

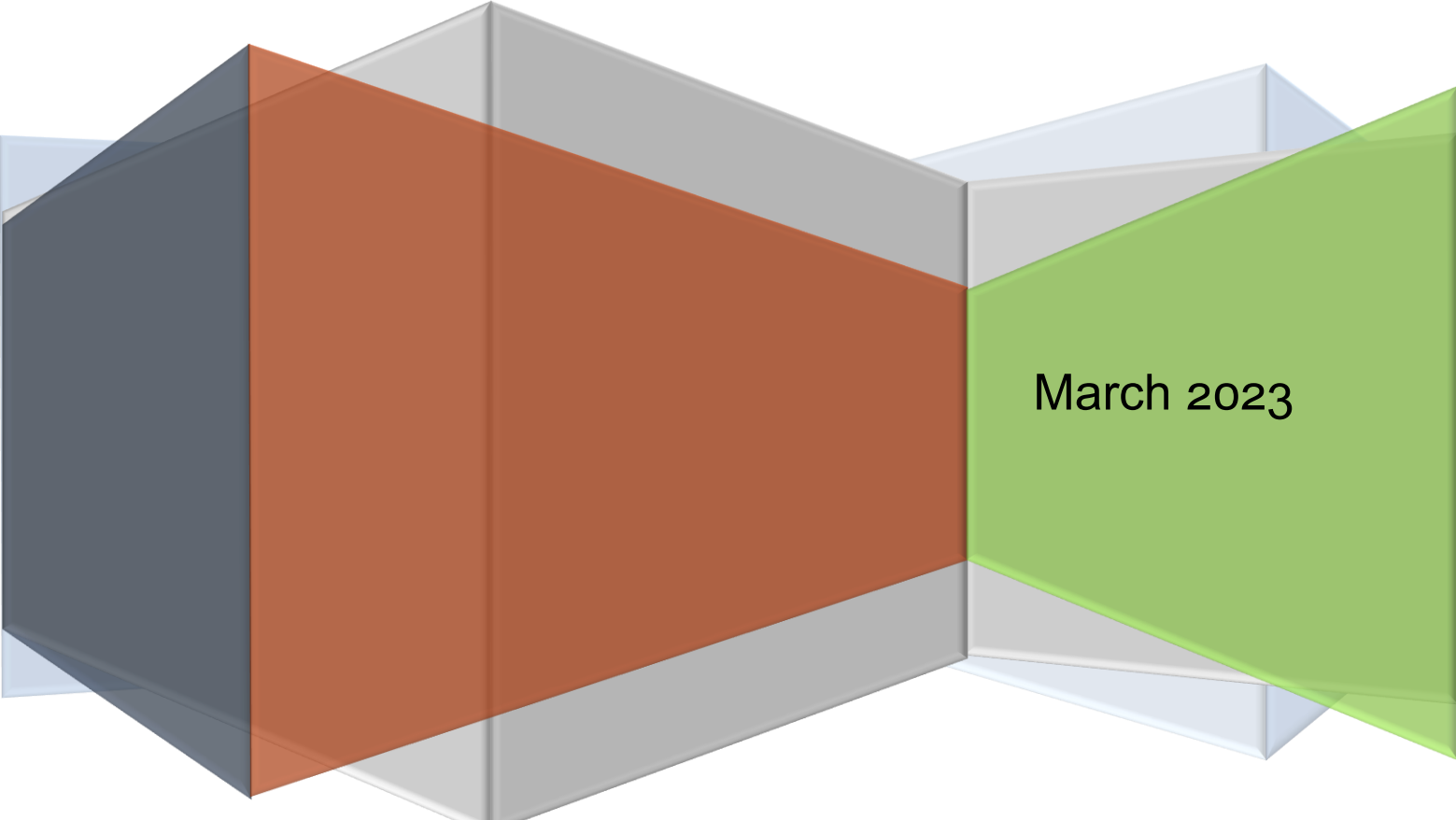


LISNEAL COLLEGE



Complaints Procedure

Lisneal College



March 2023

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Foreword

Mission Statement

“Upholding a Christian ethos, Lisneal College’s mission is to provide high quality teaching and learning experiences within an inclusive, safe, respectful, caring and aspirational environment. By building strong partnerships with parents, families, and the local community, including businesses, we will support our pupils in becoming successful, innovative and positive contributors to society.”

