

# KJHS

## COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE



# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

## FOREWORD

This document represents a revised Killicomaine Junior High School Complaints Procedure.

Where Parents, Stakeholders or members of the public have concerns about the administration of the school, they should use the procedures which are laid out in this document.

## RATIONALE

This Policy has been drawn up to support all pupils, parents and stakeholders who have any concerns relating to how the school is being managed. This Policy clearly outlines the course of action that they should take to best ensure that their concern is satisfactorily addressed.

Where their concern is not satisfactorily addressed, this Policy clearly outlines that they should then follow the Complaints Procedure.

This Policy is written, following a format which has been historically proven to satisfactorily address any concerns, by directing the concern to the relevant on-site professional and causing least negative impact on the education and achievement of the pupil.



## **SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

**“Working together for excellence in a caring Community”**

Killicomaine recognises and continually stresses the importance of the ‘triangle of learning’, where teachers, pupils and parents must work together for the pupil to achieve most in school.

One of the priorities in our School Development Plan 2021-23 is CONNECTED TO COMMUNITY .

This Complaints Procedure will improve our collaborative processes with parents and others in the local community, where concerns exist to the extent that they warrant a complaint being made.

## **CONCERNS**

Most concerns from parents or any other school user should be addressed, by simply talking to the relevant staff member in school. Killicomaine JHS welcomes this type of engagement.

Classroom issues should be raised with the Class teacher.

If concern remains the issue will be referred to the Head of Department.

Pastoral, social and behavioural issues should be raised with the Form Teacher.

If concern remains the issue will be referred to the Year Head.

Where concern remains after dealing with Head of Department/Year Head, the issue will be referred to the Vice-Principal.

If concern still remains, it will be deemed a Complaint and will be dealt with by the Principal and come under the regulation of this Complaints Procedure.

This referral system exists so that concerns can be shared by a range of professionals and cause least disruption to the Teaching and Learning process, allowing the child to continue to gain maximum benefit from his/her time in school.

**WE TAKE ALL CONCERNS SERIOUSLY AND MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO RESOLVE MATTERS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, WITH THE LEAST DISRUPTION TO THE TEACHER'S PLANNING AND DELIVERY, AND THEREFORE MOST IMPORTANTLY, LEAST DISRUPTION TO THE PUPIL'S LEARNING.**

**CONCERNS**

CLASSROOM  
ISSUES

CLASS  
TEACHER

HEAD OF  
DEPARTMENT

PASTORAL,  
SOCIAL,  
BEHAVIOURAL

FORM TEACHER

HEAD OF YEAR

VICE PRINCIPAL

P  
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**COMPLAINT**

PRINCIPAL

CHAIRMAN OF  
BOARD OF  
GOVERNORS

P  
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**NI PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN**

**AIMS**

When dealing with CONCERNS or COMPLAINTS, Killicomaine Junior High School will;

- aim to resolve the issue as quickly as possible
- aim to respond as soon as possible
- keep all parties informed
- ensure a full and fair investigation
- respect the rights of teacher, pupils, parents or other parties
- respect confidentiality
- take appropriate action
- review and adapt if necessary, practice within school, as a result of findings
- best ensure that all parties communicate in a respectful manner with each other

**COMPLAINTS**

Time limit – Unless there are exceptional circumstances, complaints will only be considered within 6 months of the origin of the complaint.



If the complaint is about the Principal write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors -

otherwise follow



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. Where this may present difficulties, please contact the school which will make reasonable arrangements to support you with this process.

When writing your complaint, please provide clear information and include the following:

- Your name and contact details
- What your complaint is about – please try to be specific
- What you have already done to try to resolve it and
- What you would like the school to do to resolve your complaint

The principal will normally acknowledge the complaint as soon as possible but within 10 school working days.

This will be a short response and you will be sent a copy of, (or a link to) the school's complaints procedure.

A final response will normally be made within 20 school working days of receipt of the complaint. This response will be issued in writing and will indicate with reasons whether the complaint has been upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld. ***If, for any reason, the consideration of a complaint takes longer to complete, you will be informed of revised time limits and kept updated on progress.***

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

If you remain unhappy with the outcome at Stage One, the complaint may be progressed to Stage Two which is overseen by the board of governors.

