

Scoil Naomh Cáthach

Ballyfinane, Furies, Cill Áirne, Co. Chiarraí
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Ballyfinane National School

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Communication Policy

This policy was developed by Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Carthach N.S., Ballyfinane, Furies, Killarney, Co. Kerry, in consultation with the school staff and the parents/guardians of our pupils. Its purpose is to provide information and guidelines to parents/guardians and teachers on parent/teacher meetings and parent/teacher communication in our school.

Parent/Guardian - Communication Policy

1. Introduction

Effective communication between teachers, Principal and parents/guardians is imperative and is in the best interests of the children's education, care and wellbeing while in school. The school seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are valued. This work can best be done where there is a high level of openness and co-operation between staff, parents/guardians and pupils.

Communication between school and home should be open, positive and courteous. The school acknowledges that parents/guardians are the primary educators of their children and the school endeavours to create an open and welcoming atmosphere for parents/guardians as well as children. Ballyfinane NS strives to create and maintain an open and welcome school culture where good communication standards are fostered and developed.

2. General Communication

There are a number of structures in place to facilitate good communication links between parents/guardians and teachers. These are as follows:-

- Informal parent – teacher contact.
- Parent/teacher meetings one-to-one in November each year (Circular 14/04)
- Parents/guardians receive a school report for each pupil at the end of each school year; this report includes results of standardised tests for children in 1st- 6th class.
- Meetings with parents/guardians whose children have special educational needs with the S.E.N. team.
- Written communications (letters, text messages, emails, newsletters).
- Communication via *Aladdin*. Electronic notes can be sent to teacher re absences, early leavers. School can communicate notices and messages immediately and efficiently. School work / homework dispersal and receipt where appropriate.
- Parents/guardians 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/guardians in written format via the school newsletter and /or website.
- Regular newsletters keep parents/guardians up-to-date with school events, school achievements, holidays and school concerns.
- Homework journals used by all classes to relay messages between parents/guardians and teachers. Parents/guardians requested to sign diary each night to confirm that homework has been completed.
- Parents/guardians are invited to family masses and school concerts.

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- Involvement of parents/guardians in preparation for First Communion, First Confession and Confirmation, as appropriate.
- School open day, Pre-enrolment, enrolment of a new child to Ballyfinane NS. Meeting for parents/guardians of new Junior Infants –May/June.

It is important that the school is 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 the teachers.

3. Parent/teacher meetings

Formal Parent-Teacher meetings are held outside of school hours, in November each year. A letter is issued to each child, giving the dates and time blocks of the meetings. Teachers then arrange the specific time, bearing in mind the time allocated to siblings. Parents/guardians will also be allocated a time to meet with their child's S.E.N. teacher (if applicable).

If custody of a child is shared, requests can be made by both parents/guardians to meet their child's teacher(s) individually for parent/teacher meetings.

The aims of Parent/Teacher meetings are:

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

A teacher or a parent/guardian may request additional parent-teacher meetings during the year to discuss teaching, learning or behaviour management issues. Every effort will be made to arrange a meeting at the earliest possible opportunity and at a time that is convenient to both parties.

4. Informal Parent/Teacher Meetings

Communication between parents/guardians and teachers is to be encouraged. Informal parent-teacher contact occurs regularly in the school as parents bring and collect children. Arranging parent/teacher meetings within the school day while children are in school is difficult. However, parents/guardians are welcome to speak to the Principal or teacher(s) at an agreed appointment time.

Regretfully, teachers are unable to enter into consultation with parents during formal teaching hours. Meetings at the classroom door to discuss a child's concern/progress are discouraged on a number of grounds. These are as follows:-

- A teacher cannot adequately supervise his/her class while at the same time speaking to a parent.
- It is difficult to be discrete when so many children are close by.
- It can be embarrassing for a child when his/her parent is talking to the teacher at a classroom door.

However, it is understood that occasions will occur where a parent needs to speak to a teacher urgently. Sometimes these meetings need to take place without prior notice. The Principal will try to facilitate such

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meetings making every effort to ensure that the children in the class do not lose out on any of the teaching/learning time.

It is important that there is a record of all informal and formal parent/teacher meetings.

If parents/guardians 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. Parents can send a message through the Aladdin App directly to the class teacher.

5. School Website

All newsletters and Principal's bulletins are made available through the school website and school Facebook page. Our school website gives our school the opportunity to share information about our school to a wider audience, community members and prospective students. Our Facebook page is devised to highlight positive aspects of our school only. Inappropriate material or comments will be deleted immediately and the school reserves the right to block any user from the school page.

The website presents and stores important school policy documents which are therefore publicly available. Parents/guardians and pupils are encouraged to visit the school website and school Facebook page regularly to keep up to date with what's new in school and different events and curricular activities in the classroom.

6. Aladdin

Aladdin is an admin web-based software system enabling the school to organize Parents/Guardian contacts and information Enrolment figures for the Department of Education. It allows for the school to streamline attendance and tracking of roll books. Ballyfinane NS can successfully upload important messages for individual teachers from the office. The Aladdin system is used for sending relevant information to parents. Texts are used when possible and important documents such as policies, PDF documents such as Newsletters are emailed. Parents will also be communicated with through Aladdin where reminders of upcoming events, links to policies and reminders re: closures, open days, parent teachers meeting etc. will be sent. This app will also allow parents to send in absence notes and early leaving and late arrivals through the app. The Principal is copied into all communication through Aladdin. Documents are secured and safeguarded by placing a protected status upon them, therefore only allowing for selected staff to view same. Confidentiality is protected and secured. The principal is notified of all Aladdin activity and communication.

7. Absences

Parents are requested under the new Tulsa guidelines to inform the school with a note of all absences by their child during school hours. Please see **School Absences Policy** for further detail. All parents will have access to the school Aladdin app.

8. Formal Meetings-IEPs/PPP Plan meetings with SNA's

Formal timetabled parent/staff meetings on the subject of the Individual Education Plan will take place once a term with the support teacher and the SNAs will attend at the beginning and end of each year 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.

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9. Reviews for Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan

All children with an Education, Health and Care Plan will have an Annual Review each academic year to discuss their progress in relations to the aims and objectives of their plan and half termly review meetings are held to ensure provision and support is appropriate.

10. Complaints Procedure

There is an agreed procedure for dealing with parental/guardian complaints. Parents/guardians should refer to this Complaints Procedure where necessary.

RATIFICATION

This statement was ratified by the Board of Management on _____

This statement will be reviewed on _____

Date of Review	Date of Review	Date of Review	Date of review

Signed: _____

Mike Carroll
Chairperson of B.O.M.

Signed: _____

Catherine O'Shea
Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____