



Working Together Parent-Staff Communication Policy

Introductory statement

This policy was developed by the staff of Scoil Náisiúnta Br. Mícheál Ó Cléirigh (Creevy N.S.), the Board of Management and the Parents Association in the school year of 2017-2018 and reviewed in January 2022.

Its purpose is to provide information and guidelines to parents and staff on parent/staff meetings and parent/staff communication in Creevy N.S. The family and home are central to the social and intellectual development of the child and the nurturing of good, moral values. 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 the stakeholders aim to work together 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 Mission Statement)
- Become actively involved in the school/parent association
- Participate in policy and decision-making processes affecting them

Staff are encouraged to:

- Participate in meetings with parents in a positive and respectful manner affirming the role of the parent as the 'primary and natural educator' of their children (as per Article 42.1 of the Irish Constitution)
- 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 activities

Structures in place to facilitate open communication & consultation with Parents

- Meeting for parents of new Junior Infants – June, October/November

- Parent/teacher meetings one-to-one in November
- Parents receive school report of each pupil at the end of each school year
- Meetings with parents whose children have special needs over the course of the year to support inclusion
- Consultation throughout the year
- Written communication
- Through the Parents' Association, parents are invited to discuss and contribute to the drafting and review of relevant school policies.
- Regular newsletters and text messaging service keep parents up-to-date with school events, holidays and school procedures/concerns.
- Homework diary/Homework folder/Aladdin used to relay messages which are signed between parents and teachers. Parents requested to sign diary each night to certify that homework has been completed
- Involvement of parents in the religious programme through the 'Grow In Love' section for parents
- Parents are also welcome to make an appointment with teachers any time throughout the year. Parents can make this appointment by contacting either the teacher or the school secretary
- Parents are invited to events throughout the year, such as end of year celebrations, Christmas concerts, plays and performances.

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.

Parent/staff meetings

The aim of Parent/Staff meetings is:

- To establish and maintain 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 help staff/parents get to know the children better as individuals
- To help children realise that home and school are working together
- To share with the parent any challenges that may have arisen for the child
- To review with the parent the child's experience of schooling
- To identify ways in which parents can help their children
- To negotiate jointly decisions about the child's education
- To inform the parents of assessment data gathered according to school policy

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 achieving in the education system. This information needs to draw on the different sources of evidence that staff use, such as conversations

with the learner, data-collection and documented progress on objectives and milestones reached in their short and long term planning, examination of students' own self-assessment data, documented observations of the learner's engagement with tasks, outcomes of other assessment tasks and tests, and examples of students' work. 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

Schools should help parents to understand fully the evidence of learning that the school reports to them, especially information from any standardised tests. The NCCA has provided a range of standard report templates to assist schools in reporting information about the progress of primary pupils to parents, including information from standardised tests. The NCCA report card templates were developed through a process of consultation with schools and parents and take account of research commissioned by the NCCA.

The report cards provide for reporting in four key areas:
the child's learning and achievement across the curriculum,
the child's learning dispositions,
the child's social and personal development,
ways in which parents can support their child's learning.

All primary schools **must** use one of the report card templates (available at www.ncca.ie) for reporting to parents on students' progress and achievement at school with effect from the date of this circular.

Text Messaging/Email Service

The text messaging/email service keeps parents up to date with school events, holidays and school concerns. Text messages/email will be sent to one mobile phone number or email address per family. In the case of separated parents, requests can be made by both parents to receive text messages and emails. All text messages will be sent to the first mobile phone number/email address as given on the enrolment form, unless otherwise requested by parents. Any changes to this number/email address must be given in writing to the school.

School Support Meetings

Where a child may require additional school support, additional parent teacher meetings may take place over the course of the school year, when devising and revising support plans. At times, outside professionals may attend these meeting and offer advice on how to best meet the child's needs in the school setting. 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.

Informal Parent/Teacher Meetings

Creevy N.S. encourage communication between parents and staff. Meetings with teacher in the reception lobby to discuss a 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

Parents wishing to speak to a teacher can do so at 2:10 for infants and 3:10 for 1st-6th class provided it is a brief meeting and it is suitable for staff member to do so. If the issue is not resolved within 5 minutes or it is an issue that the parent feels will need longer than 5 minutes to address, an appointment must be made at a mutually acceptable time.

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 if the staff member being sought is a teacher. In the absence of the Principal, the secretary can use discretionary judgement to communicate the request to the Deputy Principal or directly to the member of staff themselves.

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.

All explanations of pupil absences, along with notifications of dentist/medical appointments must be in writing to the class teacher. These notes should be written to the class teacher in the pupil's homework journal/homework folder (junior classes). This is required under the Education Welfare Act 2000.

Pupils attending dentist/medical appointments during the school day must be signed out in the sign out book in the secretary's office. If they return to the school following the appointment, they must also be signed in again. 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. Please see the revised Parental Complaints Procedures. *These are the agreed procedures for dealing with complaints as reached by the national representative bodies.*

Ratified by the Board of Management

Date: 5/6/2024

Review Date: June 2027