



## **POLICY ON COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES**

### **INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT**

This policy is drawn up as a result of consultation between teachers.

### **RATIONALE**

Our school community consists of staff, pupils and parents. In order for our school to run effectively, clear, concise communication procedures are necessary.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO CHARACTERISTIC SPIRIT OF THE SCHOOL**

Scoil Chroí Naofa is a Presentation Primary School. As a Catholic School we endorse the Catholic ethos. We are a Christian group of pupils, parents, staff and management who share a similar vision. We live out the Christian message by handing on the faith and Christian values. We cherish our pupils equally and recognising the uniqueness of each child, we work together so they may all reach their potential in all areas of the curriculum.

### **The aim of our school is**

1. To enable a child to live a full life as a child and to realise his or her potential as a unique individual.
2. To enable the child to develop as a social being working and cooperating with others and so contributing to the good of society.
3. To prepare the child for further educating and life-long learning.

### **AIM**

Our aim is to inform staff, pupils and parents of all communication procedures.

### **POLICY CONTENT**

This policy is related to Child Protection Policy and all curricular & administrative/organisational policies

### **STAFF - PUPIL COMMUNICATION**

- Communication takes place throughout the school day, in the classroom, in the hall, in the school yard, and it is a two way process.
- Principal and class teachers inform pupils of forthcoming events in our school diary.
- A school newsletter is drafted at least once a month and emailed to all parents.
- Important reminders are sent via text / Aladdin notification to all parents
- It is therefore very important that the school has the correct mobile phone & email details for all parents on file.

## **PRINCIPAL - TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

- Principal communicates with teachers in person, via WhatsApp message, text message, telephone calls or emails.
- Each teacher receives a copy of the school newsletter
- The teachers inform the Principal about requests for personal leave days in person, by phone call, text message or email.
- Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) days are booked using the calendar on the staffroom notice board - teacher checks to make sure that no other class teacher is taking an EPV on the same day. The teacher then puts their initials on the school calendar for the date they wish to take. The teacher then informs the principal so that arrangements can be made to cover their class on that day.
- All our policies are available on the GMAIL Cloud and the school website
- Principal sends a WhatsApp message to all staff regularly throughout the day to notify them of important announcements or to remind them about upcoming events
- Google Calendar is updated regularly by the secretary - it shows details of internal school items e.g. what staff are on leave and what substitute is covering for them. It also shows details of events that are public knowledge and can be seen via the website calendar e.g. details of school closures, school tours, sports events etc.

## **STAFF MEETINGS**

- There is one staff meeting each term, one hour before school ends and one hour after school. Any other staff meetings will take place after school giving teachers and staff adequate notice.
- All staff have an input into the agenda at staff meetings and planning days
- Staff meetings: this includes teachers meetings, support staff meetings, special needs assistant meetings, and meetings with secretary, caretaker and cleaner.
- Postholder: as part of a post of responsibility, records and reads the minutes at our teachers meetings.
- The Principal and Deputy Principal chair the meetings
- Postholder, as part of a post of responsibility, records decisions made at teachers meetings, which are typed up following the meeting and distributed to staff.
- Decisions are made after consultation by a show of hands. If a consensus cannot be reached, the Principal will make the decision.
- Some decisions may be postponed for a future date in order to do further research on the topic.
- Everybody's opinion will be heard on important issues.
- Principal gives the staff an account of all monies, once a year.
- Support staff meetings are held regularly.
- Support staff meet with class teachers twice a year to plan Student Support for their pupils.
- Resource Teacher, class teacher and principal and parents meet twice a year to discuss I.E.P for pupils with special needs.
- Special needs assistants meet with Principal regularly.
- Principal sends staff meeting decisions to staff by email

## **BOARD OF MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION**

Members communicate with each other at meetings/on telephone/text/email.

## **TEACHER TO TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

- The teacher on the B.O.M. reports back to the staff the agreed report of the B.O.M. meeting.
- The teacher on the Parents Council reports back to the staff on the issues that arose at the Parents Council meeting.
- The teacher representative of the I.N.T.O. distributes the InTouch Magazine, displays I.N.T.O. data on the notice board.
- When classes are allocated and teachers know their class for the following school year, meetings are arranged between teachers so they can pass on all the necessary information.
- Staff communicate with each other by email and / or WhatsApp
- All our policies are available on our GMAIL Cloud and on the school website.

