

MONASTERY NATIONAL SCHOOL

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Monastery National School

Parental Grievance / Complaints Policy & Procedure 2014

Introductory Statement

As a school community, we are committed to upholding our Catholic ethos, our school mission statement and our vision for the school in all our dealings with pupils, parents, one another and with the wider community in which our pupils live.

For that reason, we will try to prevent or minimise the need for complaints where this is possible. However, given that our community is made up of human beings and that mistakes can be made, we will approach these issues in a spirit of mutual respect and tolerance for the benefit of all.

It is the intention of the Board of Management of Monastery National School to ensure that all issues of concern, grievance or complaint are dealt with in accordance with the following policy and procedure. It is adapted from the Irish National Teachers' Organisation and the Catholic Primary School Managers' Association agreement in 1993 on a procedure for dealing with grievances / complaints by parents against teachers. The purpose of the procedure is to facilitate the resolution of difficulties, where they may arise, in an agreed and fair manner. Any issues or complaints will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence. The procedures for dealing with issues of concern will be dealt with by either informal or formal resolution.

1. It will be the policy of the school to adhere to the **CPSMA/INTO Agreed Parental Grievance / Complaints Procedure** for dealing with complaints by parents against teachers. Please note this is a non-statutory procedure.
2. The purpose of this procedure is to facilitate the resolution of difficulties where they may arise in an agreed and fair manner.

This procedure lays out in five stages the process to be followed in progressing a grievance / complaint and the specific timescale to be followed at each stage.

Note: In this agreement 'days' shall mean school days.

3. Only those grievances / complaints about teachers which are written and signed by parents/guardians of pupils may be investigated formally by the Board of management, **except** where those complaints are deemed by the Board to be:
 - I. on matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education and Skills;
 - II. frivolous or vexatious complaints and complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in a school; or
 - III. complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure.

Unwritten complaints, not in the above categories, may be processed informally as set out in Stage 1 of this procedure.

Stage 1

- 1.1 A parent/guardian who wishes to make a complaint should, unless there are local arrangements to the contrary, approach the class teacher with a view to resolving the complaint.
- 1.2 Where the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher s/he should approach the principal teacher with a view to resolving it.
- 1.3 If the complaint is still unresolved the parent/guardian should raise the matter with the chairperson of the Board of Management with a view to resolving it.

Stage 2

- 2.1 If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent/guardian wishes to pursue the matter further s/he should lodge the complaint **in writing** with the chairperson of the Board of Management.
- 2.2 The chairperson should bring the precise nature of the written complaint to the notice of the teacher and seek to resolve the matter between the parties **within five days** of receipt of the written complaint.

Stage 3

- 3.1 If the complaint is not resolved informally, the chairperson should, subject to the general authorisation of the board and except in those cases where the chairperson deems the particular authorisation of the board to be required:
 - (a) supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint; and
 - (b) arrange a meeting with the teacher and, where applicable, the principal teacher, with a view to resolving the complaint. Such a meeting should take place **within 10 days** of receipt of the written complaint.

Stage 4

- 4.1 If the complaint is still not resolved the chairperson should make a formal report to the board **within 10 days** of the meeting referred to in 3.1(b).
- 4.2 If the Board considers that the complaint **is not** substantiated the teacher and the complainant should be so informed **within three days** of the board meeting.
- 4.3 If the Board considers that the complaint **is** substantiated or that it warrants further investigation it proceeds as follows:
 - (a) The teacher should be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage;
 - (b) The teacher should be supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint;
 - (c) The teacher should be requested to supply a written statement to the Board in response to the complaint;
 - (d) The teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of case to the Board. The teacher would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting;
 - (e) The Board may arrange a meeting with the complainant if it considers such to be required. The complainant would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting; and
 - (f) The meeting of the Board of Management referred to in (d) and (e) will take place **within 10 days** of the meeting referred to in 3.1(b).

Stage 5

- 5.1 When the Board has completed its investigation, the chairperson should convey the decision of the board in writing to the teacher and the complainant within five days of the meeting of the board.
- 5.2 The decision of the Board shall be final.
- 5.3 This Complaints Procedure shall be reviewed after three years.

Further Investigation:

- The [Office of the Ombudsman for Children](#) provides an independent and impartial complaint handling service in accordance with the Ombudsman for Children Act 2002.
- Under section 9 of the Act, the Ombudsman for Children can investigate complaints relating to the administrative actions of a school recognised by the Department of Education and Skills, provided the complainant has firstly and fully followed the school's complaints procedures.
- Information about the Ombudsman for Children can be obtained on www.oco.ie or by contacting them at: E-mail: oco@oco.ie.

