

Parent/School Communication policy

Introductory statement

This policy was initially developed by the teaching staff of Saplings Special School, Goresbridge in consultation with the Board of Management. Its purpose is to provide information and guidelines to parents and teachers on parent/teacher meetings and parent/teacher communication in Saplings Special School. The environments of home and school, and consistency between these two settings are central to the development of the child. The school and the family strive to be mutually supportive and respectful of each other so that the child's education can be effective.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Develop close links with the school.
- Collaborate with the school in developing the full potential of their children.
- Participate in policy and decision-making processes affecting them.

Structures in place to facilitate open communication & consultation with Parents.

- IEP meetings with parents ideally in the first half-term in order to identify shared goals and design behaviour support plans.
- Parent/teacher meetings in December.
- IEP review meetings at Easter.
- School report in respect of each pupil at the end of each school year.
- Consultation throughout the year as necessary
- Daily communication in the form of the app Class Dojo.
- Regular newsletters and social media page keep parents up-to-date with school, events, holidays and school concerns.
- Parents and families are invited to school events which take place throughout the year.

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 the teachers.

Reporting to parents

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. In turn, parents will often be able to enrich staff knowledge of their students' progress through providing further information about the students' learning at home.

Parent/teacher meetings

A joint IEP/BSP meeting will take place by the beginning of November, and this will be reviewed in the Easter term. Brief parent/teacher meetings will take place in December.

These Parent/Teacher meetings will be initiated by the school staff and details regarding time, etc. will be worked out by them.

The purpose of any Parent/Teacher meeting is:

- To let parents know how their children are progressing in school.
- To inform teachers on how children are coping outside school.
- To learn more about parental opinions on what the school is doing.
- To identify and address 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 establish and maintain an on-going relationship and communication with parents.

Informal Parent/teacher meetings.

- Communication between parents and the teachers is to be encouraged and facilitated. However, in light of the current pandemic, public health advice dictates that parents should not be allowed on the school premises. Teachers will make every effort to facilitate discussion remotely where necessary by prior arrangement and can be contacted via Class Dojo to organise same
- Formal meetings will be minuted using a template (See Appendix A), and parents will be provided with a copy of those meetings on request.
- All communication sent from the school will be sent to the child's home address as given on the enrolment form, unless otherwise requested by parents. It is the parents responsibility to ensure that the school is notified of any change in details.
- 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.

Report card templates

Schools should help parents to understand fully the evidence of learning that the school reports to them, especially information from any standardised tests. The school has developed a reporting template which provides for reporting in four key areas:

- The child's learning and achievement across the curriculum
- The child's achievements/attainment in curricular areas
- The child's social and personal development
- Ways in which parents can support their child's learning

These will be sent home at the end of the school year. If parents have any queries or difficulties regarding the content of their child's report, they should contact the school using the standard procedures.

Behaviour of all Stakeholders in the School

Positive and respectful communication is of high 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.

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

Staff are reminded that **DES Circular 40/97** which deals with the procedures to follow if they feel they have been subjected to any of the above behaviours. In addition:

- 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. The staff of the school will respect your child's right to privacy so it is asked that parents respect other children's rights to privacy.
- When stakeholders meet, it is important to respect that the duration of meetings should be kept to a reasonable amount of time. Times of meetings should be agreed beforehand and these should be respected.

This policy on **Parent/School Communication** reviewed by the Board of Management of Saplings Special School, Goresbridge at its meeting held on **22nd October 2022**. The review of this policy will subsequently will be communicated to parents by way of agreed minutes.. It can be emailed on request and a copy will be placed in the school plan which will be located in reception folder. It is due for review in the first term of 2026 or as circumstances dictate.

Signed:..... Date:.....
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: Date:.....
Principal