## STAGE 2

Write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors  
(c/o the school and marked 'Private & Confidential')  
and provide as much detail as possible.

The Chairperson will convene a committee to review the complaint.

The Chairperson of the committee will acknowledge the complaint within 10 school working days and a final response within 20 working days from the date of receipt of the complaint.  
(NB: Timeframes may be longer in holiday period)

If you remain dissatisfied, you can refer the matter to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman. (NIPSO). The complaint should be referred to NIPSO within 6 months of the final response from the School. The school will remind you about NIPSO if you are unhappy with the school response.

### Contact

#### **Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman**

Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman  
Progressive House  
33 Wellington Place  
Belfast  
BT1 6HN

Freepost: FREEPOST NIPSO

Telephone: 02890 233 821  
Freephone: 0800 34 34 24

Email: [nipso@nipso.org.uk](mailto:nipso@nipso.org.uk)  
Web: [www.nipso.org.uk](http://www.nipso.org.uk)

## 1. SCOPE OF COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1.1 The Complaints Procedure sets out how any expression of dissatisfaction relating to the school will be managed. By taking concerns raised seriously at the earliest possible stage, it is hoped that issues can be resolved quickly and effectively.

***Some examples of complaints dealt with;***

- not following school policy
- communication delays / lack of communication
- difficulties in staff / pupil relationships.

### 1.2 Complaints with separate established procedures

Some examples of statutory procedures and appeal mechanisms are listed below. The list is not exhaustive. The Principal/ Chair of Governors will advise on the appropriate procedure to use when the complaint is raised.

***Matters may still be referred to NIPSO, if it is felt that maladministration has occurred.***

Exceptions	Contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Admissions / Expulsions / Exclusion of children from school</li></ul>	Contact <a href="http://www.eani.org.uk">www.eani.org.uk</a> Director of Operations and Estates Sara Long
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN)</li></ul>	Contact <a href="http://www.eani.org.uk">www.eani.org.uk</a> Director of Children and Young People's Services Dr Clare Mangan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School Development Proposals</li></ul>	Contact <a href="http://www.eani.org.uk">www.eani.org.uk</a> Director of Education John Collings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Child Protection / Safeguarding</li></ul>	Contact <a href="http://www.eani.org.uk">www.eani.org.uk</a> Director of Children and Young People's Services Dr Clare Mangan

1.3 The school will not normally investigate anonymous complaints, unless deemed by the Chairperson of the Board of Governors to be of a serious nature. The decision of whether to deal with such complaints will be at the discretion of the Board of Governors. *(see guidance notes for further information)*

## 2. WHAT TO EXPECT UNDER THIS PROCEDURE

### 2.1 Your rights as a person making a complaint

In dealing with complaint we will ensure;

- fair treatment
- courtesy
- a timely response
- accurate advice
- respect for privacy – complaints will be treated as confidentially as possible allowing for the possibility of consultation with other appropriate parties about the complaint and
- clear reasons for decisions.

## 2.2 Your responsibilities as a person making a complaint

In making a complaint it is important to;

- raise issues in a timely manner
- treat our staff with respect and courtesy
- provide accurate and concise information in relation to the issues raised
- use these procedures fully and engage with them at the appropriate levels.

## 2.3 Rights of parties involved during the investigation

Where a meeting is arranged the complainant may be accompanied but not represented by another person.

This Procedure does not take away from the statutory rights of any of the participants.

## 2.4 Timeframes

Where concerns are raised with the relevant Teacher or Principal, a response will normally be provided during the meeting or within an agreed timeframe.

**Stage 1** – Normally acknowledge within 10 school working days, response normally within 20 school working days

**Stage 2** – Normally acknowledge within 10 school working days, response normally within 20 school working days

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

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

## 2.5 Equality

The school requires complaints to be made in writing. Where this may present difficulties, please contact the school which will make reasonable arrangements to support the complainant with this process.

## 2.6 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 having 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 it may choose not to respond.

**A full set of guidance materials to support this procedure is currently being developed. It will be helpful to consult this to understand the scope of the complaints procedure.**