



Parental Involvement Policy **St. Brigid's Primary School, The Coombe, Dublin 8**

Rationale:

St Brigid's Primary School is a community where pupils, parents/guardians and teachers collaborate and work in partnership for our children. When parents/guardians decide to send their child to our school, they are entering a very important relationship. Parents/Guardians are invited and encouraged, at every possible opportunity to be involved in their children's educational journey through the school, in many and varied ways, and at many levels.

St Brigid's P.S. The Coombe fully endorses the view of the National Parents' Council, Primary, that parents should be involved in their local school for the following two main reasons: "The school is regarded as an extension of the home and an active partnership between parents and teachers make this a reality, especially in the eyes of the young child, who is the central figure. Research shows that parental interest and attitudes to school, to books and to education are the single most important influence on a child's learning."

Obviously, the past twelve months has shown us that we have had to take a look at how we do things. However, this policy is written through the lens of again having enhanced parental involvement, always in line with public health guidelines.

Benefits of Parental Involvement:

The following are among the perceived benefits of Parental Involvement

- It enhances communication, building bridges of trust and respect between parents and teachers.
- It promotes good parent/teacher relationships and a better level of understanding between home and school.
- Parental involvement allows children to see that the school is an extension of home and, therefore, fosters the idea of the 'school family/community.'
- Parents can learn more about and develop a better understanding of the Curriculum.

- Parental involvement actively supports and encourages the child's learning.
- A wide range of activity is facilitated. This can be interesting and fun, and can lead to a broader and more holistic education
- Children benefit from greater diversity in the classroom.
- Parental involvement provides the opportunity of making lifelong friends.

General Guidelines for Parental Involvement:

- Parents/Guardians should come into the classroom at the invitation of the class teacher/HSE teacher/ Principal, by prior arrangement and for an agreed purpose. They work in conjunction with the teacher in a planned and coordinated way, and can lend a welcome hand in many areas which can be identified by the teacher.
- Respect for teachers in their professional capacity is essential.
- The school ethos must be upheld at all time.
- Discipline remains the responsibility of the teacher.
- All work will be supervised by the teacher.
- Parents who participate should be conscious of and sensitive to the needs of the entire class.
- Parents who participate are advised that it is not considered appropriate for him/her at any time to be in the company of an individual child.
- In the interest of safety, toddlers and younger children cannot be accommodated during a classroom activity.
- The highest standard of behaviour and language is expected.

There are specific guidelines for Parental Involvement in the following areas:

1. Board of Management
2. School Policies
3. Communication
4. Home School Community Liaison Teacher

1. Board of Management

Section 15 of the Education Act 1998 states that (1) It shall be duty of the board to manage the school on behalf of the patron and for the benefit of the students and their parents and to provide or cause to be provided an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

2. *Parental Involvement in School Policies*

All policies are open to parental consultation and can be viewed through our website. Parents can discuss any issues that arise with a policy directly with the principal.

3. *Communication*

• Start of Year Class Meetings

Each class teacher holds an information meeting for all parents in the class in late September/early October. This meeting is an opportunity for parents to meet their child's new teacher and ask any questions that they might have. At this meeting the class teacher explains the homework procedure, classroom rules and gives a brief outline of the curriculum that will be taught throughout the year.

• Parent/ Teacher Meetings

These are held in November over two days. Dates are set by the staff and management but any parent who is unable to attend will be facilitated at a convenient date. Meetings for the parents/guardians of incoming Junior Infant and Early Start children are held in May/June of each year.

• Other Meetings

Teachers are regularly available to discuss issues with parents by appointment, on the phone or in person. These meetings can be arranged through the school office.

• School Report

Parents are provided with a written school report at the end of each academic year. Every school report is read and signed by the Principal. Reports are written in collaboration between class and resource teachers.

• Website

Regular school website updates will be issued from the school giving general information on school activities and events. Policy documents and information on the curriculum and suggested educational links can also be found on the website. Our school social media channels are also relevant tools.

• Text/Aladdin Connect

This service is used to keep parents updated on school events and activities.

• Homework Journal

The Homework journal is used from 2nd – 6th class and requires that parents monitor and sign their children's homework daily. The homework journal is also used as a means of communication between home and school. Teachers inform parents of any issues as they arise and parents are able to comment or raise an issue to the teacher through the journal.

• Notice Board

Information notice boards are located at the large windows of The Parents Room. Parents will be notified regularly using these notice boards of activities, parent classes/courses and upcoming events.

4. Home School Community Liaison Teacher

St Brigid's Primary School is entitled to the position of Home School Community Liaison Teacher. The HSCL Teacher's role is to link with parents/guardians, teachers, students and relevant agencies in the wider community to ensure parents and students are encouraged and supported throughout their time in the school. The aim of the scheme is to promote participation of parents in their children's education and to foster positive relationships between the home and the school. The HSCL Teacher offers five different types of support to parents.

1. The HSCL Teacher offers one on one support to individual parents and families when and where it is needed. This includes informal meetings, home visits, phone calls. HSCL can also arrange referrals to other services and agencies.

2. The HSCL Teacher runs in-class activities which allow parents to contribute and get involved in a wide-range of educational and extra-curricular activities in their own child's class. These include:

- Maths for Fun
- Story Time
- Halloween Facepainting
- Christmas Activities
- Walk on Wednesday's
- Time to Read
- Parent and Child Yoga and Mindfulness

3. The HSCL Teacher facilitates educational opportunities and organises classes, courses and talks for parents. These include;

- Courses for parents - First Aid, Cookery, Self Help, Parenting
- Homework and Gaeilge Support Classes
- Maths Classes
- Talks for Parents – Mental Health, anxiety, cyber safety and cyber bullying
- Fun activities for parents including Zumba / Circuits

4. The HSCL Teacher runs a transfer and support programme for new Incoming Junior Infants and for 6th class students moving on to secondary school.

Transition to Primary School

- Meet Parents of incoming JIs in May/June with Principal and class teacher
- Provide transition pack for incoming JIs
- Meet individually with all new junior Infant families in September – At school, phone, home visit
- Provide each parent with welcome and resource pack in September
- Follow up call/chat in December – settling in

Transition to Secondary School

- Opportunities to visit secondary school
- Liaise between primary and secondary school teachers
- Help deliver Transition Programme with the School Completion Programme
- Offer places and collect forms for School Completion Camps

- Meetings with Teachers – passport to education and transfer document
- One on one support for parents of students with additional needs – meetings with principal of secondary school, gathering documents, applying for SNA/SEN

5. The HSCL Teacher runs several Whole School events which are open to wider community and parent body:

- Grandparent's Day
- Information Talks for Parents
- Dad's Soccer Tournaments
- Local History projects

Success Criteria

The school will be evaluating the effectiveness of this policy through monitoring, staff feedback and the views of parents/guardians.

Practical indicators as to the success of this policy in St Brigid's Primary School

- * Improved learning by these pupils: e.g. assessments showing progress (teacher observations, work samples, standardised tests etc.)
- * Increased opportunities to engage the parents and pupils in a more diverse range of activities
- * Happy, well-adjusted children, with positive attitudes to school and high levels of motivation and self esteem
- * Positive parental feedback
- * Positive feedback from pupils, teachers, SNAs and all staff
- * Improved partnership between class teachers and parents/guardians

Review

The Policy will be evaluated regularly by representatives from the school community and changes/amendments will be made as necessary.

Ratification and Communication

This school policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Brigid's Primary School 25th March 2021. It is available to view on the school website www.stbrigidsthecoombe.ie

Signed: Amanda Mc Garry
Chairperson of the Board of Management