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Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. Home-School Communication Policy

Introduction

This policy was revised in 2012, 2019 and again in 2024 in consultation with the staff, parents and Board of Management of Cloughjordan No.1 N.S.

Rationale

It is recognised by the parents, teachers and Board of Management of Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. that the parents are the primary educators of their children. Our school is a community where pupils, parents and teachers collaborate and work in partnership for our children. Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. is democratically run. This means that the democratically elected Board of Management, run the school and the involvement of all parents is sought and encouraged at many levels. Effective home-school links contribute greatly to the quality of education received by the child. A high level of parental involvement is a feature of our school and is in the best interests of the children's education, care and wellbeing. It requires commitment from all parents.

Aims

- To facilitate a communicative and fruitful relationship between teachers and parents for the benefit of our pupils.
- To establish procedures for the sharing of information in relation to pupils' progress.
- To create a school environment where parents and guardians feel welcome and free to discuss their child's progress with the teachers.
- To encourage all parents to become involved with the Parent Teacher Association.
- To afford parents an opportunity to express opinions/grievances through the framework of a defined procedure

General Guidelines:

- It is crucial that Board of Management members, Parent Teacher Association Committee members and all parents generally communicate school related information in the correct manner.
- All Board and Committee members must operate in accordance with their remit.
- It is essential that all of the school community understand fully the communication procedures needed for an effective school. It is hoped that all individuals will work to promote these procedures and to encourage others to do the same.
- The development of strong Home/School Links is a high priority in our school.
- Good communication between home and school plays a vital part in every child's education. The staff of Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. is committed to creating strong, effective home school links. As a result, there are various modes of communication in place to encourage strong home school links.

School Communication:

- School communications are shared by School App/email to all parents frequently throughout the school year. These communications contain, among other items, information on important dates and events in the school. Parents are advised to check their School App/emails frequently. Brief notes to parents may also be conveyed in writing in the children's homework diaries.
- The School App is used regularly in order to contact parents with school related information. Parents are invited to submit a mobile number for inclusion on the School App's list, when enrolling their child(ren) in our school.
- "Text-a-parent" is also used occasionally in order to contact parents with school related information. Parents are invited to submit a mobile number for inclusion on the "Text-a-parent" list, when enrolling their child(ren) in our school.
- All families are asked to supply full parental details on Enrolment Application and Registration Forms and are reminded at the beginning of each school year that it is their responsibility to inform the school in writing of any changes to these details while parents in Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. This ensures that the school has records that are up to date at all times.
- If your child is being collected from school by somebody who does not usually collect your child and/or may not be known to the school staff it is very important that you let the class teacher know in advance either by phonecall or by written note. The school must be informed in advance of releasing any pupil to any person not known to the staff.
- Parents are asked to telephone the school in the morning if their child is unwell and unable to come to school. An email informing the school of the child's absence and the reason for the absence is also required.
- Party/Birthday party invitations and/or Thank you cards for presents/ birthday presents may not be distributed at school as this can lead to upset and unnecessary disappointment for some children. (Refer to the *Policy on Party Invitations*)

Parent Teacher Communication:

- Formal Parent/Teacher Meetings are held annually, usually in October. Where parents are unable to attend a Parent-Teacher meeting at this time they are encouraged to make an alternative appointment with the teacher at a mutually convenient time.
- Formal Parent/Teacher Meetings are held throughout the year with parents of children who have special educational needs, as detailed in the school's *Policy on Special Education*.
- Each teacher reserves the right to have another teacher and/or the Chairperson present at any meeting with parents.
- If a parent wishes to meet with his/her child's class teacher and/or the Principal at any time throughout the school year s/he is most welcome to do so, by appointment.
- Parents can make an appointment to meet with the class teacher and/or the Principal at a mutually convenient time by mentioning it to the teacher/Principal when dropping off or collecting their child(ren), by putting a note in the homework diary, by telephoning the school outside of class time or by emailing the school.
- If a parent has any concerns about their child at any time throughout the school year they are encouraged to speak directly to their child's class teacher, by appointment.
- A teacher may request a parent-teacher meeting for reason of teaching, learning or behaviour management issue at any time, by appointment.
- Meetings with class teachers at class doors or in classrooms during the morning assembly time and during class time to discuss concerns /a child's progress are not allowed for the following reasons:
 - (a) It is very difficult to be discrete when so many children and/or adults are close by.
 - (b) It can be embarrassing for a child when his/her parent is talking to his/her teacher at a classroom door.
 - (c) It can be embarrassing for a parent to meet with a teacher in this manner.
 - (d) It distracts from teaching and learning in the classroom.

