



# **GAELSCOIL AN CHAISTIL**

## **Dúnghaois Tréadchúrain Pastoral Care Policy**

## Intreoir / Introduction

I nGaelscoil an Chaistil bíonn cúram na bpáistí fíorthábhachtach i ngach uile rud a dheántar. Clúdaíonn an dúnghaois seo idir pháistí agus dhaoine fásta sa scoil. Baineann an dúnghaois seo leis na struchtúir agus leis na modhanna oibre a chuirtear i bhfeidhm sa scoil.

*The care of children is extremely important in everything we do in Gaelscoil an Chaistil. This policy covers both children and adults in the school. This policy describes the structures and the methodologies in use in the school.*

Cuireann an dúnghaois seo ar chúram tréadach na gnéithe thíosluaite san áireamh / *This pastoral care policy includes the following areas –*

- Dúnghaois d’iompar dearfach / Positive Behaviour Policy
- Cód Iompair / Code of Conduct
- Ag láimhseáil mí-iompair leanúnach / Managing on-going misbehaviours
- Fríthmhaistíneacht / Anti-bullying
- Dúnghaois Chomhdheiseanna / Equal Opportunities Policy
- Modh Gearán / Complaints Procedure



## **Dúnghaois Gaelscoil an Chaistil d'Iompar Dearfach** ***Gaelscoil an Chaistil's Positive Behaviour Policy***

Ours aims are that:

- we implement a policy, based on the values we cherish in Gaelscoil an Chaistil, that will receive the support of, and be followed by, everyone connected to the school, including parents, teachers, children and governors.
- we nurture a friendly and caring atmosphere in the school, where teaching and learning of the highest degree can occur in a safe and happy environment.
- we teach core values and opinions through the common curriculum as well as skills and knowledge in order to nurture a responsible behaviour and self-discipline among pupils and encourage them to respect themselves, others and school equipment.
- we encourage good behaviour rather than criticising bad through the use of a series of rewards for children of every age and ability.
- we ensure that children from an early age understand that misbehaviour or antisocial behaviour will not be tolerated and to make clear the difference between a minor infringement of rules and something that is more serious.
- we deal with problems when they arise in an understanding and careful manner to ensure a gradual improvement in behaviour.

The above aims are achievable in a secure happy environment where children feel valued, where they have had some input into the rules, where rewards and sanctions have been discussed, where they see consistency. Adults can provide good role models for children by treating everyone with respect and by being seen to be fair.

Children are more likely to give of their best in a relaxed atmosphere where they are praised and encouraged to do their best and where their efforts and improvements are recognised. Promoting positive behaviour and attitudes, and developing self-esteem are essential to the establishment of good discipline, and to the overall aim of developing fully the potential of all the children.

At the core of behaviour there should be a concern for the safety and wellbeing of all the children.

### **Managing behaviour in a positive manner**

One of the principle aims of this policy is to encourage the children to practice good behaviour and we believe that the most effective discipline is based on the positive approach. Children respond much more positively to praise than to threats or condemnation and are more likely to improve when they are being praised. In order to facilitate this aim the school conducts an awards scheme whereby staff may present children with certificates or stickers in reward for high standards of work in an academic or non-academic subject area, excellent attempts in aspects of school work, of behaviour or for full attendance. Praise will be given in appropriate ways and may include:

- a quiet word or smile of acknowledgement
- a written comment detailing a specific point
- a visit to another adult for commendation
- a public word in front of peers
- a public reference to adults
- a specific mention at assembly, Gaeilgeoir na Seachtaine awards given weekly in each class
- a star or sticker, different merit systems in each class
- a special certificate
- a specific mention to parents at the school gate or in the homework diary
- a reference on the end of year written report

The use of ‘Am Órga’ / Golden Time in Foundation and KS1 and 2 encourages positive and acceptable behaviour.

Moreover the children are verbally praised as often as possible. Outstanding work by the pupils is displayed regularly in the school in order to highlight the value given to such achievements among the children. It is hoped that this positive affirmation will encourage other children to emulate such work or behaviour.

Some children will earn credit easily while others will have greater difficulty. It is important that every child has the opportunity to gain praise, and this may mean ‘catching’ a child doing something commendable and giving praise on the spot. Such action may create the opportunity for a more difficult child to see his /her actual potential for good behaviour, and savouring this kind of success could inspire them.