Address:
Ombudsman for Children's Office,
Millennium House,
52-56 Great Strand Street, Dublin 1

Phone: 01 865 6800; Free-phone: 1800 20 20 40

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Monastery National School

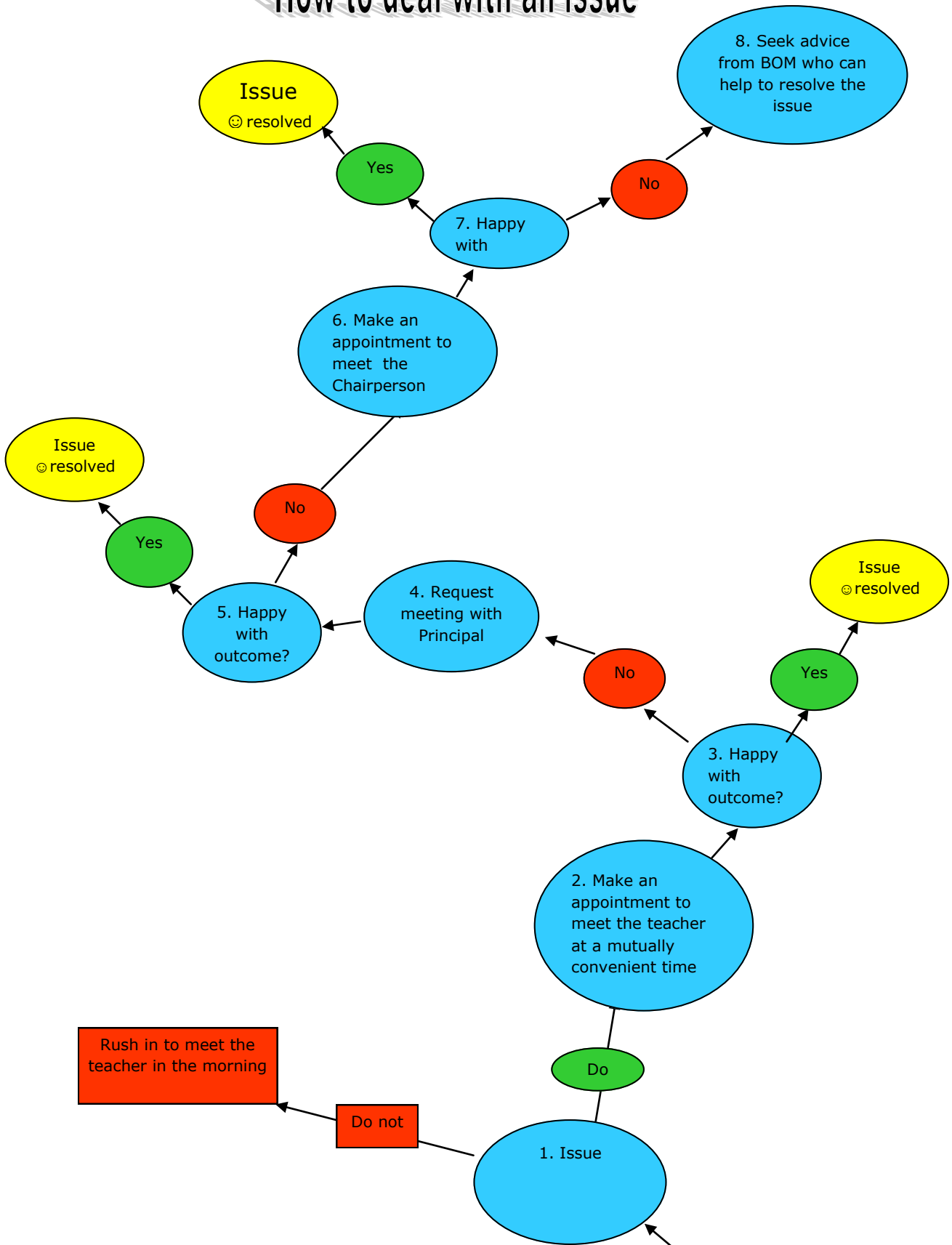
Date: December 2014

Signed (Chairperson) : *Father Peter Murphy*

Signed (Principal): *Mr Jim McGee*

Next review date: 2018

How to deal with an issue



Start Here!