



## **Communication Policy**

St. Brigid's NS, Clonegal is a co-educational, Catholic, primary school which strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and nurtured.

Parents are recognised as the primary educators of their children. Teachers are recognised as professionals in education and work in partnership with parents.

Regular, orderly parent-teacher communication is welcomed throughout the duration of the pupil's education at our school and home-school links are actively encouraged.

Members of the B.O.M., teaching staff, classroom support staff, and secretary strive to create an open and welcoming atmosphere where good communications are fostered and developed. Respectful communication between Teachers, Principal and Parents is imperative and is in the best interests of the children's education, care and well-being while in our school. Respect, honesty and acceptance of differing viewpoints is the basis for all good communications.

### **Aims of Communication Policy**

- To build a school community which is supportive of pupils, staff and all members of the school community.
- To establish procedures for the sharing of information in relation to pupil progress, needs and attainment.
- To enrich and optimise the educational opportunities provided for our pupils by accessing the skills and talents of all of the school community.
- To promote a culture of respectful partnership in the education of the children in our care.

### **Types of Parent-teacher/ Home School Communication at St. Brigid's NS, Clonegal**

The following types of communication are actively pursued in our school. Other activities may occur as appropriate.

- Informal parent-teacher contact is always welcome.
- Formal parent-teacher contact.
- Specially convened Parent – Teacher meetings – held in November/December each year.
- Meeting for parents of new Infants – May/June each year.
- Written reports at the end of each school year for all pupils. They contain results of standardized tests for pupils from 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> class.
- Individual Assessment Folders, containing samples of typical work in each curriculum area, which are sent home for signing at the end of each term.



- IEP meetings, in September and February, for parents whose children have assessed Special Education Needs.
- Newsletters.
- Regular updates of school activities – via e-mail or letter.
- Notices displayed on school doors.
- School website – updated weekly.
- Parents' Association.
- Parents are asked to comment on new Policies and their views will be considered by the Board of Management
- Text –A – Parent
- "Welcome Books" which are given to Parents of Children in ASD classes or who have other diagnosed Special Education Needs before the child comes to the school. This allows the parent and child to view/discuss photos to familiarize the child with the school.
- Homework bags for Junior and Senior Infants.
- Homework Journals, 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> class, used to relay messages. Parents requested to sign diary each night to confirm homework has been completed.
- Shared Reading booklets provide a record of reading and allows parents to participate in the school's Reading Programme and comment on child's reading progression.
- Parents are invited to all school events and celebrations – School Masses, Raising of Flags, Carol Services, Concerts, Music Recitals ,etc.
- Grandparents are invited to Grandparents day celebrations.
- Parents are invited by the Parish to become involved in Sacramental Preparations.
- Parents Council assist at all school celebrations.

It is important that the school is informed if family events/ situations occur that cause anxiety for your child and therefore may adversely affect his/her education and/or behavior.

### **Parent/Teacher meetings**

Formal Parent-Teacher meetings are held, in November/December, outside of school hours. Parents are invited to select a specific time if they have particular requirements. Children are then given an allocated time for their Parents to attend. Times are arranged, bearing in mind that siblings need to be allocated consecutive times. Parents are also allocated times to meet with Learning Support/ Resource teachers – if applicable. If the selected date does not suit a family, a mutually acceptable time and date is agreed between Parents and Teachers. If custody of a child is shared, requests can be made by both parents to meet their child's teacher(s) individually for parent/teacher meetings.



The aims of Parent/Teacher meetings are:

- To let parents 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
- To help teachers/parents get to know the children better as individuals
- To help children realise that home and school are working together

A Teacher/the Principal or a Parent may request a parent-teacher meeting at any time to discuss teaching, learning or behaviour management issues. Every effort will be made to arrange a meeting at the earliest possible opportunity. Parents can phone the office and a mutually acceptable time can be arranged.

### **Informal Parent/Teacher Meetings**

Respectful communication between Parents and Teachers/Principal is always encouraged. However, arranging parent/teacher meetings within the school day while children are in school is difficult. Meetings with the class teacher at the class door to discuss a child's concern/progress is discouraged on a number of grounds

- To enable all concerned to benefit from a meeting, it is necessary to give notice of the meeting so relevant information can be collected.
- It interferes with teaching time for the class.
- 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.

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.

### **School Website: [www.clonegalns.com](http://www.clonegalns.com)**

Newsletters and Principal's information notices are made available through the school website. Parents who are registered for email communication also receive newsletters and bulletins directly to the email address provided. It is important that school is informed if parents change their e-mail address.

The website presents and stores important school policy documents which are therefore publicly available.



The website provides a communication facility for parents and others who wish to contact the school or inform themselves about school activities. It is updated weekly. The website has an event calendar which is regularly updated, a school news section, sections for class activities, a section for the Parents Council and photo galleries.

Parents and pupils are encouraged to visit the school website regularly to keep up to date with what's new in school.

### **Text-a-Parent**

Short notices are frequently sent via text-a-parent. It is essential that the school is informed when mobile phone numbers are changed.

### **Complaints Procedure**

There is an agreed procedure for dealing with complaints. Parents should refer to this Complaints Procedure (available on our website).

### **Registration of New Entrants**

Enrolment forms are available on the school website and in the Office. Prospective Parents are invited to enroll children in January each year.

Parents of all new entrants are invited to attend an open afternoon in May/June of the year the child will commence in the school. This afternoon is important as it

- Allows the children to become familiar with the school before September and to meet their new teacher and the Principal.
- Allows new Parents to meet the class teacher and the Principal and to become familiar with the school.
- Allows the class teacher to speak to the Parents about general organization within the classroom, the subjects covered and various other useful topics of information.
- Gives Parents an opportunity to ask questions.
- Allows Principal to speak about the school, its general organization, policies and practices and to ensure Parents and children feel welcome in the school.
- Allows Parents to sign up for the Book Rental scheme if they wish.
- Allows Parents Association representative to speak to new parents about the role of the Parents Association in the school.

### **Absences**

Absences must be notified in writing to the school in accordance with National Education Welfare Board requirements. A separate attendance policy is available on the school website.

**Parents Association**

St. Brigid's NS has a Parents Association which represents the parents. The committee of the Parents' Association aims to promote the interests of all pupils in our school in partnership with the Board of Management, the Principal, the teaching staff, support and ancillary staff.

The committee of the Parents' Association meets on a regular basis throughout the school year. The function of these meetings is to plan for school activities, to discuss and organise fund-raising activities and to advise the Principal on general matters of concern to the parent body in the school.

Individual parents are encouraged to assist at the various events organised for parents and pupils throughout the school year.

**Board of Management**

St. Brigid's NS, Clonegal has a properly constituted Board of Management comprised of nominees of the trustee, community, teachers and parents. The Board of Management meets on a regular basis.