## **COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND STAFF**

Communication between parents and staff takes place in the following ways:

- School journals
- Notes
- Letters
- Email
- Telephone Calls
- Newsletters and emails
- School Calendar
- Notice boards
- Text a Parent Service
- Meetings, e.g. reception meetings, sacramental meetings, Parent's Council, etc.
- If children leave the school during the day, their departure is recorded in the "Children Leaving School" book.
- If children are sick, contact is made by telephone.
- All parents are informed of the yearly calendar along with being reminded of upcoming free days by newsletter and / or text.
- Reports are available on Aladdin at the end of each year for each pupil
- Sixth Class teachers use the Education Passport materials. They include the Sixth Class Report Card to be completed by the teacher, My Profile Sheet to be completed by the child and the My Child's Profile Sheet to be completed by the parent. Teacher prepares the child to complete their sheet with guidance and assistance on the NCCA website. Teacher then sends the report and the child's Profile Sheet home and requests parents to complete the My Child's Profile Sheet. When parents return their sheet, it is attached to a copy of the teacher's report and the child's Profile Sheet. When the children register in their new school the staff of new school will request the Education Passport Materials.
- Parents are asked to inform the staff on the following issues via Aladdin or by contacting the office (email or phonecall):
  1. After a child has been sick
  2. Explanation for absences
  3. Dates for appointments
  4. If the child has any medical problems
- If parents visit the school during the day with items/messages, they are requested to report to the secretary.

- Staff will comply with procedures outlined in the C.P.S.M.A. Newsletter. Nov 2010 regarding parental status and access to school communication.
- Formal parent-teacher meetings take place once a year.
- Teachers will meet with Parents and vice versa if requested.
- Teachers often meet with parents when the junior children are collected at 1.30pm.
- However if parents wish to discuss a small problem with the teacher, they should make an appointment by contacting the office
- If parents wish to discuss their child's development in depth with the teacher the following procedures are adopted:
  - An appointment is made i.e. day and time.
  - Parents will be ushered into the office or staffroom.
  - Teachers class will be supervised
  - Parents and teacher meet in a free room
  - If parents behave in an aggressive manner, teacher will warn them that if they do not treat him/her in a respectful manner, the meeting will have to be rescheduled.
  - If teacher feels unsafe in the meeting, he/she will excuse themselves briefly and consult with the Principal.
  - Teacher and Principal will return to the meeting. If parents continue in a disrespectful manner the meeting will be adjourned for another day.
  - If another staff member is concerned about the staff member in a meeting with a parent, that staff member is advised to enter the room and inform him/her that he/she is needed elsewhere. If the teacher doesn't need assistance, they will say "Tell them I'll be there in 10mins".
- If parents wish to discuss an issue with the Principal the following procedures will take place:
  - If principal is free at the time she will facilitate the meeting as soon as possible. If not an appointment is scheduled for another day and time.
  - Meeting will take place in principal's office.
  - If issue concerns another staff member, parents will be directed to resolve issue with staff member. Principal will invite staff member to office and will only stay if requested.
  - If parents refuse to meet with staff member, principal will listen to issue and research incident with staff member. Principal will report findings to parents.
  - If parents behave in an aggressive manner towards the principal, he / she will warn them that if they do not treat him / her in a respectful manner, the meeting will have to be rescheduled.
  - If principal feels unsafe, he / she will excuse themselves briefly and consult with the Deputy Principal.
  - Principal and Deputy Principal will return to the meeting. If parents continue in a disrespectful manner the meeting will be adjourned for another day.
  - If another staff member is concerned about the Principal in a meeting with a parent, that staff member is advised to enter the room and inform him / her that he / she is needed elsewhere. If the Principal doesn't need assistance, he / she will say "Tell them I'll be there in 10mins".
- If teacher or Principal sense that a meeting with a parent may be difficult that he/she would request another staff member (Principal/Deputy Principal) to be present from the start.
- If a parent complains to a staff member about another member of staff, the staff member will direct parent to the staff member who the parent is complaining about.

- All staff will adopt the following ASSIST ME Model of Staff Support in the aftermath of an adverse event at the request of the Board of Management
  - **A** Acknowledge with empathy the event and impact on staff member and assess.
  - **S** Sorry - express regret for their experience.
  - **S** Story - allow time and space for them to recount and share personal experience.
  - **I** Inquire - encourage questions and provide information and answers.
  - **S** Provide supports and solutions.
  - **T** Travel - provide continuous support and reassurance going forward.
  - **M** Maintain contact and monitor progress moving forward.
  - **E** End - reach a stage of closure from the event and evaluate.
- The following notice is on display at all entrances to the school and translated into different languages. ***"The Board of Management state that the Staff of Scoil Chroí Naofa have the right to work in a safe environment and to be treated with consideration and respect".***

### **Respect**

In Scoil Chroí Naofa, we teach our pupils to show kindness and respect to each other as reflected in our Code of Behaviour Policy endorsed by the Board of Management. We believe that the cornerstone of a respectful school is tolerance. Pupils are taught to respect physical, cultural and religious differences in each other. Similarly, we extend this expectation to all adults in our school community, from staff to parents and members of the Parent's Council and the Board of Management. We believe that all staff and parents deserve to be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect and to show tolerance of others in a safe environment free from negative, aggressive, and inappropriate behaviours, where positivity, civility and respect are promoted.

