

FRIENDS' SCHOOL LISBURN



Policy for Complaints to the Principal and Board of Governors

Friends' School will seek to respond promptly to resolve complaints whether received from members of the public, the parents of our pupils or our pupils themselves. It is acknowledged that many concerns will be dealt with by the appropriate Year Teacher, Head of Department, Head of School or Vice Principal. This Policy deals with situations where it is considered necessary to make a formal written complaint to the School.

Written complaints will normally be acknowledged within three working days of receipt. Acknowledgements will, where possible, include an indication of timescale for dealing with the complaint. In any case, the school will seek to resolve issues as expeditiously as possible.

The Procedure for making a complaint to the Principal or Board of Governors is detailed below

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The procedure for dealing with complaints will depend on the nature of the complaint.

A. Complaint of General Nature

In the event of a complaint concerning a matter not specifically covered in paragraphs B, C, D or E below, the complainant should write to the Principal and/or arrange a meeting with the Principal and seek a resolution of the matter.

The Principal or a person appointed by him will take such steps as are necessary to investigate the Complaint and to liaise with the complainant and will issue a response. Complaints should not, in the first instance, be directed to the Chairman.

If the complainant feels that the Principal has not satisfactorily resolved the issue raised they may direct an appeal to the Chairman of the Board of Governors who will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and will report the matter to the next scheduled meeting of the Board.

B. Complaint about a School Policy

In the event of a complaint concerning a School Policy, the complainant should in the first instance contact the Principal who will acknowledge the complaint and will arrange for the matter to be placed on the Agenda for the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Governors. The decision of the Board of Governors is final.

C. Complaint about the Curriculum

In the event of a complaint concerning the curriculum, the parent should in the first instance contact the Principal. The Principal, in liaison with the Vice Principal (Curriculum), will seek to bring about a resolution of the matter.

If such a resolution does not emerge, parents should write to the Chairman who will raise the matter at the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Governors. The Chairman may, at his/her discretion, ask the Education Committee to consider the complaint. The Chairman or the Education Committee (as appropriate) will report to the Board of Governors

If a resolution has still not been arrived at, parents may write to the Chief Executive Education Authority NI, who has the power to invoke a Tribunal.

D. Complaint about a member of the School staff – Child Protection

In the event of a complaint concerning a member of staff which could involve a Child Protection issue, the Principal will follow the procedure set down in the Child Protection Policy (Appendix B). The matter will be immediately reported to the Chairman of the Board of Governors and to the Designated Governor (Child Protection/Safeguarding).

E. Complaint about the Principal

If the complaint is about the Principal, the written complaint should be addressed to the Chairman of the Board of Governors, marked “Confidential” and sent to the School where it will be forwarded, unopened to the Chairman.

The Chairman will follow the procedure outlined in Appendix A and will raise the matter at the next scheduled meeting of the Board.