### **Code Of Conduct**

The Code of Conduct (see Appendix 1) details the behaviours that we expect all children to display when they are at school including a code of conduct for break-time and lunch time. This ensures that everyone is safe and happy at school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in Gaelscoil an Chaistil adhere to the Code of Conduct and are well behaved.

The staff of the school will make the pupil’s school time as interesting and engaging as possible, matching work to their needs and making the pupils fully aware of the school’s “Code of Conduct”. In addition, it is vital to maintain good relationships where staff and pupils can admit mistakes, make apologies, show respect and be shown respect. In these ways the children will always be encouraged to behave well, following the good example of adults and other pupils in the school. A copy of the “Code of Conduct” was sent home, to be signed by child and parents. It is also displayed in all classrooms in the school.

## *Managing unacceptable behaviour*

All children need to know where the boundaries lie between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Some children find it easier than others to recognise boundaries. In Gaelscoil an Chaistil we use agreed sanctions to establish clear boundaries so that all children will understand what behaviour is acceptable. Our “Code of Conduct” (see Appendix 1) shows the steps that will be taken, when children do not display good behaviours. This will protect the authority of staff members and the safety of the whole school community. The discipline of all children in Gaelscoil an Chaistil is a shared responsibility of the staff.

Sanctions should always be:

- Constructive
- Related to the misdemeanour
- Applied sensitively with flexibility and discrimination
- Be specific to the culprit, not to a whole group

Where possible children should be consulted about the fairness and suitability of the sanction, and why it is being applied. In all matters relating to the maintenance of discipline and the application of sanctions we must remember that our aim is to help the children in Gaelscoil an Chaistil to develop self-discipline, and to begin to take responsibility for their actions. We provide them, where possible, with opportunities to put right the wrong they have done, in order to build and maintain their self-esteem, and we praise behaviour that indicates that they have learned a lesson from a previous misdemeanour. We strive to help children establish the boundaries in a non-aggressive way.

Sanctions will include

- A look of disapproval
- Immediate verbal check of misbehaviour
- A reprimand, incorporating advice on apologising
- A minor relevant penalty
- Reinforcement of school rules
- Loss of freedom
- Loss of privileges
- Referral to principal
- Consultation with parents
- Suspension or expulsion

The method employed by the teacher will depend on each individual situation, for example if the incident is a one off incident or if it is an ongoing problem.

Procedures relating to cases of extreme or consistent misbehaviour can be found in Appendix 2.

Final sanctions would be effected by the principal in consultation with the Board of Governors.

### **The role of parents and guardians**

Standards of behaviour are already well established in children before they come to school. Standards will vary from home to home and from one family to another, but conflict arises when the expectations in school differ from those in the home.

In a small community such as a family home, individual needs can be facilitated without too much disturbance, but in a larger community such as school the needs of the whole community should take priority over the needs of any individual.

A child's reaction to anything new is usually influenced by the reaction of others around him/her. A child's acceptance of a set of rules for behaviour is also influenced by the attitudes of those at home and in their home environment. Therefore, parental acceptance of the school's expectations, and support in promoting socially acceptable behaviour, is fundamental to the success of the school's behaviour policy.

***Although parents/guardians are not in school with their child their influence on the child is still greater than that of any teacher.***

Parents/guardians have a duty to ensure that their child does not cause injury or damage to any person or property. We would ask that parents discuss the school rules with their child and point out their importance. In accepting a place in the school for their child they are accepting the general policy and rules of discipline of the school and they therefore have an obligation to promote these.

The co-operation of parents/guardians is sought in relation to maintaining high standards of

- pupil attendance,
- punctuality,
- personal appearance,
- the wearing of school uniform,
- caring for learning materials,
- the supervision of homework,
- behaviour and attitude to adults and to other children

### **Communication between home and school**

Co-operation between school and parents is central to the development of each child. Parents are always welcome in Gaelscoil an Chaistil and we encourage parents to come to meetings organized in school and to keep us informed about any matter that might be significant to their child's happiness and development at school. We encourage parents to discuss our "Code of Conduct" with the children. Likewise if we are concerned about a child's development, behaviour or attitude we will contact the parents and discuss the matter. Communication will be through the homework diary, meeting with parents at the school gate at home time or by phone. Maintaining this partnership is crucial to the success of the School Positive Behaviour Policy. If parents are concerned about any aspect of their child's education, an appointment can be made to meet with the class teacher by phoning the office.

