



Stage 1 A parent/guardian should firstly raise the matter with class teacher with a view to resolving it and if unresolved with the principal teacher. If still unresolved it should be raised with the Board of Management (BOM) Chairperson. The school should ensure that parents are informed periodically of the policy, particularly in relation to making an appointment to see the teacher. If the complaint is against the school principal, it should be raised firstly with the principal and if unresolved, with the BOM Chairperson. This stage should be attempted with any complaint, either verbal or written.

Stage 2 If the complaint is unresolved at Stage 1, the complainant should raise the matter in writing with the BOM Chairperson who should try and resolve the matter informally within 5 days. A note should be kept of any meeting and its outcomes which should be agreed with the parties. The INTO advises that a teacher should be given a copy of any written complaint.

Stage 3 If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the Chairperson should give the teacher a copy of the written complaint and arrange a meeting within ten days with the teacher and, where applicable, the principal teacher with a view to resolving the complaint. Stages 1-3 should be completed in advance of the BOM having sight of the details of the complaint.

Stage 4 If unresolved, the Chairperson should, within a further 10 days, make a formal report to the BOM. If the BOM decides the complaint to be unsubstantiated the teacher and the complainant are informed within three days of the BOM meeting. If the BOM considers the complaint substantiated or warranting further investigation the teacher is informed, supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint and asked to supply a written statement to the BOM. The teacher should be given an opportunity to make a presentation to the BOM within ten days and is entitled to be accompanied/assisted by a friend at this meeting, as is the complainant. INTO advises that any member who is asked to supply a written response or attend a BOM meeting should contact their CEC Representative or INTO Head Office for advice and assistance.

Stage 5 When the BOM has completed its investigation, the teacher and the complainant should, within five days of the meeting, be informed of the final decision of the BOM including any outcomes and proposed action.

The DES is now advising that a complainant unhappy with the investigation/handling of the complaint by a BOM may bring the matter to the attention of the school patron or refer the matter to the Office of the Ombudsman for Children.

The underlying principles of the procedure are that all parties are entitled to a fair and impartial determination of any outcomes. Anyone with a connection to one of the parties that would raise concerns regarding impartiality should not investigate or decide a case. BOM members should be reminded of obligations in respect of confidentiality.