
6. If a pupil deliberately strikes another pupil with intent, then that pupil will be detained in a classroom for at least one big break under supervision provided by the principal or a member of the in-school management team.

7. If a pupil is consistently in breach of the school and/or classroom rules, after exploring possible reasons for misbehaviour, it shall be open to the class teacher to report the child to the principal.
8. The principal will record, in writing, the child's name and the date of the referral and the reason for the referral. The principal will then explain the relevant rules and remind the child about expectations for future behaviour. Subsequent referrals will also be recorded.
9. Regular written and verbal communication between school and home is an important feature of the Code of Behaviour.
10. If a child continues to breach the Code of Behaviour and does not respond to the admonishment, the principal/and a teacher has the option of seeking an appointment with the child's parents.
11. The principal and /or teacher and parents will discuss the child's behaviour and explore possible reasons for it. The parents will be expected to undertake to support the school and the class teacher in expecting the child to abide by the Code of Behaviour.
12. If a parent is unwilling or unable to support the school's expectation from the child and if the child's behaviour has not improved, the principal has the option of suspending the pupil from the school for a period not exceeding 3 school days. **A pupil may be suspended for a single serious breach of the Code of Behaviour.**
13. In consultation with the principal and having arranged through the Patron an alternative place in a primary school, the Board of Management or the Chairman on its behalf has the option of expelling a pupil for serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour.
14. If parents are unhappy with the way in which a particular incident has been handled, the complaints procedure outlined in the policy on bullying may be used.

Strategies for affirming positive behaviour.

- a) Praise may be given by using any of the following:
 - A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
 - A comment in a pupil's exercise book.
 - A visit to another member of staff or the principal for commendation.
 - A word of praise in front of a group or class.
 - A system of merit marks relevant to age of class.
 - Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
 - A mention to parent, written or verbal communication

Strategies for signalling unacceptable behaviour

(The nature of the behaviour will determine the strategy).

- Reasoning with pupils.
- Reprimand (Including advice on how to improve behaviour).
- Prescribing extra work.
- Detention
- Communication with parents (verbal/written)
- Temporary separation from peers and/ or loss of privileges.
- Referral to principal or deputy principal.
- Record unacceptable behaviour in incident book.
- Take note for teacher's records.
- Pupils to write explanation.
- Suspension / expulsion in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules of National Schools as amended by Circular 7/88.

Parents Role:

- Parents can encourage good behaviour at school by promoting a positive image of the school and by discussing the school rules and the need for them with their children.
- The teachers and principal in the school are always willing to meet parents to discuss concerns or difficulties.
- If you are asked to come to the school to discuss a problem, please remember that the teacher or principal wants to discuss the problem, not apportion blame or make judgements.
- There will be times when you totally disagree with something a teacher says or does. If this happens, please check that you have the correct version of events and then discuss the problem with the teacher or principal.
- Please do not undermine the authority of the school by criticising a teacher in front of the pupils; come to the school to discuss the problem.
- Listen to your child and talk about what is happening in school and let them know that you are interested and aware of what is going on.
- Be on the alert for any changes in mood or behaviour as this can sometimes indicate that a child is worried or under pressure.
- Please remember that children can be best served when teachers and parents work together and stay in touch.
- Please check homework diaries daily for comments from your child's teacher and sign the diary.
- Classroom rules and teachers' expectations are explained at September class parent / teacher meetings.

Policy on Bullying.

What is bullying?

Bullying is defined as repeated aggression, whether verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others. Examples of bullying include physical aggression, damage to property, intimidation, isolation, name-calling, taunting or “slagging”. Child to child bullying, teacher to child, intra staff bullying, parent to staff and parent to child bullying (including a child other than their own) are examples of the areas where bullying may occur.

Isolated instances of aggressive behaviour, which would be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour, would not be described as bullying. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing, it is bullying.

The school acknowledges that there are three parties involved in bullying – those who bully, those who are bullied and those who witness the bullying. Staff and teachers bear this in mind when dealing with bullying incidences and try to support and work with all parties involved.

Policy Statement:

Every pupil in St. Patrick’s has the right to learn and take part in school activities free from fear and intimidation.

