

# Scoil Bhríde

Rathcormac, Co. Cork

*Ní neart go cur le chéile!*



## **Scoil Bhríde, Ráth Chormaic Home/School Partnership Policy**

This Policy was developed in consultation with the staff, Board of Management and the Parents' Association of Scoil Bhríde. Its purpose is to provide information and guidance to parents and staff on the invaluable Home/School Partnership Approach that benefits the education of all pupils in the school. School personnel and family members strive to be mutually supportive and respectful of each other and this approach is central to the realisation of our school Mission Statement. The partnership is envisaged as a positive working relationship that is characterised by a shared sense of purpose, mutual respect and a willingness to listen and learn in the best interests of pupils' development and progress. Scoil Bhríde recognises the importance of clear and effective communications with parents and guardians and is committed to being open and accessible for all parents and guardians. Scoil Bhríde welcomes parents to work in partnership with staff in the interests of their child's education. The home is central to the development of the child. The school and the family strive to be mutually supportive of each other so that the student's education can be effective. This policy addresses the main ways in which the school ensures effective communication between home and school.

### **Parent/Teacher/SNA Meetings**

The aims of Parent/Teacher Meetings are:

- To facilitate an exchange of information among staff members and parents
- To let parents know how their children are progressing in school
- To let teachers know how children are getting along outside school
- To establish an ongoing relationship and communication with parents.

These come in the form of:

- Face-to-face Parent/Teacher meetings take place at the end of November (Senior Infants - 6th).
- Face-to-face Parent/Teacher meetings take place at the end of January (Junior Infants).
- Parents of children with special educational needs are invited into school to meet with class teachers and Special Education teachers to discuss targets of School Support Plan or School Support Plus Plans in October initially and February for the review. Phone calls suffice if parents are not able to attend in person.
- At the end of standardised testing, teachers make contact with various parents to discuss certain standardised test results.
- Parents are invited to discuss their child's end-of-year report with the class teacher in June. This can be done through a face-to-face meeting or over the phone.
- Parents meet with Principal, class teachers and SNA to demonstrate care and administration of medication when a child has a medical need which requires SNA assistance eg. Diabetes; catheterisation etc.

### **Meetings with the Principal**

Parents who wish to speak to the Principal about matters arising throughout the year can do so in person by making an appointment, through email or over the phone.

### **End-of-Year School Reports**

An end-of-year school report is issued to parents approximately two weeks before Summer Holidays via Aladdin Connect.

### **Communication with Parents**

The main methods of communication between school and parents are:

- Aladdin Connect
- Email
- Phone

Teachers use these methods to contact parents and parents have access to their child's class teacher's email address and Special Education teacher's email address, where relevant.

Other means of communication include:

- School website [www.sbrathcormac.ie](http://www.sbrathcormac.ie). Every class level in the school has a specific page which is updated regularly to keep parents up to date with all the 'goings on' in school.
- School Newsletters (sent by email and available on the school website).

### **Consultation**

Questionnaires are issued to parents on a range of issues through a variety of means (online, electronic surveys, email). They may be distributed at specific parental events or via 'Aladdin' system.

The consultation process via questionnaires addresses key service areas such as the school curriculum, policies, homework, uniform etc.

### **Parents' Association**

- Our Parents' Association work closely with the school and organise events for the school eg. Crazy Hair Day.
- The Parents' Association organise activities/speakers for the parent community eg. 'Wellbeing Promotion' by Shelly Mac
- Presentations to parents by pupils can take place at Parents' Association meetings eg. 'Global School' initiative by 5th Class

### **Policies**

- Parents are encouraged to give feedback on new policies or review of old policies eg. Healthy Eating Policy.
- A parent representative is invited to become part of a committee with regard to developing new policies in the school eg. Healthy Eating policy.

### **Junior Infants Parents**

- Parents of incoming Junior Infants are invited to the school for an Information evening in June prior to their child starting in September. The incoming Junior Infants are invited into the school in June to spend a morning with their new teacher and soon-to-be classmates.
- Parents of current Junior Infants are also invited into school for an information evening every September. They meet with the class teachers and Principal about school-life, homework etc.

### **Initiatives**

- Parents are invited to become involved in various initiatives throughout any given term eg. Green Schools Walk on Wednesday; Food Dudes etc.
- As a STEM Academy school, parents were heavily involved in the delivery of STEM lessons to 5th and 6th classes. Parents employed by Johnson & Johnson came to the school weekly to assist in the delivery of Coding lessons. This partnership has progressed from Coding with Dot and Dash to 3D printing to Lego robotics to our upcoming Renewable Energy lessons with 4th Class.
- When a Science fair is held in school, parents are invited to come in and view all class projects, investigations and experiments in the Halla. Each child presents their class project at their stand.
- Parents are invited to speak with various classes about their career eg. Engineers' Week.
- Parents with specialised expertise are invited in to run classes during Active Week eg. Yoga, Tae-kwon-do, Fitness Classes etc.
- Parents with specialised hobbies are invited in to support the learning of various topics eg. planting in the school garden/ planting hedging
- Parents are invited to volunteer to help out at school-run events eg. Sports Day during Active Week

### **Board of Management**

- There are two parent nominees on the current Board of Management (2023-2027).
- A Board of Management report for parents is shared following each Board of Management meeting.

### **Performances**

- Parents are invited into the school to watch the Junior and Senior Infants' Christmas performance.
- Parents are invited to attend concerts and performances at all class levels.
- Parents and grandparents of 3rd Class students are invited in to celebrate Grandparents' Day.
- Parents and families are invited to attend special school Masses.

