

1 COMMUNICATION POLICY

This policy was written in consultation with the Staff, Board of Management and Parents' Association. It was created in order to provide information and guidelines regarding communication between teachers and parents in the context of our primary school.

1.1 AIMS

- Develop close links between home and school
- Enable parents to collaborate with the school in developing the full potential of their children
- Outline the various forms of home-school communication
- Share the responsibility of maintaining the school's ethos, values and distinctive character
- Encourage positive and respectful participation in parent/teacher meetings
- Affirm the professional role of all staff members in the school
- Encourage active involvement in the school/parents' association
- Encourage participation in policy development and decision-making processes.

1.2 FORMS OF COMMUNICATION

- Parents Association AGM
- Board of Management Annual School Meeting
- Meeting for parents of new Junior Infants – Term 1 prior to starting in the school
- Individual Parent/teacher meetings in November
- Parents receive a school report at the end of each school year for each of their children
- Planning meetings with parents whose children have additional needs
- Parent/Teacher consultation throughout the year, as needed
- Written communication – letters in the schoolbag/emails/texts
- Through the Parents' Association, parents are invited to discuss and contribute to the drafting and review of school policies. Decisions taken to change current policies and procedures or to introduce new ones will be made known to all parents in written format via the school newsletter or website
- Weekly news updates keep parents up-to-date with school events, holidays and school concerns
- 1st – 6th class – the homework diary can be used to relay messages which are signed between parents and teachers. Parents are requested to sign the diary each night to certify that homework has been completed
- Parents are invited to events throughout the year e.g. Seachtain na Gaeilge concert, International Day etc.
- Staff meetings during Croke Park Hours

All parents are welcome to make an appointment any time throughout the year. If a parent wishes to contact a teacher, he/she can contact the class teacher to arrange a suitable time. It is vital that the school is immediately informed of family events/situations that occur which may cause anxiety to the child and therefore may adversely affect his/her education.

In all matters pertaining to the well-being and education of pupils, only the parents/legal guardians will be consulted by staff.

In the case of separated parents, they shall both be contacted by email once signed up for email communication. Both parents will be sent a copy of the end of year report, by email if they are signed up for it or by post in the event that this is requested.

1.3 PARENT/TEACHER MEETINGS

Formal Parent/Teacher meetings will be held once a year for all classes in November.

The school will attempt to co-ordinate times where siblings are concerned. Meetings may take place in classrooms or support rooms. Parents can enrich teachers' knowledge of their child's progress by providing further information about his/her learning at home.

The purpose of the Parent/Teacher meeting is:

- To establish and maintain good communication between the school and parents
- To inform parents how their children are progressing in school
- To help teachers/parents get to know the children better as individuals
- To help children realise that parents and teachers are working together
- To inform parents of problems and difficulties the child may have in school
- To discuss with the parent the child's experience of schooling
- To learn more about the child from the parent's perspective
- To learn more about parental opinions on what the school is doing
- To identify areas of tension and disagreement
- To identify ways in which parents can help their children
- To make joint decisions about the child's education
- To inform teachers on how children are coping outside school
- Parents can enrich teacher's knowledge of their students' progress through providing further information about the students' learning at home.

1.4 REPORTING TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents have the primary responsibility for their children's learning and development. Schools can strengthen the capacity of parents to support their children by sharing useful information with parents about the progress that children are achieving in the education system. Teachers draw on the following sources of evidence:

- conversations with the child
- teacher's observations on the child's progress in reaching objectives laid down in the teacher's short-term and long-term planning
- examination of students' own self-assessment data
- teacher's observations of the child's engagement with tasks
- outcomes of assessments, tests and other tasks
- examples of students' work
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1.5 END OF YEAR REPORTS

End of year reports are sent home each June to inform parents of their child's progress during the year. The school uses the template from the NCCA. The NCCA also have additional useful information for parents on their website www.ncca.ie.

The teachers report under the following headings:

- Your child as a learner
- Your child's social and personal development
- Your child's learning during the year
- How you can further support your child's learning.

1.6 MEETINGS WITH THE SUPPORT TEACHER

These meetings pertain to children with additional needs who have been allocated support hours. Support hours are allocated to children based on the needs of children across the whole school and are not static. A meeting between parents and the support teacher is arranged for September/October in order to discuss the child's Support Plan. However, if a parent wishes to arrange a meeting at any stage during the year to discuss their child, they may do so by prior appointment.

1.7 INFORMAL MEETINGS WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The school encourages communication between parents and staff. However, meetings with the teacher cannot generally be arranged for during teaching time.

Meetings with the teacher at the class door to discuss a child's concern/progress are discouraged on a number of grounds:

- a) Teachers cannot adequately supervise their class while at the same time speaking to a parent
- b) It is difficult to be discreet when so many children are standing close by
- c) It can be embarrassing for a child when his/her parent is talking to staff at a classroom door
- d) Keeping in mind that schools are very busy places, parents are asked, whenever possible, to arrange an appointment to see the class teacher or principal. (Parents should reveal the theme of the meeting so that the school can prepare adequately.)

