

Scoil Naomh Eoin

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Principal: Stephen Donovan

Deputy Principal: Anne T. Hillery

Parental Involvement Policy

Introductory Statement

This policy was formulated by the staff of the school, in consultation with members of the Parents' Association during the first term 2023/24, and reflects on-going practice in Scoil Naomh Eoin.

Rationale

This policy aims to enhance relationships between staff and parents in Scoil Naomh Eoin. It acknowledges that parental involvement in a school brings benefits to pupils, parents and teachers. This policy is written in the context of the *Education Act, 1998* the *Education Welfare Act, 2000* and *Circular 24/91* which recognises parents as partners in education.

Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the school

Scoil Naomh Eoin 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 and pupils.

Aims:

We hope that the introduction of this policy will support the maintenance of a school climate that:

- Supports all members of the school community, most especially its pupils.
- Has established procedures for the sharing of information in relation to pupil progress and attainment
- Enriches and extends the educational opportunities provided for pupils by accessing the skills and talents of parents

Parents' Council

All parents are invited and encouraged to become actively involved in the Association. Parent nominees on the Board of Management may be involved in the Parents' Association Committee, to aid communication between the two

groups. The principal or his representative is invited to all Parents' Council Committee meetings to aid communication and co-ordination between the parents and staff.

The Parents' Council supports and promotes the role of parents in Scoil Naomh Eoin, in consultation with the principal. It may advise the principal and Board of Management on policy issues should the parents think it necessary, and as such is an important resource for the school.

The Parents' Council fundraising activities are invaluable to the school, and ensure that school arranged activities are financially accessible to all children in the school. The fundraising events organised by the association also play an important role in aiding informal and friendly contacts between parents and staff of the school, and provide an opportunity for parents, especially those new to the community, to meet each other.

The Parents' Council also provides practical assistance to the school from time-to-time through helping with the organisation of school events, maintenance matters etc. Members of the Parents' Council may help the school liaise with other organisations in the locality, such as the GAA or Tidy Towns committee.

The Parents' Council Committee has a role in facilitating education (e.g. arranging speakers, disseminating information) for the parent body, should they deem this appropriate.

All members of the Parents' Council are reminded that the Parents' Council is not a forum for complaint against either an individual parent or teacher.

Board of Management

The parents' nominees on the Board of Management are appointed and fulfil their roles in accordance with the *Governance Manual for Primary Schools*.

Vision / Mission and Aims

Parental support for the aims of the school is vital if they are to be achieved. It is expected that parents will co-operate with the school and its teachers in the academic, physical and spiritual education of its pupils, and likewise the school commits to collaborate with parents in the best interests of all children in the school.

Organisational Policies

From time to time parents are asked to respond or give their opinions on specific policy issues, often through the Parents' Council or parent nominees on the Board of Management. All parents are welcome to request a copy of any school policy and to comment on aspects of these policies, by appointment.

The school depends on the support of parents for the implementation of all its policies. In particular, parents are asked to ensure the punctuality and attendance of their children, and to help their children in complying with the code of behaviour and the healthy lunch, uniform and homework policies. Parents have access to information about their children which helps the school apply the Anti-Bullying, Code of Behaviour, Child Protection and Administration of Medicine procedures. Parental collaboration with teachers is essential when the school is catering for children with special educational needs.

Curricular Areas

By ensuring that their children come to school rested, fed and properly equipped for the school day, parents play an important role in ensuring that the schools' curricular aims are achieved.

Class teachers are willing to discuss concerns parents might have, by appointment. At the annual parent-teacher meetings, the progress of individual children in each subject area is discussed. Teachers arrange other meetings with parents on curricular and other issues should the need arise.

Parents are consulted and make the final decision in relation to decisions such as obtaining an educational psychologist's report, referring children to other agencies (except where Child Protection concerns suggest parental consent is not appropriate), applying for an Irish exemption. (***see Exemption from the Study of Irish Policy***)

Parents with particular knowledge or skills may be available to help the school in particular subject areas, for example:

- Language: poet/author, member of drama group, etc.
- Mathematics: architect, builder, carpenter, accountant, etc.
- Arts: artist, actor, musician, dancer, etc.
- SPHE: district nurse, dietician, guard, etc.
- SESE: laboratory technician, historian, town planner, etc.

- P.E: sportsperson, representatives from local sports groups, etc.

Teachers are encouraged to engage with initiatives such as plays/musicals, concerts, themed days etc. that support parents in becoming involved in their children's learning.

Special Educational Needs

See SNE Special Education Needs Policy.

Parents are informed once it is obvious that their children are having difficulties with their school work, and invited to a meeting with the class teacher or SEN teachers to contribute to the devising of the Support Plans. Parent-teacher meetings take place with SEN teachers as with classroom teachers, and parents are welcome to make an appointment with the SEN teachers should the need arise. Parents are strongly advised to allow their children to benefit from the services offered by the SEN teachers, in the best interests of their children.

Communication

Parent teacher meetings take place annually and provide an opportunity for parents and teachers to talk privately, without interruption. All reasonable efforts are made to ensure that the meetings are scheduled at a time convenient for the parents, and the meetings for siblings are usually scheduled consecutively to facilitate parents. The specific format of the meetings is at the discretion of individual teachers. Teachers facilitate separate meetings if requested due to family break-up etc. Additional parent-teacher meetings may take place throughout the year if the parents or teacher deem this necessary.

At the end of each school year a written report is sent to parents and a copy kept in the school. Teachers send duplicate copies of reports if requested. These reports are confidential and without prejudice.

The school frequently sends written notes, newsletters and bulletins through Aladdin Connect. These are sent at the start of each term and as the need arises throughout the year. The school website, Aladdin and Seesaw are also used to communicate with parents. The school facilitates the Parents' Council in communicating with parents by publishing notices, reports or bulletins on Aladdin.

From first class (at the discretion of the class teacher), each child has a homework notebook, which parents and teachers may also use to communicate with each other. All parents are requested to provide the school with their phone numbers so that they may be contacted rapidly in the case of an emergency, or

for other reasons.

Parent/guardians are welcome to meet with the class teacher, SEN teacher, principal or deputy principal, provided they make an appointment. Teachers in Scoil Naomh Eoin always treat parents with courtesy and respect and expect parents to treat them similarly.

Parents are invited to a variety of events in the school, such as Christmas Plays, concerts, masses, Sports Day, matches etc. It is very heartening for staff to see the good attendance that these days usually attract.

Notices of interest to parents are published on the Aladdin Notice Board, as are photographs of various activities that the pupils have been involved in.

Parents are expected to provide an explanation for their child's absences through Aladdin or a note, if homework is not completed or if the child is not wearing the school uniform. Individual teachers may have other requirements regarding notes, signing notebooks, tests etc. which they communicate to parents at the start of each school year.

Parents are made aware at the start of each school year of the role of Education Welfare Officer in communicating with parents whose children have missed more than 20 school days, in relation to placement of pupils in other schools, etc.

Success Criteria

It is acknowledged that the implementation of a policy of parental involvement will be a continual and on-going process. However, evidence of the following features in the school would indicate that the policy is operating successfully:

- Benefits to pupil learning resulting from greater parental involvement.
- Parental involvement is increased in school activities
- Positive feedback from parents/staff

Roles and Responsibilities:

All parents are responsible for engaging with the school at a level that they regard appropriate. All school staff are expected to facilitate this appropriate involvement.

Communication

All school staff and parents are aware of the provisions of this policy, and will be

given a copy of it upon request.

Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the 11th of October 2023.

Signed: Ms. Deirdre Doyle(Chairperson)

Date: 11/10/23