



# Scoil Maelruain Junior

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## Parent/Staff Communication Policy

### Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and guidelines to parents and staff on parent/staff meetings and parent/staff communication in Scoil Maelruain JNS. 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 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
- Become actively involved in the school/parent association
- Participate in policy and decision-making processes affecting them

### Structures in place to facilitate open communication and consultation with parents

#### Parents of children starting Junior Infants

- Induction meeting with all parents of Junior Infant in the term prior to starting school
- An informal visit for parents and children to meet the classroom teacher

Formal Parent/teacher meetings are held in November

Parents receive a school report of each pupil at the end of each school year on the Aladdin App.

*Meetings with parents of children have special needs will take place at least twice a year*

Meetings can be facilitated at any time during the year between parents and teachers if the need arises.

Regular written communication through email and on the Aladdin app

Through the parents' association, parents are invited to discuss and contribute to the drafting and review of school policies that are relevant to them. 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, email or text

Involvement of parents in the 'Grow in Love' religious program section for parent

If a parent wishes to consult with a teacher, he/she can contact the teacher via email to arrange a suitable time or by telephoning the office. It is therefore important that parents keep contact **details up to date**. It is vital that the school is immediately informed if family events/situations occur that cause anxiety to your child and therefore may adversely affect his/her 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.

### **Parent/Teacher meetings**

Formal Parent/Teacher meetings will be held once a year for all classes (Circular 14/04). Where possible, they will be held in the first term. Details regarding time, etc. will be sent through the Aladdin app. Meetings may take place in classrooms and learning support rooms. On some occasions these can take place over the phone. The teachers use prepared guidelines for the meetings and collaborate in advance about the progress of individual children. A short written record of the meeting is maintained by each teacher. In the case of separated parents, requests can be made by both parents to meet their child's teacher(s) individually for parent/teacher meetings.

The purpose of the Parent/Teacher meeting is:

- To establish and maintain good communication between the school and parents
- To let parents know how their children are progressing in school
- To help teachers/parents get to know the children better as individuals
- To help children realise that home and school are working together.
- To meet demands for accountability
- To share with the parent the problems and difficulties the child may have in school
- To review with the parent the child's experience of schooling
- To learn more about the child from the parent's perspective
- To identify ways in which parents can help their children
- To negotiate jointly decisions about the child's education
- To inform the parents of class test results

### **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 staffs 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 staff's knowledge of their students' progress through providing further information about the students' learning at home.

### **Report card templates**

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

### **Formal Meetings-Support Plan Plus**

Formal timetabled parent/staff meetings to create a Support Plan for individual students who meet this criteria will take place at least twice a year (September and January). The support teacher and the SNAs will attend if required. 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 via email.

### **Informal Parent/Staff Meetings**

1. The school encourages communication between parents and staff.
2. Meetings with the class teacher at the class door/school gate to discuss a concern or child's progress, are not allowed on a number of grounds:
  - Staff cannot adequately supervise his/her class while at the same time speaking to a parent
  - It is difficult to be discreet when so many children are standing close by
  - It can be embarrassing 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 staff member urgently. Sometimes these meetings/telephone conversations 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, coats etc, this can be done through the secretary's office as it is important to keep class interruptions to a minimum.

Parents are strongly discouraged from taking pupils out of school during term time in order to facilitate family holidays. If they do withdraw their child they should give prior notice to the class teacher via email.

### **Behaviour of all Stakeholders in the School**

Positive and respectful communication is of high importance to our school. This not only extends to the children but 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, 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 community, they may be asked to remove themselves from the building. In certain cases, the Gardaí will 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.
- 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.

### **Class Whatsapp Groups**

The administrator of these groups should moderate all the conversations on the groups. Any inappropriate conversation should not be tolerated. **Any inappropriate comments about staff and children should be reported to the Principal. The Whatsapp Group should not be used in place on the Complaints Procedure.**

### **Safety, Health and Welfare at Work**

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act became operative on 1 November 1989. It is an important piece of legislation for BoMs and for those who work in schools, as schools and colleges were brought under the scope of safety legislation for the first time.

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 which deals with the procedures to follow if they feel they have been subjected to any of the above behaviours. A copy of this circular can be found on the Department of Education website.

### **Implementation and Communication**

This policy was originally ratified in September 2021 and was implemented in September 2021. It is due to be reviewed again in 2023 or sooner if circumstances demand it. It is available to view on our school website for all parents or other interested parties