

**Our Lady of the Wayside NS  
Kiltiernan**



**Parent/School Partnership**

**INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT:**

This document was developed for the School Self Evaluation Process in November 2015. It was reviewed by the Staff and Parents' Association and ratified by the Board of Management.

The purpose of this document is to provide information and guidelines to parents and staff on parent/staff meetings and communication in Our Lady of the Wayside 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.

**STAFF ARE ENCOURAGED TO:**

- Establish good communication with parents/guardians of pupils in their class.
- Keep parents/guardians informed of their child's progress and behaviour both positive and negative.

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- Listen to what parents/guardians have to say and encourage them to bring any concerns to you at an early stage to avoid situations escalating.
- Be aware of the role of parents/guardians as prime educators and emphasise that all parties are working together for the child's benefit to help him/her reach his/her potential.
- Value and respect the input of parents as they know their child best.

### **CURRENT STRUCTURES IN PLACE IN OUR LADY OF THE WAYSIDE TO FACILITATE OPEN COMMUNICATION & CONSULTATION WITH PARENTS:**

- Meeting for parents of new Junior Infants – mid June.
- Parent/teacher meetings one-to-one in November.
- Parents receive school report of each pupil at the end of each school year.
- Regular meetings with parents whose children have special needs with resource teachers.
- Written communication.
- Through the parents' association, parents are invited to discuss and contribute to the drafting and review of 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 website.
- Regular notifications and the school website keep parents up-to-date with school events, holidays and school concerns.
- Home work diary 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> class, are used to relay messages which are signed between parents and teachers. Parents are requested to sign the diary each night to certify that homework has been completed.
- Parents are invited to school events throughout the year e.g. sports day, school events and school plays etc.

Parents of Infants are also welcome to make an appointment any time throughout the year. Infant teachers will be available between 1.30pm and 2.30pm for this when necessary. If a parent wishes to consult with a teacher, he/she she can contact the school secretary to arrange a suitable time.

**It is vital that the school is immediately informed if family events/situations occur that cause anxiety to the 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.

### **PARENT/TEACHER MEETINGS:**

Formal Parent/Teacher meetings will be held once a year for all classes .

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 in consultation with parents. The school will attempt to co-ordinate times where siblings are concerned. Meetings may take place in classrooms and resource rooms. The teachers use prepared guidelines for the meetings and collaborate in advance about the progress of individual children.

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### 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 all positives about the child.
- 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.

*Circular 56/2011 Initial Steps in the implementation of the national literacy and numeracy Strategy* has been adopted by the Board of Management. References to parent/school communication are:

### 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 about the progress that their children are achieving in the education system. This information needs to draw on the different sources of evidence that staff use, such as conversations with the learner, data-collection and documented progress on objectives and milestones reached in their short and long-term planning, examination of students own self-assessment data, documented observations of the learners engagement with tasks, outcomes of other assessment tasks and tests, and examples of students' work. In turn, parents will often be able to enrich staffs' knowledge of their students' progress through providing further information about the students learning at home.

### 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 NCCA has provided a range of standard report templates to assist schools in reporting information about the progress of primary pupils to parents, including information from standardised tests.

### THE REPORT CARDS PROVIDE FOR REPORTING IN FOUR KEY AREAS:

- The child's learning and achievement across the curriculum.
- The child's learning dispositions.
- The child's social and personal development.
- Ways in which parents can support their child's learning.

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Our Lady of the Wayside uses standard report card templates each June for reporting to parents on students' progress and achievement at school.

### FORMAL MEETINGS:

Formal timetabled parent/teacher meetings take place once a year. However, if a parent wishes to arrange a meeting at any stage during the year to discuss their child, they may do so by prior appointment.

- 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
- 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
- Formal meetings can be set up at the request of the Teacher, Principal or Parent.

### FORMAL MEETINGS-IEPs: (Individual Education Plans)

Formal timetabled parent/staff meetings on the subject of the **Individual Education Plan** will take place in September/October. However, if a parent wishes to arrange a meeting at any stage during the year to discuss his/her child, they may do so by prior appointment.

### INFORMAL PARENT/STAFF MEETINGS:

- The School encourages communication between parents and staff.
- Meetings with the class teacher at the classroom door to discuss concern is discouraged on a number of grounds:
  1. Staff cannot adequately supervise a 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 staff 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. In urgent cases where a pre-arranged appointment has not been made, parents are asked to report in the first instance to the school secretary/principal. The practice of parents approaching classrooms directly during teaching time is discouraged. 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.

Ratification:

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in February 2016