



Parental Involvement Policy

Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa

Ballymurn

Introductory Statement

The Board of Management and staff of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa recognise the importance of the involvement of parents/guardians in the school setting. This policy was formulated by the deputy principal, Michelle O'Brien in co-operation with the principal and teaching staff in November, 2011 for ratification by the Board of Management. There was cooperation between the Board of Management, staff and parents/guardians of the school in the process.

Rationale

Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa is a school community where pupils, teachers and parents/guardians cooperate and help each other for the good of the school. When parents decide to send their child to our school they are entering a very important relationship. The main aim of this policy is to ensure a good relationship and effective communication between all parties and that the pupils of the school are provided with the highest quality educational opportunities available. This policy will describe the ways in which parents/guardians can support and enhance the school community.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are valued. This work can best be done where there is a high level of openness and co-operation between staff, parents and pupils.

Aims

- To develop a school community that is committed to supporting every child
- To encourage positive relations between the school community
- To establish procedure for the sharing of information in relation to pupil progress and attainment
- To enrich and extend the educational opportunities provided for pupils by accessing the skills and talents of parents.

Objectives

- To identify the most effective means by which parents/guardians and the community can support the school and the children in it
- To outline various roles and responsibilities for the school, parents/guardians and the wider school community, in order for this policy to succeed and to be effectively implemented.

Guidelines

These guidelines address parental involvement in the following areas

1. Parent Association
2. Board of Management
3. Vision / Mission and Aims
4. Organisational policies and curriculum plans
5. Communication
6. Guest speakers

We view the role of parents as a primary element of children's' learning.

The schools will make all reasonable efforts at including the parents/guardians in the learning process within and without the class, while at the same time recognising that not all parents/guardians have the time to involve themselves during the school day on a regular basis.

The schools also will invite parents to participate in all policy development. The policies and procedures set out below encompass much of what we believe to be optimum practice. All school staff has responsibility for encouraging, developing and maintaining positive relationships with parents with particular responsibilities resting on the Príomh Oide.

1. Enrolment

- All pupils will be enrolled in compliance with our enrolment policies.

Pre-Enrolment

- Parents should attend an information session held in May/June before enrolment will be enacted.
- An open day/afternoon is held in Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa in each June and prospective pupils and parents can then meet their class teacher and principal.
- Parents will be given a welcome/enrolment pack which will include some documentation on school and how best to prepare their children.

Other Classes

- Parents presenting children for enrolment to other classes will be offered a meeting with teacher and will be given documentation relating to schools before enrolment is affected.

Post Enrolment

- Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time. However, if they wish to meet class teachers they should make an appointment with the school secretary.
- Teachers wishing to meet parents will request such meetings directly in person by letter/note in homework journal or by phone.
- Parents are invited to a display of Junior Infant artwork, writing, songs etc. during the last week of the first half-term each year.
- Formal meetings between parents and teachers are held once a year in late November.
- When visiting the school or assisting on school trips parents may never issue any reprimand to children other than their own.
- Parents are encouraged to become involved in their children's education by active participation in class activities e.g. Maths for Fun, Book fair and Homework Activities
- Parents are welcome to participate in before & after school activities in agreement with organisers e.g. Walking Bus & Active-School Activities

1. Parent Classes/Courses

- The schools will use their contacts and expertise to access specialist speakers/tutors on mutually agreed topics.
- The schools will provide courses available to parents from the Education Centre.

2. **Parents of Children with Special Needs**

- Parents of pupils in receipt of Support Services within school will be consulted on these services before implementation.
- Parents will be consulted by the SET team during the preparation of Individual Education Plans for their children and will be offered a copy of any such plan.

3. **Newsletters**

- Regular newsletters (once a month) or school website updates will be issued from each school giving general information on school activities, parent classes/courses and upcoming events.
- Parents will be facilitated in publicising parental activities. Each Parents' Association will issue their own newsletter (usually one per term). All letters emanating from school must be seen by Príomhoide before circulation.

4. **Parents' Notice Board**

- Information notice boards are located outside the main entrance to Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa.
- Parents will be notified regularly on the notice boards in each school of school activities, parent classes/courses and upcoming events.
- The school will have access to the outside notice boards.

5. **Websites/Texts**

Parents will be notified regularly on the websites of each school of school activities, parent classes/courses and upcoming events

✚ www.ballymurnns.ie (Website)

✚ office@ballymurnns.ie (Email)

Parents will be notified through text messages for upcoming events, late notifications and school activities.

6. **Ongoing Communication – Individual**

All teacher-initiated communication will be done directly with parent or by note usually in homework journal.

7. **Parental Involvement – Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa**

- Parents will be invited to co-facilitate during Book fair Week, held annually each October.
 - Parents will be invited to assist with supervision on school trips, swimming etc., reading programmes, Art & Craft lessons e.g. crochet, knitting class **
- Parents will be invited to partake in the annual fundraiser e.g. Halloween Hike.

**** Any parent / guardian who wishes to assist the school in such matters must consent to be 'Garda Vetted' in accordance with National Child Protection Guidelines.**

8. **Parent Association**

The Education Act of 1998 states that parents have the right to establish a Parent Association in a school and that this association will be open to all parents/guardians with children attending that school. The Parent Association works in co-ordination with the Board of Management, Principal

and school staff to establish effective partnership between school and home. When there is effective partnership between school and home children are happier and are more likely to achieve greater academic success.