### **Bullying**

The aim of our pastoral care policy is to create a community in which all staff and pupils feel safe, valued, supported and happy. Bullying is an activity which flows contrary to this stated aim. Accordingly it will be dealt with firmly and consistently by all staff in line with our policy on bullying (see Appendix 3).



# Cód Iompair na Scoile.



**Cinntíonn an cód iompair seo go mbíonn gach duine sábháilte agus sona sásta agus iad ar scoil. Bíonn muid ag dúil go leanfaidh gach duine an cur chuige seo ar scoil.**

- Labhróidh mé mo chuid Gaeilge i gcónaí i ngach áit sa scoil.
- Beidh meas agam ar an fhoirgneamh scoile, ar thoscáin/threalamh scoile, ar bhaill foirne agus ar mo chomhscoláirí uilig.
  - Ní thógfaidh mé aon rud nach liomsa gan chead.
  - Cuirfidh mé trealamh scoile ar ais sna háiteanna cearta.
  - Tuigim go mbeidh orm íoc as leabhar/trealamh ar bith a scriosaim/chaillim.
- Labhróidh mé go deas cairdiúil le gach duine ar scoil agus i nguth deas séimh.
- Siúlfaidh mé go cúramach i gcónaí, gan screadaíl nó amaidí. Níl cead a bheith ag rith ach amháin sa chlós ag am sosa & am lóin.
- Beidh meas agam ar shuíomh na scoile agus cuirfidh mé mo bhruscar sna boscaí bruscair i gcónaí.
- Déanfaidh mé mo dhícheall m'obair scoile agus baile a dhéanamh mar is ceart i gcónaí. Tuigim go gcaithfidh mé gach píosa a dhéanamh go hiomlán.
- Fanfaidh mé i mo shuí ag am sosa agus ag am lóin agus éistfidh mé go cúramach le stiúrthóirí sosa/lóin. Leanfaidh mé rialacha sosa/lóin.
- Déanfaidh mé líne dhíreach nuair a bhuaileann an clog agus fanfaidh mé le mo mhúinteoir ranga.





# Behaviour Code



**These rules below are implemented to ensure that everyone is safe and happy while they are at school. We expect everyone to follow these rules.**

- I will use all my Gaelic when at school.
- I will respect the school buildings, school furniture/equipment, staff and all my fellow pupils.



- I will not use/lift anything which isn't mine without permission.
- I will put school equipment back in the correct places.
- I understand that I will have to pay for any book/equipment I break/lose.

- I will speak kindly to everyone in a nice voice.



- I will walk carefully at all times, without shouting or messing about. You aren't allowed to run on school grounds except in the playground at break and lunch.

- I will respect the school grounds and I will always place my rubbish in the bins.
- I will always try my best to correctly complete my class and homework. I understand that I will have to complete all pieces of work fully.
- I will remain seated at break and lunch time and I will listen carefully to the break/lunch supervisor. I will follow break/lunch rules.
- I will go into a straight line when the bell rings and I will wait on my teacher.

*I understand and agree with these rules above and I agree that I will abide by them at all times.*

**Child's signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*I understand and agree with these rules above and I agree to ensure that my child abides by them at all times.*

**Parent's signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Cód iompair d'am sosa agus d'am lóin**

### **TAOBH ISTIGH**

- Labhraíonn tú Gaeilge i gcónaí.
- Téann tú chuig an halla i do líne ranga, suíonn tú go socair ag tábla agus itheann tú do shos/lón.
- Fanann tú i do shuí agus tú sa halla – níl cead siúl thart.
- Déan cinnte go nglanann tú aon rud a thiteann agus go gcuireann tú do bhruscar sa bhosca bruscair
- Caithfidh cead an mhúinteora a fháil le himeacht ón halla.
- Níl cead liathróidí a bheith agat nó aon chluichí a imirt taobh istigh.
- Léiríonn tú meas d'achan duine sa seomra. Smaoiníonn tú ar an challán atá sa halla.
- Ag deireadh sosa/lóin, téann tú amach de réir ranga ag brath ar threoracha an mhúinteora.