We expect adults in our school community to:

- Use respectful, supportive, and encouraging language in all interactions
- To be mindful of the impact of negative body language.
- Listen for understanding and not always agreement in interactions with others
- Respect each other as adults and trust each other's decision making abilities
- Approach conflict with maturity and true desire for compromise or resolution
- Bullying of staff, parents and / or children will not be tolerated in our school community.

### ***EMERGENCY CLOSURE***

In the event of emergency closures a message will be sent via Aladdin to all parents & staff. This will be used in conjunction with the local radio station; Galway Bay FM. Please see Emergency Closure Policy.

### ***LIAISON WITH SCHOOLS***

- The school calendar for the year ahead is agreed by the staff of our school and the Boys School after Easter. Decisions on the school calendar is rotated every second year between our school and the boy's school..
- Names and addresses of all sixth class pupils are sent to the Presentation College and Clarin College
- Names and addresses of first class boys are sent to the Boys National School
- Principal / teacher of both second level schools visit to talk to the sixth class pupils about their schools.
- Parents and pupils of sixth and first class are informed of open days.
- Sixth class teacher prepares the class for the Secondary school Entrance Examinations.

- Pupils are reminded of the day and times for Entrance Examinations.
- Teachers from the second level schools, i.e., Resource Teachers for Special Needs and Home school Liaison Teacher meet with our Sixth Class teacher / resource teacher /principal about the children who are transferring to second level.
- Resource Teacher /Class Teacher from the Boys National School meet with our school's First Class Teacher and or Resource teacher regarding pupils transferring.
- Results of assessment tests are also forwarded to the Boys School on request.
- If new schools are seeking Professional Reports e.g. Psychological Assessments, Principal seeks permission from parents to transfer data to new school.
- If children leave our school during the year a report is sent to their new school on request.
- If a child is enrolled in our school during the school year, the Principal informs the previous school regarding the date the child first attends.

## **GENERAL**

### **Update 2013/2014**

- Copies of the latest circulars are available on the DES, INTO AND CPSMA websites. Circulars will no longer be on display in the staff room. However staff will be alerted to new circulars.
- If a teacher receives a Professional Report from a parent for their child who is currently not sanctioned resource hours, please direct parent to Principal.
- A maximum of half an hour will be allocated to meetings with professionals.
- If a child needs to be referred for speech therapy, a referral form is completed by the SET department and needs to be signed by the parent. The form is then posted to the relevant Primary Care office and the school must await their decision.
- Teachers will request reasons for absence from parents if children are absent from major school events.
- Children will be sent to Principal when they have a new baby brother or sister and also on leaving the school.
- In extreme cases where a child must have a mobile phone in school, a note is required from parents and the phone must be handed up to the teacher at the start of class and it will be returned at the end of the school day.
- If any teacher needs a particular text sent out to certain parents, (e.g. an extra curricular activity being cancelled), let Principal know and the text can be sent out to include other school messages.
- Usage of mobile phones must be kept to a minimum.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Principal and /or staff communicate with the following during the school year as the occasion arises; Board of Management members, priests, speech therapist, psychologist, occupational therapist, doctor, nurse, dentist, attendance welfare officer, garda, visiting teacher for travellers, visiting teacher for hearing impaired, visiting teacher for visually impaired, principals, inspector, photographer, student teachers, students on work experience, social workers, D.E.S. Officials, sales representatives, visitors etc.

## **SUCCESS CRITERIA**

- Informal Staff meetings may take place during morning breaks
- Staff have an input on agenda for Staff Meetings and Planning Days

- Parent / teacher meeting will take place once a year and informal meeting will take place during the year if necessary.
- A school report is sent home to every pupil at the end of the school year.
- Whole school Evaluations take place every few years.
- Our Whole School Self Evaluation takes place every year.

### **Monitoring Procedures**

This policy will be monitored annually.

### **Role & Responsibility**

A teacher will review this policy on consultation with the staff; hence any amendments will take place.

### **Review Procedures**

This overall policy will be reviewed in:

- a) The light of incidences.
- b) The light of challenges or difficulties that may present themselves from time to time.
- c) The light of on-going good practice.

### **RATIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION**

The Board of Management ratified this policy.

Signed: *Bernie Ryan*  
Chairperson

Signed: *Fergal Naughton*  
Principal

REVIEWED DATE: January 2024

**Appendix One: Revised Parental Complaints Procedure** – this PDF should be read in conjunction with this policy. This procedure was revised and agreed by the INTO and school management bodies. It took effect from Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 2024.