Role

The Education Act of 1998 sets out the role of a Parent Association

"(2) A parents' association shall promote the interests of the students in a school in co-operation with the board, Principal, teachers and students of a school and for that purpose may—

(a) advise the Principal or the board on any matter relating to the school and the Principal or board, as the case may be, shall have regard to any such advice, and

(b) adopt a programme of activities which will promote the involvement of parents, in consultation with the Principal, in the operation of the school."

(Education Act 1998 Part VI 26.2)

Parents/guardians in Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa who are involved with the Parent Association are encouraged to support the school by the following means:

- Create and maintain effective communication
- Network with other parents/guardians and encourage them to take on a more active role in their child's school life
- To raise money for the school by organizing fundraising events. The Parent Association must provide a written submission of all fundraising activities to the Board of Management before these activities are undertaken. The submission must contain a description of the event, the cost of running the event and the expected revenue of the event. All monies raised shall be for a specified purpose subject to prior agreement with Principal/Board of Management.

"Fundraising in the name of the school must have the prior consent of the board of management. A Parents' Association should consult with the Board about fundraising for the school or school projects. The approval of the board is needed before these funds are raised. The expenditure of these funds is by the board of management, in consultation with the parents' association. All monies raised or generated for an agreed project for the school should be lodged to the school account." *CPSMA Handbook*

- To help and advise the school staff and Principal on the school planning process. The school Principal, in conjunction with the staff leads the planning process in Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa.
- To affirm the work being done by the teachers and staff of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa.

All of the above to be carried out in partnership with the Board of Management, Principal and School Staff

National Parents Council

It is recommended that the Parent Association of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa be affiliated to the Nation Parents Council Primary.

The Members

Every parent/guardian is a member of the wider Parent Association; however, it is not practical for each and every parent/guardian to be part of the Executive Committee therefore an Executive Committee is to be elected from the parent body. The Executive Committee is a small group of elected parents who manage the tasks and affairs of the committee. In order for the Parent Association to be an effective one, this committee must work together as a team.

The members of the Executive Committee are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Parent Association. To become a member of the Executive Committee one must have a child enrolled in Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa. A representative from each class level in the school must be elected at the AGM. The guidelines relating to maximum and minimum representatives are contained in the Constitution of the Parent Association. The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer are chosen at the AGM.

Training

It is recommended that the Parent Association avail of the training that is provided by the National Parents Council Primary. This training provides an explanation of the role of the Parent Association, it helps parents/guardians to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and procedures for the effective running of the Association and, this training also helps develop an understanding of the importance of developing and maintaining positive relationships with all school partners.

Planning and Management of the Association

The Executive Committee is a team and openness and co-operation are essential. The Parent Association, in partnership with the Board of Management should draft a Constitution. The Constitution contains guidelines pertaining to good practice. The aims, structures, sub-committees, members, funding, changes etc should be described in the Constitution.

The Executive Committee should meet regularly. It is recommended that an agenda be set for the meetings and this agenda should be adhered to. The Secretary should take the minutes. The minutes are a record of decisions taken by the Executive Committee, statements by or opinions of individual committee members should not be recorded in the minutes. The minutes should be agreed and signed at the following meeting.

The main aims of the Parent Association for each school year should be agreed by the Executive Committee at the meeting following the AGM. It is strongly recommended that these aims be discussed and agreed with the school Principal.

The Executive Committee has the authority to establish sub-committees to help with tasks e.g.: fundraising/building committee etc.

Annual General Meeting

An Annual General Meeting of the Parent Association of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa should be held in September each year. It is recommended that a notice of 10 working days be given before this meeting. The parents/guardians are advised of this in a note that is sent home with the children. To ensure the meeting is run smoothly, an agenda should be set out and strictly adhered to. The school Principal should be provided with this agenda before the meeting.

- The school Principal should be invited to attend the AGM.

- The work and progress of the Association during the previous school year is discussed at this meeting. A new Executive Committee is elected. It is recommended that fundraising activities, extra-curricular activities, guest speakers and previously organized activities be discussed.
- To ensure equality and to protect children's rights, parents /guardians should not mention or discuss incidents relating to individual children at the AGM. Teachers should not be mentioned by name or by inference at the AGM.
- The AGM is **not a forum** for parents to raise personal issues or grievances, there is another process in place in Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa to deal with these issues. The advice of the Principal/Principal's Representative should be adhered to should any of the above mentioned issues be raised at the AGM. In this case the parents/guardians should make an appointment to speak to the class teacher/principal to discuss the issue and come to a satisfactory resolution. Parents/Guardians of the school should be respectful and mannerly towards school staff and members of the school community who attend the AGM.

Meetings of the Executive Committee

The new Chairperson/Secretary should compile a list of names and contact numbers of all the new Executive Committee members directly after the AGM in order to arrange the first meeting of the Executive Committee. A weeks' notice should be given before each meeting. The Executive Committee should hold regular meetings. It is recommended that an agenda be set for the meetings and this agenda should be adhered to.

This agenda should be discussed with the school Principal before the meeting to ensure that all aspects of it fall under the remit of the Parent Association. It is recommended that the Principal attend the meetings of the Executive Committee. The Secretary should take the minutes. The minutes are a record of decisions taken by the Executive Committee, statements by or opinions of individual committee members should not be recorded in the minutes. If neither the Principal nor Deputy Principal is able to attend a meeting the Committee should decide on relevant points to discuss.

Review

This will be reviewed by the Michelle O' Brien every two years. It will also be discussed at a whole staff level under the guidance of the Principal.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified on 17th January, 2012

Signed: **Nick Byrne**

Date: 17th January, 2012

Nick Byrne
Chairperson
Board of Management