### **TAOBH AMUIGH**

- Labhraíonn tú Gaeilge i gcónaí.
- Léiríonn tú meas don stiúrthóir clóis (éisteann tú mar is ceart > labhraíonn tú go múinte)
- Léiríonn tú meas dá chéile - labhraíonn tú lena chéile mar is ceart i nguth deas cairdiúil.
- Níl cead dul isteach gan chead a fháil. Tagann tú amach láithreach ina dhiaidh.
- Nuair a bhuaileann an clog, stopann tú den súgradh
- Nuair a shéidtear an fheadóg faoi dhó, faigheann tú do mhála sosa / lóin go ciúin
- Déanann tú líne dhíreach taobh amuigh agus fanann tú le do mhúinteoir.

## **Code of Conduct for Breaktime & Lunchtime**

### **Dinner hall**

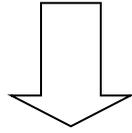
- Speak in Gaelic at all times.
- Walk to the hall in your class line, sit down quietly at the table and eat your breal / dinner.
- Stay on your sit at all times in the hall – you are not allowed to walk around.
- Make sure you tidy up anything that falls on the ground and put all your rubbish in the bin.
- You must get permission for the teacher / supervisor to leave the hall for any reason.
- Do not take footballs or toys inside.
- You show respect for everyone that is in the hall. Think about the noise levels in the hall.
- At the end of breaktime / lunchtime, line up with your class and wait for your teacher.

### **Playground**

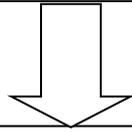
- Speak in Gaelic at all times.
- Show respect for the playground supervisor (listen carefully and speak politely.)
- Show respect for each other. Speak kindly to everyone in a nice voice.
- You must get permission to go inside for any reason. You come back outside straight away.
- When the bell rings, you must freeze on the spot.
- When the whistle is blown twice, you line up with your class.
- Make a straight line outside and wait on your teacher.

**Muna léiríonn páiste dea-iompar, seo thíos na céimeanna a leanfar:**

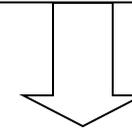
1. **Labhróidh múinteoir/ball foirne leat agus tabharfar rabhadh duit.**



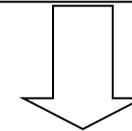
2. **Cuirfear nóta sa dialann agus caillfidh tú amach ar am súgartha. Caithfidh an nóta a bheith sínithe ag an tuismitheoir/chaomhnóir.**



3. **Cuirfear scairt ar do thuismitheoirí/chaomhnóirí faoin drochiompar.**



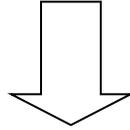
4. **Labhróidh Brídín leat faoin fhadhb.**



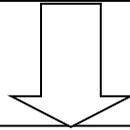
5. **Beidh ar do thuismitheoirí/chaomhnóirí teacht isteach chun na scoile le haghaidh cruinnithe leis an phríomhoide chun an chéad chéim eile a phlé.**

**If children don't display good behaviours, these are the steps that will be taken:**

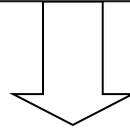
1. **A teacher/staff member will speak to you and you'll be given a warning.**



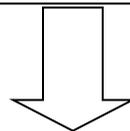
2. **A note will be written in your diary and you will lose play time. The note must signed by a parent/guardian.**



3. **A phone call home will be made to discuss the misconduct with your parents/guardians.**



4. **Brídín will discuss this misconduct with you.**



5. **Your parents/guardians will have to come into school for a meeting with the principal to discuss the next step.**

## **Appendix 2 - Ag láimhseáil mí-iompair leanúnach / Managing on-going misbehaviours**

In the case of an ongoing problem parents will be informed and the situation will be monitored to see if input from home has a beneficial effect.

If something serious takes place such as:

- School equipment or that of the teacher damaged purposely;
- Leaving school without permission or staying away from school;
- Child using bad language with another child, a teacher or anyone else in the school;
- Threatening to fight or hurt another child in any way or a physical assault on anyone;
- Putting another child in danger;
- Bullying;
- Stealing;
- Disturbing class work;
- Refusing to do work for the teacher.

The above happen less frequently but when they do occur, the teacher should deal with them decisively especially if they are reoccurring. There are appropriate steps to follow when such problems arise and if not resolved the next step will be taken. Each step will be recorded.

Ways to resolve problems:

- To inform parents of the behaviour;
- To conduct a formal interview with the parents;
- To carry out a daily report on the child;
- To seek compensation when a child is found guilty;
- To maintain regular contact between the parent and the school and to issue a warning about the child's behaviour;
- To suspend the child from the school.