Together Everyone Achieves More

Core Values- (LC7)

The Lisneal College ethos is underpinned by the following core values **Teamwork; Respect; Integrity; Responsibility; Hard Work; Kindness; Resilience.**

Vision and Aims

Lisneal College is a co-educational, all ability post-primary school serving pupils between the ages of 11 and 18. Lisneal College aims to be a caring, progressive and pupil centred school focusing on developing and nurturing excellent relationship with the local and wider community. We are an inclusive school and we aim to ensure that every young person is provided with the highest standard of education available. We have high expectations of our pupils and the Lisneal College teaching and non-teaching staff are committed to providing high quality learning and teaching experiences for every child.

It is our strong belief that young people achieve success when they are happy, supported and challenged to be the best that they can be. We aim to provide a combination of excellent pastoral care, a relevant and inclusive curriculum, superb special educational needs provision and high quality teaching and learning to ensure that each young person who attends Lisneal College is provided with the opportunity to achieve his or her best. At Lisneal College we understand that every child is unique and we will strive to provide the challenge, care and support to help all of our pupils reach their potential.

School aims:

- **To develop a team culture where pupils are encouraged to set goals, lead, work together and support one another;**
- **To promote a culture of self-respect, respect for others and to build good relationships across the entire school community;**
- **Pupils should display tolerance, empathy and be considerate towards the needs of others;**
- **Pupils should become successful, independent and confident young people who take responsibility for their own learning and actions;**
- **To encourage pupils to be aspirational in setting high standards in every area of school life;**
- **To ensure all pupils receive equity of provision and are supported and nurtured appropriately in accordance with individual needs;**
- **To strive to become a beacon of good practice in all aspects of school provision.**

Here at Lisneal College, we take complaints very seriously. We have the best interests of all our pupils at the centre of what we do. In this regard, we would encourage anyone with a concern to speak to us as soon as possible. Many issues can be addressed by talking to the relevant staff in school; however, if

you are not satisfied that this is the appropriate route for your complaint, guidance is provided to assist you through the complaints procedure.

Aims of the Complaints Procedure

When dealing with complaints the school will;

- encourage resolution of all concerns as quickly as possible
- provide timely responses to concerns and complaints
- keep you informed of progress
- ensure a full and fair investigation of your complaint where appropriate
- have due regard for the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved
- respect confidentiality
- fully address complaints and provide an effective response
- take appropriate action to rectify the issue and prevent it happening again where appropriate
- be responsive to learning from outcomes which will inform and improve practice within the school.

A copy of this Procedure is available from the school on request.

Complaints Procedure – At a glance



Time Limit

Please contact the school as soon as possible, unless there are exceptional circumstances, complaints will normally only be considered within 6 months of origin of the complaint to the school.

Stage One

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. *(see guidance notes for further information)*, Please provide as much information as possible including;

- name and contact details
- what the complaint is about
- what has already been done to try to resolve it and
- what you would like the school to do to resolve the complaint.

The complaint will normally be acknowledged within 5 school working days and a response normally made within 20 school working days of receipt of the complaint. This response will be issued in writing by the Principal and will indicate with reasons whether the complaint has been upheld, partially upheld or not upheld

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

If you remain unhappy with the outcome at Stage 1, the complaint may be progressed to Stage 2 which is overseen by the Board of Governors.

Stage Two

If the complaint is unresolved after Stage One, write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors *(care of the school and marked 'private and confidential')*. Where this may present difficulties, please contact the school which will make reasonable arrangements to support the complainant with this process. The Chairperson will convene a committee to review the complaint. Please provide as much detail as possible as indicated above.

The complaint will normally be acknowledged within 5 school working days and a final response normally made within 20 school working days from date of receipt of the complaint. The response will be issued in writing by the Chairperson of the committee.

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

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO)

If following Stage Two 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:

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 233821

Freephone: 0800 34 34 24

Email: nipso@nipso.org.uk

Web: 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.

Exceptions	Contact
Admissions / Expulsions / Exclusion of children from school	Contact www.eani.org.uk Director of Operations and Estates
Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN)	Contact www.eani.org.uk Director of Children and Young People's Services
School Development Proposals	Contact www.eani.org.uk Director of Education
Child Protection / Safeguarding	Contact www.eani.org.uk Director of Children and Young People's Services

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

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 5 school working days, response normally within 20 school working days

Stage 2 – Normally acknowledge within 5 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.

March 2023