- St. Patrick’s as a community does not tolerate unkind actions or remarks even if they are not intended to hurt.
- Repeated acts of unkindness will be called bullying.
- Bullying will be treated seriously.
- Children who are bullied or who witness bullying are taught:
 1. Say “No”!
 2. Get Away.
 3. Tell someone you trust and keep telling.
- The school discourages children from standing idly by through inactive participation. Do something/tell.
- The school recognises the worth of every single pupil.
- Bullies and their victims are children in need and the school will always try to meet those needs.
- The school recognises the parents’ rights to share in the teaching of life skills.

Definitions:

Bully:

A girl / boy who repeatedly oppresses or harasses somebody else. The target may be boys or girls, the harassment physical, psychological, verbal or exclusion.

Victim:

A boy / girl who for a period of time has been and still is exposed to aggression or exclusion from others. (That is boys or girls from his/her class or maybe from other classes, who pick fights, are rough with him/her or tease and ridicule him/her).

School Policy on dealing with Bullying.

1. Teachers will record incidents of bullying behaviour. This record will not be used as a threat to children.
2. When a child reports an incident of bullying, he/she will be interviewed by the teacher. The alleged bully will also be interviewed. If the incident is serious in the teacher's opinion, the case will be referred to the principal. The principal will proceed in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.
3. If a parent wishes to report an incident of bullying, the report should be made directly to a member of the teaching staff. The parents of the alleged bully will be informed at the earliest opportunity and invited to meet the principal, and/or teacher to discuss the incident.
4. If any parent feels that an incident has not been resolved satisfactorily the following procedures are open to the parents:

See Appendix 1 Complaints Procedure

5. It is school policy that parents who have an issue with another pupil should refer the matter to a member of the teaching staff. Outside agencies, including parents will not be allowed to communicate with or interview individual children without referring to a member of the teaching staff and without the parental permission or involvement of the child's parents. Parents must check in at office before entering the school building.
6. It is school policy that children should not be told to "Hit back; Fight your own battles; You'll have to toughen up."

Children with Additional Needs

All children are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However, the school recognizes that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents, the class teacher, learning support/resource teacher, principal and/or relevant outside agencies. The principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments is invaluable.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs to adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the differences in all individuals.

School Rules

The school rules are drawn up to help you to be safe and happy in school. You have the right to be safe and happy and so has every child in St. Patrick's N.S. You have a responsibility to work hard at your school work. Your teacher has a right to work and be happy. You have a right to own things and so has your teacher and other children. If you find it hard to remember all the school rules, just ask yourself, "When I do this am I interfering with somebody's right to be safe, to be happy and to work? Am I putting myself in danger? Am I being responsible?"

- In St. Patrick's people speak respectfully to each other and treat each other respectfully.
- Be courteous and helpful to people around you.
- If you are upset or worried or afraid, tell somebody.
- You must have permission from a teacher to go or stay indoors for break.
- Listen carefully and if you are not sure about something, ask your teacher.
- Always use your gift of speech properly- your voice is not for shouting, using bad language or being rude or cruel.
- You must not take what does not belong to you no matter how much you want it.
- Make sure you have your own equipment (pencils, pens, erasers, etc)
- Always ask before borrowing something.
- Always walk while indoors and exiting the school building.
- You are not allowed to punch, hit or kick people – no matter how angry you feel.

- Hand things to people – never throw them.
- **Be in school before the bell rings at 8.45 a.m.**
- Treat school equipment and other pupil's equipment with care.
- Wear school coat to school and school tracksuit on P.E days or on school outings.
- **Mobile phones are not allowed in school.** If on a certain day you have to bring a phone to school you must have a note from parents/guardians. Phones must be switched off and handed in at the office where it will be kept during school hours. Student may collect phone from the office at the end of the day.
- Always be careful coming to and going home from school.
- Always keep your school clean by bringing unfinished food and drinks, cartons, wrappers etc home. You should show respect for the school building and grounds.
- Remember how special you are. Always try your best, be kind to yourself and take care of how you look.

Dress Code

Following consultation with staff, the Board of Management, parents and children we have updated our dress code.