If a child is to be suspended the following steps should be taken:

- 1). Only the Principal may suspend a child, in conjunction with the Board of Governors.
- 2). A child may be suspended for no more than five days.
- 3). When a child is suspended, the Principal must do the following:
  - a). Forward a letter to the Parents, the Board of Governors and the Education and Library Board indicating the reason for suspension and how long it will continue.
  - b). Invite the parents to come and discuss the case.
  - c). Point out to the parents that the school authorities recognise that the child is entirely under the jurisdiction of the parents when not at school.
  - d). If the suspension is to be extended this cannot be done without due permission from the Board of Governors and without first of all writing to the Education and Library Board and the parents informing them of the decision.

Parents have the right to appeal a decision to suspend a child and to bring this to a hearing of the Board of Governors.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Frithmháistíneacht / Anti-bullying Policy**

Bullying involves violence on other children. It can be physical, verbal or in the mind of the child who is being made the victim of bullying. It involves a child or a group of children imposing their rule on other children. It is an ongoing issue and can be short or long-term. It does not happen by mistake.

There are many different kinds of bullying.

Physical – Tripping up another child, kicking, writing a demeaning note about another child.

Threatening – Threatening anything on another child such as “I’ll get you after school”.

Verbal – name-calling, making fun of or belittling in any way another child.

Stealing money off another child or forcing them to hand over sweets etc.

The school grounds must be made safe for every child. Bullying can take place in any part of the school. Likewise children should not be subject to such bullying or feel threatened or pressurised when travelling to and from school.

Issues regarding children’s emotions in relation to school, friends and worries are regularly discussed during Circle Time and all children discuss what constitutes bullying, how to protect themselves and the possible results ensuing from bullying incidents.

Any of the following can inform the school of bullying as and when they witness it occurring – the child itself, the child’s friends, a parent, a teacher or any other person who is associated with the school or the child.

### *Strategies to deal with bullying*

Below are a series of approaches that are used in Gaelscoil an Chaistil depending on the seriousness of the bullying incident.

Staff must always be prepared to listen, even to the child guilty of bullying as they themselves are often the victim of bullying in another setting.

Have a long discussion with the victim. This will require patience and understanding. Always remember the following: listen, believe and do something.

Determine who is behind the bullying. Acquire the names of other children who have seen the incident, if possible. Collect evidence.

Discuss the case with those responsible for the bullying. Give them the details and ask them to tell you the truth about what happened. Make it clear that such behaviour is totally unacceptable in Gaelscoil an Chaistil.

Speak with the parents of the victim and those of the bullies separately.

If it can be proved that there was bullying taking place, there should be some form of appropriate punishment given depending on the seriousness of the incident. The person responsible for the bullying could be denied that which they enjoyed most at school, playtime, or play at lunchtime, for example. If the incident was more serious the child may be suspended from school according to the rules for suspension above.

Monitor the case, watching at lunchtime and playtime. Discuss the affair with the perpetrators to make sure it does not reoccur.

If the situation improves those who were involved in the bullying should be allowed to return to the normal school timetable and good follow-up behaviour should be praised and rewarded if possible.

All staff members should be alert to the possibility that bullying is taking place. A teacher should be concerned if there is a sudden change in a child's behaviour or if their work is continuously deteriorating without any reason. If a child tells a teacher that there is bullying taking place in the classroom that teacher should let the child know that something will be done to rectify the situation.

As part of the curriculum, bullying and the implications of it should be discussed with the school children and the material covered at a level that is in keeping with the age level of the children. Eg. Circle Time, Personal Development and Mutual Understanding lessons.

## **Appendix 4**

### **Dúnghaois Chomhdeiseanna / Equal Opportunities Policy**

Our aim in Gaelscoil an Chaistil is to ensure that each child who comes to the school has the same opportunities, irrespective of their age, ability, sex, religion or background. We wish every child to reach their own potential during their time with us. It is on this basis that we organise all our teaching and we are confident that the opinions and the practice prevalent throughout the school will support the child's development.

Girls and boys will undertake the same curriculum and will have the same opportunities to partake in extra-curricular activities both in and out of school hours.

School equipment/resources are carefully chosen to ensure that undue emphasis is not given to any particular sex. The same time and attention is given to every child whether boy or girl.

