

St. Patrick's S.N.S.,
Beau Piers,
Skerries,
Co. Dublin.
K34 X751
Tel: 01-849 0945
Email: admin@stpatssns.ie
Website: www.stpatssns.ie



St. Patrick's S.N.S.
Roll Num.: 163320
Principal: Oisín McGinty
Deputy: Kim McGregor

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and guidelines to parents and staff on parent/teacher communication and Parent Teacher Meetings in St. Patrick's Junior School, Skerries.

The home is central to the development of the child and the nurturing of good moral values. Both the school and the family strive to be mutually supportive 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.

St. Patrick's Senior National School is a welcoming and inclusive community that is holistic, respectful and tolerant of all religious traditions and beliefs. The school community strives to create an atmosphere of love, respect, security and trust. Teachers are sensitive to the needs and circumstances of each pupil. We work in close collaboration with the family. Good communication between parents and teachers is essential to the nurturing of this positive, supportive environment.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Develop close links with the school and 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 their children's education through the Parents' Association, the Active Schools programme, the Green Schools programme etc.
- Through the Parents' Association, participate in policy formulation and the decision-making processes affecting them.
- Participate in meetings in a positive and respectful manner, affirming the professional role of the staff.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

- Individual Parent Teacher Meetings take place in November for all classes.
- There may be additional Parent Teacher Meetings for parents whose children attend learning support or who have special educational needs.

- A written report on each pupil is provided to parents/guardians in November and at the end of each school year.
- Teachers may consult with parents regularly or request to meet parents. The homework journal can be used to relay messages as well as our school email address admin@stpatssns.ie.
- Newsletters are issued throughout the school year. They include updates on the school, Board of Management and Parents' Association news and notices of forthcoming events.
- Parents may receive texts from the school occasionally with reminders and messages.
- The school website is www.stpatssns.ie.

FORMAL PARENT TEACHER MEETINGS

The purpose of Parent Teacher Meetings is to:

- Let parents know how their children are progressing in school.
- Inform teachers on how children are coping outside school.
- Establish an on-going relationship and communication with parents.
- Allow teachers and parents get to know the children better as individuals.
- To help children realise that home and school are working together.
- To review with the parent the child's experience of schooling.
- To share with the parent the achievements and attainments of their child in school.
- To share with the parent the problems and difficulties the child may have in school.
- To identify ways in which parents and teachers can support the child further.

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 teachers use, such as conversations with the learner, documented progress on objectives, checklists, examination of students' own self-assessment data and examples of students' work. In turn, parents will often be able to enrich teachers' knowledge of their pupil's progress through providing further information about the students' learning at home.

The Principal attends a number of these formal Parent Teacher Meetings each year. No prior notice of the Principal's attendance at these meetings can be given.

- Formal scheduled Parent Teacher Meetings take place in November and February.
- The meetings are held in accordance with DES/CPSMA/INTO guidelines.
- Meetings will be timetabled and usually held between 2.40p.m. and 5.45pm.
- The Principal and teachers agree the meeting schedule and parents are given an appointment in advance.
- The school aims to co-ordinate sibling meeting times and meetings with the Additional Needs Teacher (where relevant) where these have not been held jointly with the class teacher.

- Parents/guardians who cannot attend the formal Parent Teacher Meeting can make alternative arrangements at the discretion of the class teacher.
- The Principal shall be informed of all Parent Teacher Meetings taking place.
- Teachers will bring relevant issues to the attention of the Principal in advance of the meetings.
- Issues arising from the meetings will be discussed with the Principal and other relevant staff members.
- We recommend one joint Parent Teacher Meeting for parents of pupils who have separated in order to ensure that both parents have access to the same information at the same time in respect of their children. However, separate meetings can be arranged for parents/guardians on request.
- Where separate meetings are arranged, this fact will be brought to the attention of the Principal and a senior member of the teaching staff will be present with the class teacher and Additional Needs Teacher (where relevant) at both meetings.
- All staff members maintain the highest level of professional confidentiality in regard to information received during or as a result of Parent Teacher Meetings.

ADDITIONAL PARENT TEACHER MEETINGS

Good, respectful communication between parents and teachers is vital and is strongly encouraged at St. Patrick's Senior National School.

