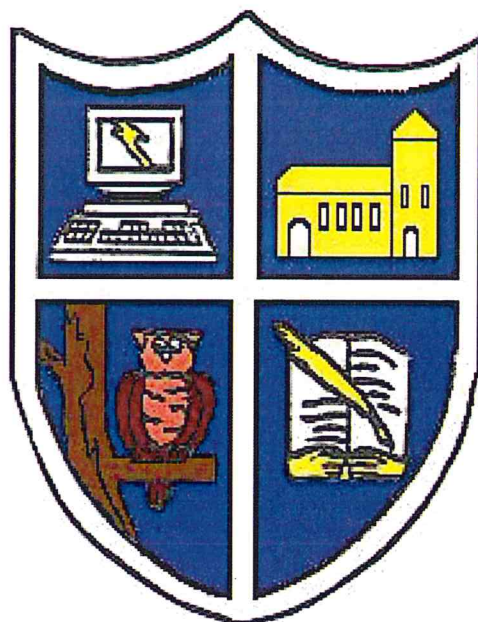


**COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

**FOR**

**Ballytrea Primary School**



## Foreword from the Principal

Our school vision states:

Ballytrea Primary School believes in promoting spiritual, personal, social and academic goals, desirable for our pupils. We wish to promote such values that will enable pupils to become caring responsible adults of the future. These values are inherent in all areas of the school's life and provide the basis of, and are implicit in our school policies. We believe in the development of the whole person and in promoting respect for others.

All staff employed in Ballytrea Primary school share these ideals, values and beliefs. The care of our pupils is a shared responsibility among us all. Central to this vision are the strong relationships between school, home and the community.

The school seeks, through the Education Reform (NI) Act 1989 to afford every child the opportunity to be educated to his/her full potential by providing a broad and balanced curriculum, which develops the skills, concepts and knowledge necessary to prepare our young people for the world in which they live.

Here at Ballytrea Primary School, we value parents'/ carers' opinions/ feedback and we take complaints very seriously. We have the best interests of all our pupils and their families at the centre of all we do. In this regard, we encourage anyone with a concern to speak to us as soon as possible. If concerns are dealt with at an early stage, then they are more likely to be resolved and there is no unnecessary dissatisfaction.

Many issues can be addressed simply by talking to the relevant staff in school who will be happy to help. Open communication and regular engagement between the school, parents/carers and other stakeholders is vital to the effective management of the school.

We welcome open communication with our staff and you can speak to staff by contacting the school secretary to arrange a meeting with the class teacher/ Principal at a mutually convenient time.

If you have any issues, please talk to the teacher as soon as possible. Concerns about matters other than in the classroom should be raised with the Principal. We take all concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve matters as quickly as possible.

## Complaints Procedure – At a glance

### Stage One

Write to the Principal

### Stage Two

Write to the Chairperson of Board of Governors

### Time Limit

To help us resolve your complaint, please contact us as soon as possible. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, we will only consider a complaint within 6 months of you becoming aware of the issue.

### Stage One

When making a complaint, contact the school Principal who will arrange for the complaint to be investigated. *If the complaint is about the Principal, proceed to Stage Two.* The school requires complaints to be made in writing. However, where this is not possible the school will make reasonable arrangements to support you. Please provide as much information as possible including:

- Your name and contact details
- What the complaint is about
- What has already been done to try to resolve it and
- What you would like the school to do.

The complaint will normally be acknowledged within 5 school working days and a response normally made within 20 school working days of receipt of the complaint.

*These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.*

If you are unhappy with the outcome at Stage 1, your complaint may be progressed to Stage 2 which is overseen by the Board of Governors.

### Stage Two

If the complaint is unresolved after Stage One, write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors (*care of the school and marked 'private and confidential'*), who will convene a sub-committee to review the complaint. Please provide as much detail as possible as indicated above.



## 1. SCOPE OF COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1.1 The Complaints Handling Procedure sets out how any expression of dissatisfaction relating to the school will be managed. By taking concerns raised by parents or others seriously at the earliest possible stage, we hope to resolve issues quickly and effectively.

### 1.2 Complaints with separate established procedures

Some examples of established procedures or appeal mechanisms are listed below. The list is not exhaustive. Your Principal/ Chair of Governors will advise you on the appropriate procedure to use when you first raise your complaint.

*You may still take your complaint to NIPSO, should you remain dissatisfied upon completion of one of these procedures.*

Exceptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Admissions / Expulsions / Exclusion of children from school</li><li>• Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN)</li><li>• School Development Proposals</li><li>• Child Protection / Safeguarding</li></ul>

1.3 The school will not normally investigate anonymous complaints, unless deemed by the Chair of the Board of Governors to be of a serious nature. The decision of dealing with such complaints will be at the discretion of the Board of Governors.

**Stage 1** - Normally acknowledge within 5 school working days, response normally within 20 school working days

**Stage 2** - Normally acknowledge within 5 school working days, response normally within 20 school working days

If, for any reason, the review of your complaint takes longer to complete, you will be informed of revised time limits kept updated on progress.

*These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.*

### **3. Making A Complaint**

#### **3.1 Equality**

The school requires complaints to be made in writing. However, where this is not possible, please contact the Principal who will make reasonable arrangements.

#### **3.2 Unreasonable Complaints**

The school is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain.

There will be occasions when, despite all stages of the complaints procedure having been completed and the complaint has been reviewed by the Ombudsman, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If they try to re-open the same issue, the Chair of Governors will inform them that the procedure has been completed and that the matter is now closed.

If the complainant repeatedly continues to contact the school with the same issue we may choose not to respond.