Children are encouraged to work and play with every other child, both boys and girls. Children will be given opportunity to work with adults of both sexes, within staff constraints.

Queues, groups, seat layouts in classrooms etc. will be organised according to appropriate criteria such as age, friendship and subject ability, but not according to the sex of the child. For example, the school uses Cairde Cainte / Talking Buddies to ensure that children get to know all the children in their class and this in turn facilitates deeper friendships in the classroom and in the playground.

The school rules and disciplinary procedures throughout the school will be applied equally to both boys and girls.

A school uniform is worn to further nurture the sense of equality among children.

## **Appendix 5**

### **Modh Gearán / Complaints Procedure**

At Gaelscoil an Chaistil we are committed to listening about our service. We will use this information, wherever possible, to help maintain and improve our service. We encourage and welcome all comments and views, both positive and negative.

This policy is designed to establish a clear mechanism for the resolution of complaints that can be verbal, written, taped or E-mailed. Our comments / complaints policy is outlined below.

#### **Aims**

Our Complaints Procedure aims to:

- provide an efficient and thorough system through which issues are effectively addressed
- facilitate the school in providing the best possible service for its pupils and the local community
- provide a simple, speedy and accessible service that respects confidentiality
- be courteous and respectful
- address issues arising from complaints in a fair and honest manner within the timescales set out in this policy
- treat individuals and groups with openness, equality and inclusiveness
- keep people informed of progress and the final outcome of the issues raised
- be simple, easily accessible and easy to use.

These procedures do not replace or supplement other established procedures and/or appeals mechanisms in such areas as Child Protection, Special Education, Admissions or Suspensions and Expulsions.

In addition, where it becomes evident at an early stage that the nature of your complaint may give rise to future disciplinary action, these procedures will be set aside in favour of other established Disciplinary Procedures.

We are not able to deal with anonymous complaints and therefore these procedures do not provide for a resolution of anonymous complaints except for the referral of child protection concerns to the appropriate Child Protection Procedures and Guidelines.

## *What to Expect under these Procedures*

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

In dealing with your complaint we will ensure that you receive:

- fair treatment;
- courtesy;
- a timely response;
- accurate advice;
- respect for your privacy – concerns will be treated as confidentially as possible allowing for the possibility that we may have to consult with other appropriate Agencies about your complaint;
- reasons for our decisions.

Where there are grounds to your complaint we will acknowledge this and address the issues you have raised. Similarly, we will ensure that you are clearly advised where we believe that there are no grounds to your complaint.

### **Your responsibilities as a person making a complaint**

In raising an issue we would expect that you:

- raise issues in a timely manner;
- treat our staff as professionals, in a non-threatening manner and with respect and courtesy;
- provide accurate and concise information in relation to the issue you raise;
- use these procedures fully and to engage in them at the appropriate levels.

In addition, we would expect that you have reasonable grounds for making a complaint and are not seeking to invoke these or other procedures as a means of dealing with issues that would be more appropriately dealt with in other ways.

## **Making a Complaint**

### **Stage 1 - Informal - Speaking with the Teacher concerned**

In the first instance a complaint or concern should normally be referred verbally to the class teacher concerned, so that they may be allowed an opportunity to address the issue, as in many instances, these can arise through a simple misunderstanding. You should observe the school's existing protocols for arranging and conducting such approaches or meetings (contacting the teacher by phoning the office or writing a note in the homework diary and arranging a convenient time to meet).

This approach would not prevent you from choosing to enter the process at a later stage, if you believe that to be an appropriate course of action.

### **Stage 2 - Informal - Speaking with the Principal**

If your complaint remains unresolved you should arrange a meeting with the Principal to discuss the issue with him/her. You should let the Principal know in advance the nature of your concerns so that he/she can prepare for the meeting.

If you have concerns relating to the Principal, you should arrange a meeting with him/her to discuss the issues as at Stage 1.

In some circumstances the Principal will not be able to deal effectively with your concerns immediately and he/she will require some time over which to investigate and prepare a proper response. If further time is required you will be told of this.

### **Stage 3 – Formal - Writing to the Principal**

Sometimes it will not be possible for you to have your complaint resolved at source through the informal routes proposed at Stages 1 and 2 or indeed it might be more appropriate to initiate the procedures at this stage. Your written complaint should be as concise as possible and address specifically the issue or issues that are of immediate concern to you.