- However it is understood that occasions may occur where a parent needs to speak to a teacher urgently. Sometimes these meetings need to take place without prior notice. Teachers will try to facilitate such meetings making every effort to ensure that the children in the classroom do not lose out on any teaching/learning time.
- The homework diary can also be used as a form of communication between home and school. (1st – 6th Class).
- Parents are encouraged to be familiar with the work being done by their child in school and to be aware of what homework their child is given. Parents are required to supervise their child's homework and to sign their child's homework diary each day, but only when they are satisfied that their child has completed his/her homework to the best of his/her ability.
- Formal school reports are issued to parents before the end of each school year, in accordance with Literacy and Numeracy For Learning and Life, The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People. School reports include results of standardised tests in literacy and numeracy for children in 1st – 6th class.

Parent Teacher Association:

The school recognises the benefits of an active and supportive Parent Teacher Association. The Parent Teacher Association committee of Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. meets regularly throughout the school year. The aims of the school's Parent Teacher Association are:

- To promote general interest in the welfare of the school
- To run functions of educational and/or social value for Parents/Guardians and Pupils
- To run functions which will provide finance to improve facilities in the school
- To organise and run extra curricular activities

The dedicated and industrious Parent Teacher Association of Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. provides invaluable support to the school on an ongoing basis, for the benefit of the whole school community. It welcomes suggestions from parents at any time for events it may organise throughout the year.

The Parent Teacher Association is not permitted to, and does not, involve itself in management issues in the school, professional issues pertaining to teaching and learning and is not a channel for complaints for other parents.

In the event that you, a parent / guardian, has a complaint against a teacher, teachers or Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. in general it will be dealt with using the INTO/Primary School Management Bodies Revised **Parental Complaints Procedure**. In 2022-2023 the Irish National Teachers' Organisation engaged extensively with the Primary School Management Bodies on revising the existing nationally agreed parental complaints procedure. The revised procedure came into effect on 1st January 2024

The revised parental complaints procedure (*Appendix 1*) agreed by the INTO and the management bodies of primary schools is designed to provide an open and clearly defined process to facilitate parents/legal guardians in raising concerns about their own child/children in an agreed, fair and transparent manner, with a view to seeking an early resolution of the issue.

In the interest of fairness the same procedure will apply if a teacher has a complaint against a Parent/Guardian.

Important note

If approached, PTA members and Board of Management members will promote the procedures outlined in *Appendix 1* for dealing with parental concerns/grievances.

Parental Involvement

The Board of Management of Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. aims to enrich and extend the educational opportunities provided for all pupils by accessing the skills and talents of parents and to increase the supportive involvement of parents in the school in a positive and meaningful way. The many benefits of parental involvement are detailed in the school's *Policy on Parental Involvement* as are details on how parents are welcomed and encouraged to get involved in the school. This policy operates in conjunction with the school's *Policy on Confidentiality* and the school's enforcement of *Garda Vetting and Disclosure* procedures.

This policy has been made available to school personnel, to parents on request and has been provided to the Parent Teacher Association and is available on <https://www.cloughjordanno1ns.com/>

A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

Implementation and Review

This policy will be implemented immediately and will be reviewed in February 2027.

Ratification

*This policy was ratified by the
Board of Management of Cloughjordan No.1 N.S.*

on 26th February 2024

*Signed: Lesley Sandes
(Chairperson of Board of Management)*