Children in St. Patrick's N.S do not wear a school uniform. The Board of Management appreciates that, through their chosen attire, pupils may express their individuality and confidence. We believe that a dress code is part of the personal education of children, and they are encouraged to become aware themselves of what is, and what is not acceptable in terms of what they wear in the school environment. In order to facilitate this learning, we have a dress code to help them make the right choices in terms of their school clothes and to realise that some forms of clothing are not appropriate for school.

However, pupils are expected to wear their full school tracksuit on PE days and when going on school trips or outings. They are required to wear their school coats (navy coat for 6th class students if they have outgrown school coat – any other colour coat or fleece is not acceptable) in winter and on cold or wet days and when going on school trips.

- Clothes worn to school should be clean, in good order and appropriate for daily school life
- Underwear should never be seen

- The length of skirts, dresses and shorts must extend below your child's fingertips when his or her arms are extended by their sides
- Tops that expose the midriff must not be worn

Attire worn to school throughout the week should always allow children to play actively and safely at break times. Physical exertion at break times is an integral part of the school day and students' mode of dress should not inhibit them from playing normal childhood games; thus, items such as very wide/very long trousers and shoes/boots with high heels should not be worn. Flip-flops and heeled shoes are particularly unsafe and should not be worn. This is a health and safety matter.

Jewellery should be appropriate to daily school life. Jewellery that is very long and loose such as necklaces, chains and long earrings may all be pulled, accidentally or otherwise, whilst the wearing of large rings, brooches or badges could pose a risk (again accidentally or otherwise) to fellow pupils. This is a health and safety issue.

Parents/guardians are requested to label school coats and tracksuits (tops and bottoms). The school does not take responsibility for any lost clothes. If a child has lost any items of clothing, parents/guardians can check the lost property box.

When do you need a note?

- To explain why you were absent
- To explain why you are late for school
- To explain why your homework is not completed
- If you need to leave school during school day
- If there is a change in arrangements for going home after school
- If you need to have a mobile phone on a certain day
- If you need to stay in during break time.
- If you cannot take part in P.E or physical activity.
- If you have not got your school tracksuit for PE or outing.
- If you are not wearing your school coat.

In the yard

- Keep off the grass if it is wet.
- Play and share fairly.
- When you hear the bell, walk quietly to your line and wait for teacher.
- Walk to and from the yard in an orderly fashion.
- Wipe feet when going indoors.
- After school, wait at the front of school for your transport home. Pedestrians walk out through small school gates.
- Remember to walk in the yard at drop-off and pick-up times.

Remember: Never ever leave the school grounds without permission.

Every teacher in the school is in charge and is responsible for your safety and well being and you must do what teacher tells you.

Healthy Lunches.

We encourage children to pack healthy and nutritious lunches. Chewing-gum is not allowed. Sweets, chocolate and fizzy drinks are not encouraged, instead why not drink milk or fruit juices and bring a sandwich and fruit or yoghurt everyday. No glass bottles for safety reasons.

All days (Mon through to Fri) are “Healthy Eating Days”. Child may bring a treat on Friday.

Methods of Communication with Parents.

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and at school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor to encouraging positive behaviour in school. Structures and channels designed to maintain high levels of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents has been established and are reviewed regularly.

Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in their child’s life, in the past or present, which may affect their child’s behaviour.

The following methods are used at all levels within St. Patrick’s:

- Informal parent / teacher meetings and Formal parent / teacher meetings.
- Via Aladdin Connect
- Through children’s homework journal (infants do not have a homework journal – check bags)
- Letters / notes from school to home and from home to school.
- Telephone call to parents from teacher.
- Agreed daily, weekly or monthly report.
- End of year Report cards.

Review

This policy was reviewed in 2011 by teachers, Board of Management, committee of parents from the PTA and the Principal. This policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis or any other time it is deemed necessary.

Ratification and Communication.

This plan was ratified by the Board of Management on 25/11/2011.

This plan will be communicated to all relevant parties.

This policy was reviewed and updated on 11/02/14.

This plan was reviewed and ratified by the BOM on 26/04/16.