You will receive a written acknowledgement of your letter within 10 working days. This will confirm that your letter has been received, and either;

- Provide a response to the issues you raised;
- or,**
- Indicate that your concerns are being fully investigated and the timeframe - a maximum of 20 working days from the date on which your letter was received - against which you can expect a response to be issued.

### **Stage 4 - Formal – In writing to Governor Sub-Committee**

If you still believe that your complaint has not been dealt with in a satisfactory manner, or in a case where you decide to raise an issue at this level, you may write to the Chairperson of Board of Governors. The Chairperson will be responsible for bringing your complaint to a Governors' Sub-Committee, which will investigate and respond to your complaint. Your written complaint should be as concise as possible and address specifically the issue or issues that are of immediate concern to you. However, where it is evident that the nature of your complaint may give rise to future disciplinary action, these procedures will be set aside in favour of other established Disciplinary Procedures which may subsequently involve Governors at another level.

You will receive a written acknowledgement of your letter within 10 working days. This will confirm that your letter has been received, and;

- Provide a response to the issues you raised;
- or,**
- Indicate that your concerns are being fully investigated and the timeframe – a maximum of 25 working days from the date on which your written complaint was received - against which you can expect a response to be issued;
- or,**
- Indicate a date, time and place for you to attend a meeting with this Sub-Committee at which your concerns will be discussed in full. If this meeting is required, it will take place within 20 working days from the date on which your written complaint was received and you should expect a written response within a further 10 working days of the meeting having been held.

## **Appeals Process – Full Board of Governors**

Finally, if you still believe that your complaint has not been addressed you may write to the Chairperson of Board of Governors requesting that you be allowed to meet with the full Board of Governors to appeal the outcomes. The Chairperson will be responsible for ensuring that you are invited to the next suitable scheduled meeting of Governors where your appeal will be heard. Your written request should be as concise as possible and set out specifically the grounds for your Appeal.

Again, where it is evident that the nature of your complaint may give rise to future disciplinary action, these procedures will be set aside in favour of other established Disciplinary Procedures which may subsequently involve Governors at another level.

You will receive a written acknowledgement of your letter within 10 working days. This will confirm that your letter has been received and provide you with the date and time of the meeting at which you will have an opportunity to discuss your concerns. Since this process is consultative in nature and not adversarial, a complainant will not have the right to be accompanied or represented by any other person, unless it is deemed appropriate by the Board of Governors. This meeting will normally take place within 30 working days of your Appeal request having been received.

Following this meeting, and within 10 working days of that meeting, you should expect a final written response. This will indicate the Governors' findings, their recommendations and the reasons supporting their decisions.

## **The Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO).**

If following this process, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can refer the matter to the Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO).

The Ombudsman provides a free, independent and impartial service for handling complaints about schools in Northern Ireland. You have the right to complain to the Ombudsman if you feel that you have been treated unfairly or have received a poor service from a school and your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction.

A complaint should normally be referred to NIPSO within six months of the final response from the School. The school must advise in its concluding letter that the complaint may be referred to the NIPSO if you remain dissatisfied.

Contact details for NIPSO are:

<b>Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman</b>	Freepost: FREEPOST NIPSO
Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman	
Progressive House	Telephone: 02890 233821
33 Wellington Place	Freephone: 0800 34 34 24
Belfast	
BT1 6HN	Email: <a href="mailto:nipso@nipso.org.uk">nipso@nipso.org.uk</a>
	Web: <a href="http://www.nipso.org.uk">www.nipso.org.uk</a>

## **Record Keeping**

The School Principal shall maintain a record of all correspondence, conversations and meetings concerning your complaint. These records shall be held confidentially in the school and shall be kept apart from pupil records. All such records will be destroyed five years after the date of the last correspondence on the issue.

Our responses will be in plain Irish and English and we will attempt to address all the points and issues raised.

If you do not respond within a reasonable time to the outcome of an investigation into your comment / complaint we will assume that you are satisfied and do not require us to take further action.

This procedure does not provide a role for any other statutory or non-statutory body.

### Review of Policy

On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the policy

Ceannlá / Date \_\_\_\_\_

Ceannlá Athbhreithnithe / Review Date \_\_\_\_\_

Sínithe / Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Príomhoide / Principal)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Cathaoirleach / Chair)

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FLOW CHART

