



# Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa

## St. Kevin's Primary School

Gleann dá Loch, Co. Chill Mhantáin  
Glendalough, Co. Wicklow  
Tel: (0404) 45460

## School Communications Policy and Complaints Procedure

### Introductory Statement:

The In-School Management team of Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa conducted an initial review of the Communications Policy. Staff members, the Board of Management and the Parents Association were then consulted. This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies.

### Rationale:

It is generally accepted that good communication between all of those involved in the school i.e. teachers, special needs assistants (SNAs), children, parents/guardians, and ancillary staff is a vital part of our school. Open communication is encouraged between all parties based on respect and professionalism.

### Aims:

Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa aims to promote and support sound communication structures in the following areas:

1. Staff Communications.
2. Communication with Parents/Guardians.
3. Within the wider school community (Board of Management & Parents Association) and staff, parents/guardians.

All members of the school community are expected to familiarise themselves with this policy. It is considered that everyone has a responsibility to make themselves aware of where and how to seek information and updates as the need arises and should seek to keep themselves informed.

Parents/Guardians and Staff are encouraged to:

- Work together in the best interests of our students.



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- Participate in meetings in a positive and respectful manner, affirming the professional role of the staff and all staff members in our school.
- Collaborate with each other in developing the full potential of our children.
- Share the responsibility of seeing that the school remains true to its ethos and values.
- Speak directly to each other if there is a concern.
- Reflect on any given situation before communicating, except where urgent communication is deemed necessary.

### Staff Communications:

- The school has adopted 'Working Together – Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations'. A copy is available [here](#).
- In addition to the formal communication that takes place during staff meetings, the Principal undertakes to make himself available to any member of staff who wishes to discuss school matters.
- The whiteboard in the staffroom and the noticeboard on Aladdin will be used for general updates and information.
- Emails are used for circulating minutes of staff meetings and various correspondence.
- Principal will inform staff of emergencies, such as school closure, through text.

### Communication with Parents/Guardians:

Joining the School Community: Parents of children who are new to the school will receive a copy of our "School Information" booklet. All updated school policies will be available on the school website.

### School Calendar

The Calendar outlines the dates of the three terms, mid-term breaks etc. It is issued to all parents/guardians in September and is available on the school website.



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### **Student Progress:**

All parent/teacher contact is considered to be extremely valuable in a child's education.

- Individual parent/teacher meetings are held once annually. A teacher or parent may also request another meeting to discuss a student's progress by email.
- Reports are issued on children's progress in all classes in June.
- Staff may use homework notebooks, Class Dojo, email or phone calls to communicate with parents/guardians.

### **Communication with Teacher:**

- Regular communication between parents/guardians and teachers is very important. Children should be aware that teachers and parents/guardians are regularly in contact and we are all "part of the same team" working together to help and support the children. This understanding is very important for the development of positive working relationships between all parties.
- All formal communication should be by email or arranged phone calls. Parents/Guardians should not use the personal phone numbers of staff members to make contact unless a prior agreement has been made.
- Teachers are available to speak to parents/guardians by appointment only. Appointments can be made through the school secretary.
- Teachers may communicate with parents/guardians by phone if the need arises.
- All parties are expected to be professional and respectful in their communications.



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- It may be deemed necessary from time to time for a second staff member or the Chairperson of the Board of Management to sit in on meetings/phone calls.

### **General Communication:**

- Newsletters/Emails with information on events and school activities are circulated regularly.
- Individual classes may share news with their classroom community using Class Dojo Stories. The wider school community will have access to school stories on Class Dojo.
- Text messages may be used for reminders and emergency updates.
- Individual teachers may send emails in relation to class trips or events. Parents/guardians should check emails regularly.

### **Absences:**

- All absences should be explained using the Aladdin App.

### **Wider School Community:**

- The Parents Association (PA) may contact the school community through the school office or the principal by email.
- Unofficial WhatsApp groups have been used in the past for parents of a particular class grouping. These WhatsApp groups are not regulated by the school but may be useful for parents/guardians. We ask that conversations remain professional on these groups and that correct channels are used for official communications.
- There are eight nominees on the Board of Management. Each nominee is meant to provide representation for their group while working collaboratively with the other members. The board consists of two parent nominees, two patron nominees, two teacher nominees and two community nominees. Parent nominees are not meant to be mediums for communication between parents/guardians and the school. If a



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parent or guardian has a query or concern the first point of contact should always be either the school office or the class teacher.

- Updated policies and procedures are published on the school website.

### **Complaints Procedure:**

Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa follows the INTO/CPMSA Complaints Procedure Guidelines for Primary Schools as set out below.

### **INTO/CPMSA COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

The Irish National Teachers' Organisation and the Catholic Primary School Managers' Association reached agreement in 1993 on a procedure for dealing with complaints by parents against teachers. The purpose of the procedure is to facilitate the resolution of difficulties where they may arise in an agreed and fair manner. The agreement lays out in five stages the process to be followed in progressing a complaint and the specific timescale to be followed at each stage.

### **Introduction**

Only those complaints about teachers which are written and signed by parents/guardians of pupils may be investigated formally by the Board of Management, except where those complaints are deemed by the Board to be:

1. (i) on matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education;
2. (ii) frivolous or vexatious complaints and complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in a school; or
3. (iii) complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure.

Unwritten complaints not in the above categories may be processed informally as set out in Stage 1 of this procedure.

### **Stage 1**



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1. 1.1 A parent/guardian who wishes to make a complaint should, unless there are local arrangements to the contrary, approach the class teacher with a view to resolving the complaint.
2. 1.2 Where the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher she/he should approach the Principal with a view to resolving it.
3. 1.3 If the complaint is still unresolved the parent/guardian should raise the matter with the Chairperson of the Board of Management with a view to resolving it.

### Stage 2

2.1 If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent/guardian wishes to pursue the matter further she/he should lodge the complaint in writing with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

2.2 The Chairperson should bring the precise nature of the written complaint to the notice of the teacher and seek to resolve the matter between the parties within 5 days of receipt of the written complaint.

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### Stage 3

3.1 If the complaint is not resolved informally, the Chairperson should, subject to the general authorisation of the Board and except in those cases where the Chairperson deems the particular authorisation of the Board to be required:

1. (a) supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint; and
2. (b) arrange a meeting with the teacher and, where applicable, the Principal Teacher with a view to resolving the complaint. Such a meeting should take place within 10 days of receipt of the written complaint.

### Stage 4



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4.1 If the complaint is still not resolved the Chairperson should make a formal report to the Board within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.1(b).

4.2 If the Board considers that the complaint is not substantiated the teacher and the complainant should be so informed within three days of the Board meeting.

4.3 If the Board considers that the complaint is substantiated or that it warrants further investigation it proceeds as follows:

(a) the teacher should be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage;

(b) the teacher should be supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint;

(c) the teacher should be requested to supply a written statement to the Board in response to the complaint;

(d) the teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of case to the Board. The teacher would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting;

(e) the board may arrange a meeting with the complainant if it considers such to be required. The complainant would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting; and

(f) the meeting of the Board of Management referred to in (d) and (e) will take place within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.1(b).

### Stage 5

5.1 When the Board has completed its investigation, the Chairperson should convey the decision of the Board in writing to the teacher and the complainant within five days of the meeting of the Board.

5.2 The decision of the Board shall be final.

5.3 This Complaints Procedure shall be reviewed after three years.

5.4 CPSMA or INTO may withdraw from this agreement having given the other



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party three months' notice of intention to do so.  
In this agreement 'days' means schools days.