### **Swimming Lessons**

- Parents are welcome to attend Swimming lessons with their child's class and assist with dressing their child in the changing rooms if they are Garda vetted, should they wish.

### **Sacramental Preparation**

- Parents of children making their First Holy Communion and candidates for Confirmation are invited into school for a meeting with regard to same.
- Parent representatives are invited to read a prayer and/or bring up gifts during Communion and Confirmation ceremonies.
- Parents of 1st Class children are encouraged to help out at celebrations following First Confession and parents of 5th Class children are encouraged to help out at Graduation for the outgoing 6th Class.

### **Other**

- Informal meetings and greetings with parents.
- Supporting local/community events eg. Autumn show, GAA matches

### **What parents can expect (in terms of communication)**

- Parent communications responded to within a reasonable time
- Requests for appointments responded to or scheduled within a reasonable time
- Parent to be notified about a single serious issue or ongoing problem
- Annual formal parent/teacher meetings, with other meetings and calls within reason.

### **What parents should not expect:**

- Teachers returning a call after work hours
- Answering emails in the evening/weekends
- Access to the teacher's private phone number or email

### **When you should contact your child's teacher**

- Changes in family situation
- Medical issues that arise or change
- Illness (via Aladdin)
- Safety issues, change in behaviour at home
- Family emergencies, sleepless nights, appointments
- Ongoing and pervasive problems/concerns at school or home
- When you can't keep a scheduled appointment
- When homework takes way more time than recommended or your child is unable to do most of it independently
- When you have last minute information for the teacher, send an email to the teacher or call the office and leave a message for the teacher.

### **Parents are encouraged to:**

- Develop and maintain close links with the school
- Address concerns promptly and directly with a staff member in the spirit of cooperation and mutual respect
- Collaborate with the school in developing the full potential of their child(ren)

- Emphasise the benefits and importance of learning to their child(ren)
- Equip pupils with all the appropriate school materials (books, copies, writing materials, etc) required during the school day, including a healthy, nutritious lunch and full uniform/tracksuit
- Become actively involved in the Parents' Association
- Participate in policy and decision-making processes when the opportunity arises
- Notify the school at the earliest opportunity if family events/situations occur that cause anxiety to their child and therefore may adversely affect his/her education
- Provide a note of explanation when a pupil is late arriving to school, absent from school or not in correct/full uniform/tracksuit
- Show care and respect for school property and encourage child(ren) to do likewise
- Monitor child(ren)'s use of devices and use of internet-based apps and sites to support the child(ren) in making safe decisions about online behaviour and relationships
- Facilitate the child(ren) reaching their full potential and gaining maximum benefit from their time in school by ensuring that pupils attend regularly and punctually throughout the school year. The practice of taking pupils out of school at any time during the school year in order to facilitate family holidays and/or taking pupils out of school early during the school day (unless it is absolutely necessary for attendance at medical appointments etc) should be avoided where possible
- Leave the school building/grounds promptly when 'dropping-off' pupils especially those young pupils who may experience some 'separation anxiety' in the earlier part of the school year. Further contact will be made with parents on these occasions if the need arises.

**Staff members seek to:**

- Promote partnership and collaboration with parents in the interests of the child(ren)'s learning and holistic development on a 'whole school' basis
- Maximise the active participation of parents in their child(ren)'s education
- Raise awareness in parents of their own capacities to enhance their child(ren)'s educational progress
- Promote active co-operation between home, school and relevant community and statutory agencies in promoting the educational interests of pupils.

**Health and Safety Issues**

Scoil Bhríde prides itself on being an open, welcoming place for all members of the school community. However, in order to provide a safe and supportive environment for all who work and learn in the school the following procedures are in place:

- All parents and visitors should enter and leave the school building by the main door, at the front of the school
- All visitors (including parents/guardians) to the school must report to the secretary's office to gain admission to the school
- All visitors to the school must sign the visitors' book located at the secretary's office

- As the Board of Management is responsible for the Health and Safety of all members of the school community, parents/guardians are not allowed to challenge/reprimand another person's child on the school premises
- If a child is unwell or has an accident and needs to be collected, school staff will contact the child's parents
- The willingness of parents to be involved in a voluntary capacity with such support activities as Sports Programmes (e.g. coaching), Healthy Eating Promotional Work, the Parents' Association etc. is valued and very much appreciated by the school. However, in order to protect the privacy and integrity of all members of the school community, such volunteers are required to respect the confidential and/or sensitive nature of information which may come to their attention during the course of their work in the school
- Boards of Management are responsible for ensuring the health, safety, wellbeing and educational progress of students. They also have a duty under Section 8 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to ensure; so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of employees. The Department of Education and Skills has acknowledged that on very rare occasions there may be incidents of assaults on school employees. The Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde is aware of its duty to provide a safe place of work for its employees. The Board of Management is concerned to protect school employees from the risk of violence of any kind, be that in the form of verbal abuse, threats, assaults or other forms of intimidation.

#### **Ratification and Communication**

The Board of Management ratified this revised policy at its meeting on 27/04/2024. Copies of the policy will be circulated and communicated to all members of the staff, parents and guardians via email. A copy will be available on the school website.

Signed; Mary Barry Mary Barry (Chairperson) 27/04/2024

Signed; Mairéad Uí Iomhair Mairéad Uí Iomhair (príomhoide) 27/04/2024