- Additional meetings can be scheduled through our school email address www.stpatssns.ie or through a message in the student's journal. Alternatively, a parent may ring the school secretary and request a meeting with their child's class teacher.
- Teachers will schedule an in-person meeting at a time and day that suits both parties.
- In order to make best use of the short time available for meetings, the parent must always give a reason for the meeting. Knowing the purpose of the meeting beforehand allows teachers to prepare adequately for the meeting and results in more efficient use of time at the meeting and the early resolution of issues.
- Where possible, these meetings will be held after school hours at a time that is convenient for both the teacher and the parent.
- The Principal may, without giving any prior notice, attend any Parent Teacher Meeting.
- Teachers will do their respond to requests for communication within two days.
- If parents wish to drop in lunch boxes, P.E. gear, etc., this can be done through the secretary's office as it is important to keep class interruptions to a minimum. The school secretary can also relay messages on to children where this is appropriate.

PRINCIPAL PARENT MEETINGS

- The school Principal is very happy to meet parents regarding enrolments, finances, etc.
- However, when it comes to a concern or complaint, a parent must first approach the class teacher regarding the matter.

- Parents requesting an appointment with the Principal will be asked whether the matter has already been discussed with the class teacher. If not, the parent will be redirected to the class teacher in the first instance.
- If the issue is not resolved at a meeting with the class teacher, the parent can then request an appointment with the Principal.
- The Principal will consult with the classroom teacher in relation to the issue and then give the parent an appointment. If appropriate, the classroom teacher will attend this parent meeting with the principal.
- In order to make the best use possible of time and to ensure that these procedures have been followed, a parent wishing to make an appointment with the Principal must give an outline of the subject matter of the meeting.

END OF YEAR REPORT

Schools aim to help parents to understand fully the evidence of learning that the school reports to them. In line with Departmental advice, the school uses an NCCA approved report template. 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.

IN SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

Positive and respectful communication is of great 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.

- Aladdin is the primary method of communications within school for messaging internally. For the work/life balance and wellbeing, our school will aim to only message using Aladdin within school hours.
- Good communication is a key aspect of any successful organisation. If the Principal or Deputy Principal request face to face meeting with any staff member, this request must be adhered to as soon as possible (within that working day) on request of the Principal/Deputy Principal and BoM.
- The 'Working Together' and 'Dignity at Work' document from the INTO and ASTI are used by this school as frameworks for good communication.
- Meetings regarding a specific topic/concer/issue are not to be held on corridors or in public. The principal/deputy principals office or a classroom should be used.

It is important that all stakeholders are responsible for their own behaviours in the school.

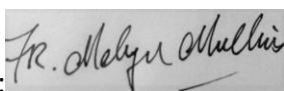
Examples include:

- 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 must and 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 or to compare a child to others in his or her class. The staff of the school will respect your child's right to privacy so parents are required to respect other children's rights to privacy.
- When stakeholders meet, it is important to respect that the length of meetings should be kept to a reasonable amount of time. Times of meetings should be agreed beforehand and these should be respected.
- Staff members are generally available for brief exchanges of information (confirming the time of a meeting, etc.) in the morning and after school. However, should a parent need to have a discussion or meeting, an appointment should be made at a mutually convenient time. This ensures that issues can be resolved.
- Please note that all meetings will be held face to face in so far as possible. It is the policy of St. Patrick's Senior National School not to hold Parent Teacher Meetings by phone call, video conference or any other social media. (A teacher or the Principal may, however, telephone a parent where necessary to inform them of an incident which has taken place involving their child or an injury sustained by their child during the day.)
- Where one parent attends the Parent Teacher Meeting on behalf of both parents it is the responsibility of the attending parent to provide feedback to the absent parent. Teachers are not permitted to take phone calls from one parent on behalf of the other parent during a Parent Teacher Meeting.
- Meetings are confidential to the participants; therefore, it is the policy of St. Patrick's Senior National School that **no voice or video recording of a Parent Teacher Meeting may take place**. As this is school policy, **teachers do not have the authority to give permission to be recorded** during a Parent Teacher Meeting.

Approved by the Board of Management.

Date: 08.11.23

Signed:



Very Rev. Fr. Melvyn Mullins,
Chairperson.