This policy was reviewed, updated and ratified by the BOM on 19/09/2023

APPENDIX 1 – COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

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

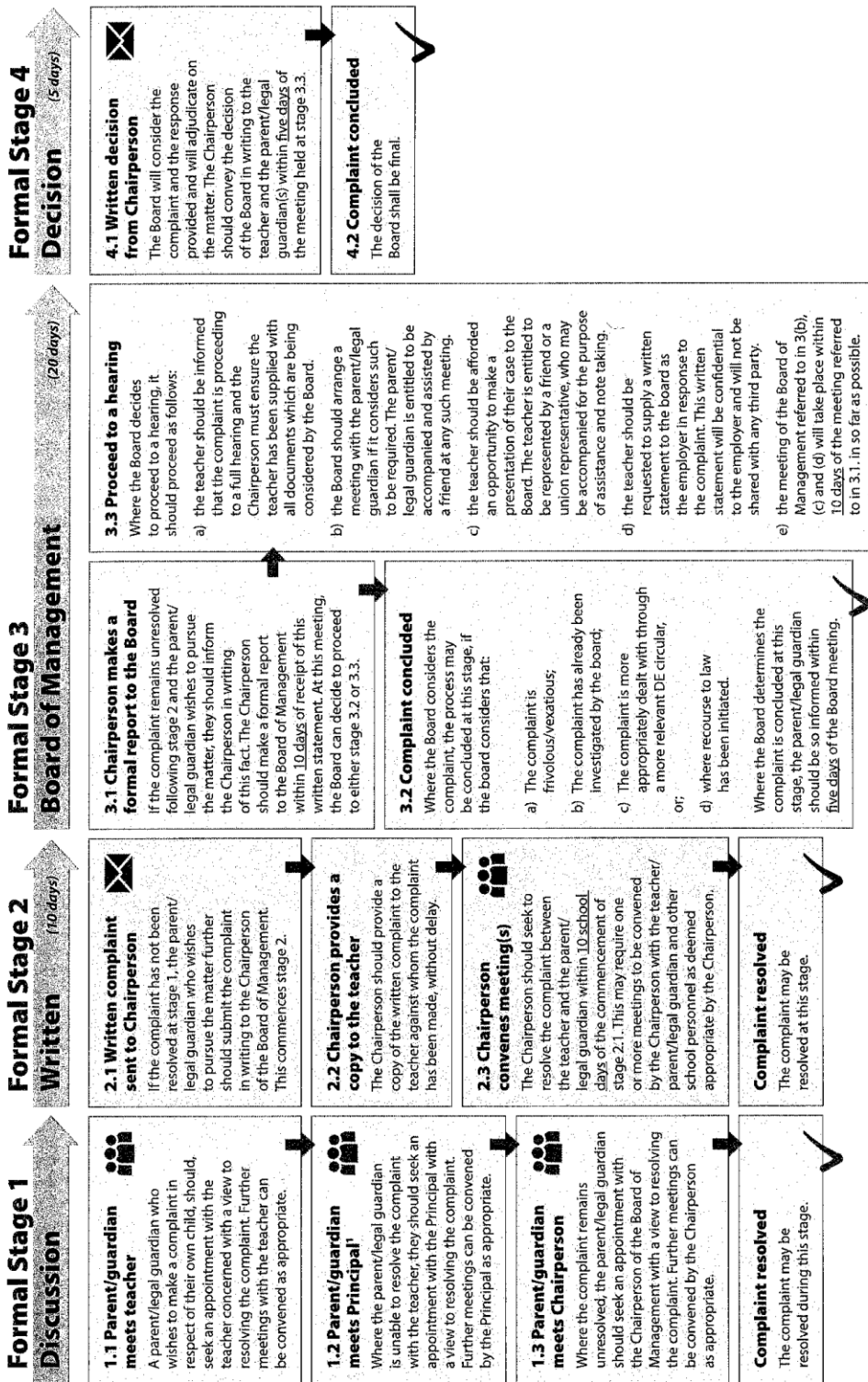
The parental complaints procedure was revised and agreed by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation and the management bodies of primary schools, the Catholic Primary Schools Management Association, the Church of Ireland, An Foras Pátrúnachta, the Muslim Primary Education Board, Educate Together and 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.



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