

School Procedures
Parent-Staff Communication Policy
Scoil Íosagáin Ballybunion



Working Together
Parent-Staff
communication
June 2021
Reviewed October 2024

Introductory statement

This policy was developed by the staff of Scoil Íosagáin, the Board of Management and the parents association in the school year of 2020/21. It was reviewed in October 2024 and ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting in December 2024.

It's purpose is to provide information and guidelines to parents and staff on parent/staff meetings and parent/staff communication in Scoil Íosagáin. The school and the family strive to be mutually supportive and respectful of each other so that the child's education can be effective. All of the stakeholders in Scoil Íosagáin aim to work for the benefit of the child and their learning.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Develop close links with the school
- Participate in meetings in a positive and respectful manner, affirming the professional role of the staff and all staff members in the school.
- Collaborate with the school in developing the full potential of their children
- Share the responsibility of seeing that the school remains true to its ethos values and distinctive character (See school Ethos, Vision and Mission Statement)
- Become actively involved in the school/parent association
- Participate in policy and decision-making processes affecting them

Staff are encouraged to:

- Collaborate with the parents in an open two-way communication so that both parties are working together to develop the full potential of the student
- Be aware of the activities of the Parents' Association and link in with them where possible to support their fundraising activities
- Keep parents and guardians informed of their child's progress and behaviour
- Listen to what parents have to say and encourage them to bring and concerns to you at an early stage to avoid situations escalating

Structures in place to facilitate open communication & consultation with Parents

- Details of classroom staff communicated to parents at beginning of school year and any regular updates RE: long-term substitute or work experience personnel as appropriate. Advance notification to be given where possible if a regular member of staff is leaving so that parents can prepare the student for the imminent change
- One to one meetings between parents and teachers, parents and NEPS psychologist etc
- Meetings between parents and the Special Education team and/or Multidisciplinary team (CDNT) working with the student to ensure agreement on goals being worked towards
- School report for each pupil at the end of each school year
- Communication and consultation throughout the year (phone calls [often and early if any concerns arise], Aladdin, website and Facebook)
- Thorough on-going communication between the Principal and the Parents' Association, parents are invited to discuss and contribute to the drafting and review of relevant school policies.
- Any policies under review will be made known to all parents in written format after Board of Management meetings
- Homework diaries can also be used to relay signed messages. Parents are requested to sign diary each day to certify that homework has been completed and checked.
- Parents invited to events throughout the year e.g. Christmas play, Graduation ceremonies etc
- Meetings for new parents usually in February
- At least one annual, formal Parent/Teacher(Guardian) meeting per year (usually in term 1)

In all matters pertaining to the wellbeing and education of pupils, only the parents/legal guardians named on the enrolment form will be consulted by staff.

If a parent/guardian wishes to consult with a teacher they must contact the school secretary to arrange a mutually convenient time. It is not acceptable for any parent/guardian to demand an on the spot meeting with any staff member. It is important to note that teachers are **not expected to check emails** during the school day as they are busy teaching their class. If emailing a teacher with a specific request please allow a reasonable response time, at least 48 hours.

We are always happy to facilitate these discussions, and pre-arranged appointments help ensure that both parties are prepared and can fully engage in the conversation.

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It is vital that the school is informed immediately if family events/situations occur that could cause anxiety to their child and therefore may adversely affect their education. In all matters pertaining to the wellbeing and education of pupils, only the parents/legal guardians named on the enrolment form will be consulted by staff. Parents are asked to keep information on Aladdin up to date.

Parent/staff meetings

The aim of Parent/Staff meetings is:

- To improve communication between the school and parents.
- To let parents know how their children are progressing in school
- To inform staff on how children are coping outside school
- To establish an ongoing relationship and communication with parents
- To help staff/parents get to know the children better as individuals
- To help children realise that home and school are working together

Important:

Parents have an obligation to inform staff of any medical needs that their child might have. Parents should, at the beginning of the school year, request a meeting with new teachers/staff dealing with their child to keep them up to date on the child's medical condition and needs. Please do not assume that information automatically transfers to the next teacher. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to complete (annually) an Allergy Action Plan for their child and to keep school staff informed of any/all changes.

Circular 56/2011 INITIAL STEPS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY STRATEGY has been adopted by the Board of Management. References to parent-school communication are:

Reporting to parents

Parents have the primary responsibility for their children's learning and development. Schools can strengthen the capacity of parents to support their children in this way by sharing meaningful information with parents about the progress that children are making in school. In turn, parents will often be able to enrich staffs' knowledge of their

students' progress through providing further information about the students' learning at home.

Report card templates

Report cards are issued annually via Aladdin in June. Parents are welcome to request a printed copy by calling to the office where this will be facilitated.

We have information from the NCCA on our school website at www.ballybunionprimary.ie in relation to understanding standardised test results.

Formal Meetings-Student Support Files

Formal timetabled parent/staff meetings on the subject of the **Student Support File/Plan** take place no later than the end of October on any given academic year. This includes all children attending our special classes. 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.**

Children attending one of our special classes should make any appointment through their child's class teacher only, not their mainstream counterpart.

- All communication sent from the school will be sent to the child's home address as given on the enrolment form, unless otherwise requested by parents, or placed in the family's designated cubby hole as appropriate
- In the case of separated parents, requests can be made by both parents to meet their child's staff(s) individually for parent/staff meetings. It is the responsibility of individual parents to request separate meetings if they require one

Informal Parent/Staff Meetings

1. Scoil Íosagáin encourages communication between parents and staff.
2. Meetings with the class staff in the reception lobby or on the school grounds to discuss a child's concern/progress are discouraged on a number of grounds.
 1. A staff member cannot adequately supervise their student/class while at the same time speaking to a parent
 2. It is difficult to be discreet when there are potentially other parents and children standing close by.
 3. It could cause distraction for a child when his/her parent is talking to staff at a classroom door

Occasions occur where a parent needs to speak to a member of staff 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. A parent wishing to speak to a member of staff urgently should in the first instance indicate their request to the school secretary. The school secretary will pass on the request to the Principal or class teacher.

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. Please remember that teachers do not check their emails during the school day. Please do not use the class teacher's email as a means of relaying important information

Parents are strongly discouraged from taking pupils out of school during term time in order to facilitate family holidays.

Complaints Procedure

Complaints are infrequent but the school would wish that these would be dealt with informally, fairly and quickly. See the Parents Complaints procedure (available on www.education.ie) for the full policy document.

Behaviour of all Stakeholders in the School

Positive, respectful communication is of high importance to our school. This and is something we work on with the students in the school but this also extends to all of the stakeholders e.g. the staff, parents and the wider community. Anyone entering our building should feel safe to do so. While the behaviour of children in our school is of vital importance and is a major part of our education model, **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 stakeholders are responsible for their own behaviours in the school. Examples include:

- **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,

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they may be asked to remove themselves from the building. In certain cases, the Gardaí may be called.

- All stakeholders will treat our children with the utmost respect while on the premises.
- Staff should not be asked to speak about another parent's child. The staff of the school will respect your child's right to privacy so it is asked that parents respect other children's rights to privacy.
- **When stakeholders meet, it is important to respect that the time of meetings should be kept to a reasonable amount of time. Times of meetings should be agreed beforehand and these should be respected.**
- 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 at a convenient time for both parties. This ensures that issues can be resolved. Classes begin at 8.50 am and finish at 2.30pm [1.30pm for Junior and Senior Infants] and this time should not be interrupted.

Ratified by the Board of Management

Chairperson: _____

Principal: _____

Date: _____

Sean O'Sullivan

J. Walsh

26.11.2024