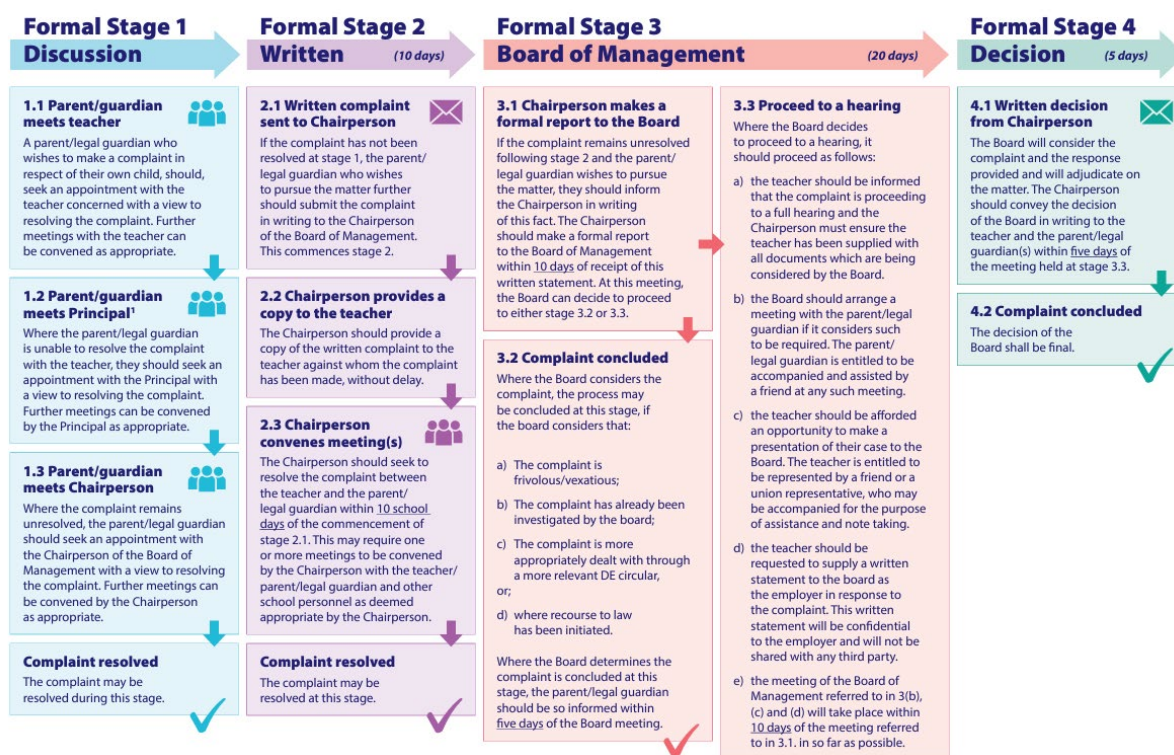
Occasions occur where a parent needs to speak to a staff member urgently. Sometimes these meetings need to take place without prior notice. The Principal will aim to facilitate such meetings, making every effort to ensure that the children in the class do not lose out on any of the teaching/learning time.

If parents wish to drop in lunch boxes, sports gear etc, this can be done through the secretary's office as it is important to keep class interruptions to a minimum.

1.8 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Complaints are infrequent but the school would wish that they be dealt with informally, fairly and quickly. The full complaints procedure is on our website. These steps are followed when dealing with

any form of complaint between adults in the school community. Staff are directed to INTO's [Working Together](#) document to resolve intra-staff complaints.



1.9 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Positive and respectful communication is of great importance to our school. This not only extends to the children but to all of the partners in education e.g. the staff, parents, board members and the wider community. While the behaviour of children in our school is of vital importance, adults in the school community also have a responsibility to ensure their own behaviour models the types of behaviour expected of children.

It is important that all partners in education are responsible for their own behaviour in the school. For example;

- All stakeholders are expected to speak to each other with respect. Shouting or other aggressive tones are not acceptable. If a stakeholder displays anger or aggression to another member of the school community, they may be asked to remove themselves from the building. In certain cases, the Gardaí may be called
- All stakeholders will treat all children attending our school with the utmost respect while on the premises
- Staff will only discuss school matters relating to the parent/guardian's own child. The school staff will respect the child's right to privacy so it is asked that parents respect other children's rights to privacy
- When meetings are arranged, it is recommended to agree a reasonable duration and agenda for the meeting. Every effort should be made not to exceed the agreed duration

- Staff are generally available to listen to a quick issue in the morning and after school. However, should a parent need to have a discussion or meeting, an appointment should be made for a convenient time for both parties. Classes begin at 9.00 am and finish at 2.40pm and this time should not be interrupted.

1.10 HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE AT WORK

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act (2005) is an important piece of legislation for Boards of Managements and for those who work in schools. It is recognised that school staff may be at risk from violence in the form of verbal abuse, threats, assaults or other forms of intimidation. This behaviour may come from pupils, parents, guardians, other staff members or intruders. In this respect, all staff should be aware of DES Circular 40/97 and Health & Safety Policy and Dignity at Work Policy which deal with the procedures to follow if they feel they have been subjected to any of the above behaviours.

1.11 SUCCESS CRITERIA

Record of number and nature of complaints and how they were resolved

Feedback from the school community/visitors to the school that a positive, welcoming atmosphere can be felt in the school

Feedback from school staff, parents, pupils, etc on how the policy is working

Good relationship and good communication between parents and school staff

1.12 RATIFICATION & REVIEW

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 06th December 2024

This policy will be reviewed in 2026.

Signed:  _____
Chairperson