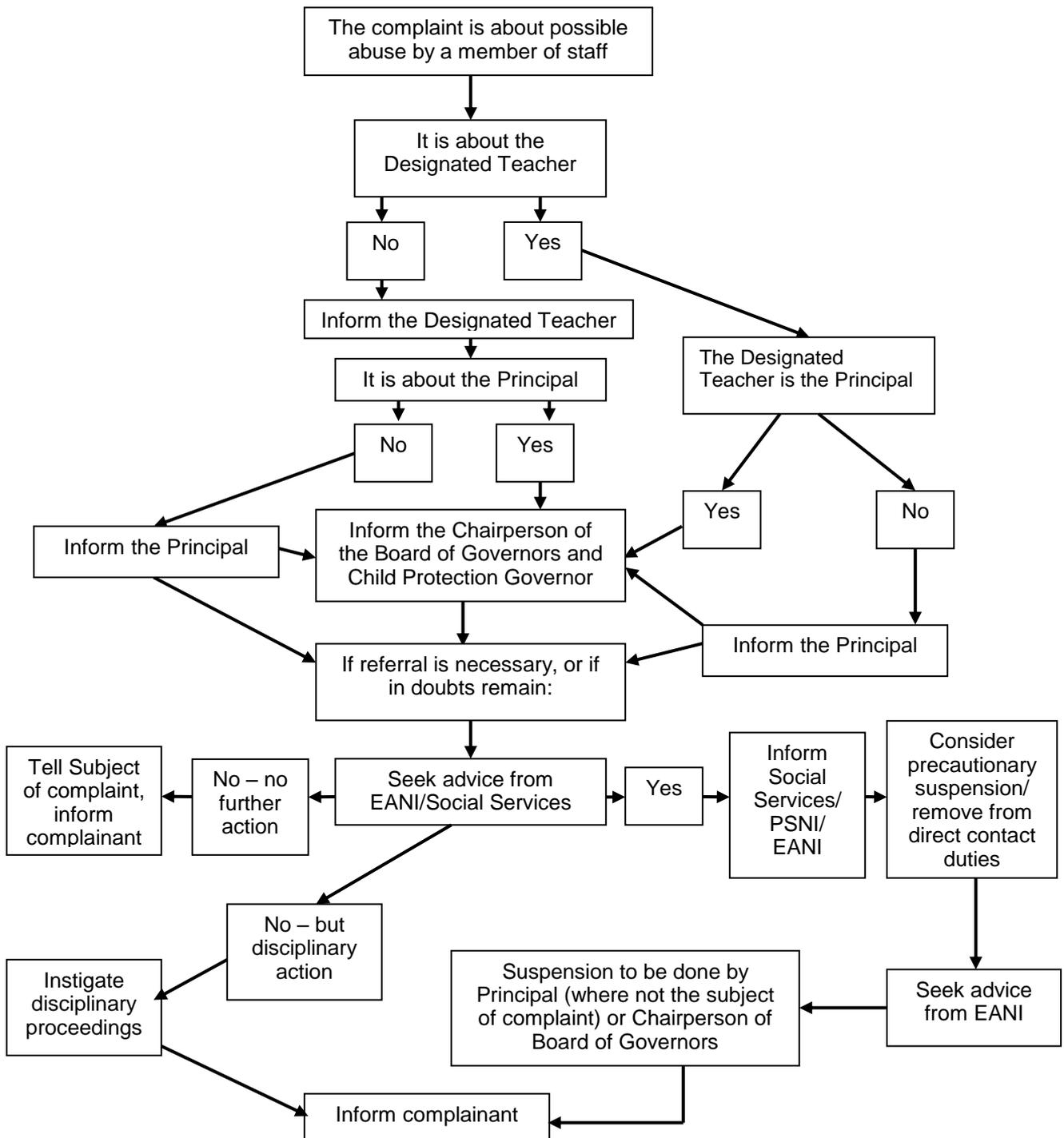
This Policy and Procedures document is available on request and on the School’s web site (www.friendsschoollisburn.org.uk)

Summary of Complaints Procedure

1. Written complaints will be acknowledged in writing within 3 working days.
2. If a meeting with the complainant has not already taken place, or been requested by the complainant, the Principal (or in the case of a complaint about the Principal, the Chairman) may invite the complainant to meet to discuss the issue.
3. Principal (or Chairman) will arrange for the complaint to be investigated.
4. Action taken to resolve the complaint will be at the discretion of the Principal (or in the case of a complaint about the Principal, the Chairman) and in accordance with relevant Friends' School Policies. The Chairman, if a complaint has been made to him/her, may designate a number of Governors to consider the complaint.
5. At all times the School's priority will be to seek a resolution.
6. Principal (or in the case of a complaint about the Principal, the Chairman) will notify the complainant of the outcome.
7. A written record of the complaint, and of actions taken, will be kept. The Principal (or in the case of a complaint about the Principal, the Chairman) will ensure that the Chairman and Board of Governors are kept informed.
8. If a complaint has been raised with the Principal and an acceptable resolution does not emerge the complainant should write to the Chairman who will raise the matter at the next meeting of the Board of Governors. The Chairman of the Board may, at his/her discretion, appoint a Committee, comprising Members of the Board of Governors, to investigate/resolve the complaint on behalf of the Board. The Chairman or Committee, as appropriate, will report to the Board of Governors. The decision of the Board of Governors is final.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE – CHILD PROTECTION

The following procedure should be followed when a complaint is made about possible abuse by a member of School’s staff. A written record should be kept at every stage whether a referral is made or not.



- 1 Person making or receiving details of complaint should refer it directly to the Principal.
- 2 Principal will seek clarification, if required;
- 3 Principal will:
 - (a) ask Designated Teacher or Deputy to initiate the record of the complaint;
 - (b) consult with EANI Designated Officer;
 - (c) consult with Chairperson of the Board
- 4 Principal will consider evidence and advice received;
- 5 In consultation with Chairperson of the Board, Principal will decide that the evidence is such that:
 - (a) The accusation is unsubstantiated and there is no case to answer;OR
 - (b) An immediate referral to Social Services or PSNI is required;OR
 - (c) Action should be taken under Disciplinary Procedures.
- 6 In the case of 5 (a) ie no further action, Principal should:
 - advise member of staff concerned of the nature of the complaint (if not already done) and also of the outcome;
 - advise SEELB Designated Officer of the outcome
 - advise the complainant in writing of the action taken and the outcome
 - consider if support eg counselling is required
 - record a brief record of the complaint on the file of the pupil including reasons for outcome along with copies of correspondence

Friends' School Lisburn
5 June 2017