

Parent/Staff Communication Policy

Introductory statement

This policy was developed by the staff of Carrig N.S., the Board of Management and the Parents Group in the school year 2014. Its purpose is to provide information and guidelines to parents and staff on parent/staff meetings and parent/staff communication in Carrig N.S. 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 & consultation with Parents

- Meeting for parents of new Junior Infants – late June
- Parent/teacher meetings one-to-one in November
- Parents receive school report of each pupil at the end of each school year
- Meetings with parents whose children have special needs
- Consultation throughout the year
- Written communication
- Through the parents' group, parents are invited to discuss and contribute to the drafting and review of all school policies. 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
- Regular newsletters keep parents up-to-date with school events, holidays and school concerns
- Homework diary Senior Infants – 6th class, used to relay messages which are signed between parents and teachers. Parents requested to sign diary each night to certify that homework has been completed
- Parents are invited to events throughout the year e.g. Sports Day, school masses and school concerts
- Involvement of parents in the 'Religion Alive O Programme' section for parents

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.

Formal 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, towards the end of November for all classes. They will be initiated by the school staff and details regarding time, etc. will be worked out by the class teacher, in consultation with parents. The school will attempt to co-ordinate times where siblings are concerned. 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 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.

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 learn more about parental opinions on what the school is doing
- To identify areas of tension and disagreement
- To identify ways in which parents can help their children
- To negotiate jointly decisions about the child's education
- To inform the parents of standardised test results according to school policy.

Informal Parent/Staff Meetings

1. The School encourages communication between parents and teachers. Parents are welcome to make an appointment to meet the teacher any time during the school year.
2. Meetings with the class teacher at the class door to discuss a child's concern/progress are discouraged on a number of grounds:
 1. They cannot adequately supervise his/her class while at the same time speaking to a parent
 2. It is difficult to be discreet when so many children are standing close by
 3. It can be embarrassing for a child when his/her parent is talking to the teacher at a classroom door.

Occasions occur where a parent needs to speak to a staff member urgently. Sometimes these meetings 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.

School report cards

Report cards are sent home to parents in June in accordance with DES guidelines.