



Coláiste na hInse

Communication with Parents/Guardians Policy

1. Introduction

This Communication with Parents/Guardians policy has been developed to provide information and guidelines to parents/guardians and teaching staff on communication from **Coláiste na hInse** to parents/guardians of pupils attending the school and from parents/guardians to members of management and teaching staff at **Coláiste na hInse**.

2. Aims of this Policy

Through the development and implementation of this Communication with Parents/Guardians Policy, **Coláiste na hInse** aims to:

- Develop close links between parents/guardians and the school
- Provide structured opportunities for parents/guardians to collaborate with the school in helping their son/daughter reach their full potential
- Encourage and support parents/guardians in becoming actively involved in the school
- Keep parents/guardians up to date with what is happening in the school
- Promote partnership with parents/guardians as outlined in the Education Act 1998 and the Education Welfare Act 2000

3. Facilitating open communication and consultation with Parents/Guardians

It is important that pupils attending the school understand that communications between home and school are regular and provide for opportunities to further develop the educational partnership between school and parents/guardians who are both working together to provide the best possible education for the young people attending **Coláiste na hInse**. The following measures are in place at **Coláiste na hInse** to support the facilitation of open communication and consultation with Parents/Guardians of students attending the school:

- **Supporting the work of the Parents Association:** The Parents Association at **Coláiste na hInse** is an integral part of the school community. Section 26 of the Education Act, 1998 states that the parents/guardians of students of a recognised school may establish, and maintain from among their number, a Parents' Association for that school and membership of that association shall be open to all parents/guardians of students of that school. The Parents Association will make a vital and valuable contribution to the school's promotion, growth and development as the Parents Association provides for the formal involvement of parents in the affairs of the school. Parents will be kept informed of the work of the school through a report provided at each of the Parents Association meetings. The school website will incorporate a section for Parents/Guardians.
- **Parent Teacher Meetings** will also be held for each Year/class group during the academic year. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to attend these meetings as they provide valuable opportunities to meet with the school's teaching staff and identify areas where their son/daughter is excelling as well as discussing and identifying additional supports that may be needed to ensure a student can achieve their potential during their time at the school. These meetings also provide opportunities

for parents/guardians to inform teachers on how their son/daughter is coping outside of the school context.

- **Individual Meetings with Parents/Guardians:** Appointments to meet with a caomhnóir (class tutor), Realtóir (year head), and or Principal/Deputy Principal can be arranged through the main office at the school.
- **Homework Diary/Cinn Lae:** Each pupil attending **Coláiste na hInse** will have a homework diary which is used to log homework given and is signed by parents/guardians each evening upon completion of homework. The Homework Diary also provides a facility for school and home to interact via the notes section in the diary. Parents/guardians are also requested to complete absence notes in the diary when their son/daughter has been absent from school.
- **Written Reports on Pupil Progress:** These will be issued to parents/guardians/students over 18 in **December and May** each year. Reports will be posted directly to the pupil's home address unless otherwise requested by parents/guardians/students over 18.
- **School Related events:** Parents/Guardians will also be invited to attend school concerts, sports days, sporting activities, open night, graduation night and other relevant talks/information sessions facilitated by the school and/or outside speakers.
- **Policies:** All **Coláiste na hInse** school policies are published on the school website and are available in hard copy on request from the main office at the school.
- **Board of Management Report:** An agreed report will be prepared by the Board of Management at the end of each of their Board of Management meetings. This will provide information for parents/guardians pertaining to matters of interest to them which was discussed at each Board meeting. This report will be distributed to Parents via text (with a link to the report). This report will also identify school policies which has been developed and reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management.
- **Newsletters:** Online newsletters will update parents/guardians on school activities and student achievements. A hard copy of the newsletters will be available on request from the main office at the school.
- **Friday briefing:** The Principal will prepare a 'Friday Briefing' each week which will communicate important information for the following week and also give an account of events that have occurred in the Coláiste during the previous week.
- **Communication through Social Media:** The school will communicate with parents using modern technologies including text, email, school website, twitter page and Facebook page.
- **School Calendar for the Academic Year:** A detailed School Calendar for each Academic Year will be published in **June** of each year on the school website. A hard copy of the Calendar will also be available from the school office on request.
- **Book Rental Payments and Proposed Contributions from Parents/Guardians:** These will be collected through an online payment system capable of tracking payments made and providing receipts to parents/guardians. Monies collected through the online payments system will be lodged directly to the LMETB bank account as LMETB schools move to a cashless system.

4. Family events/situations which may cause anxiety for a pupil attending **Coláiste na hInse**

Throughout the school year there will be times when our pupils' families are experiencing and dealing with situations that may cause anxiety for their son/daughter. Management and staff at **Coláiste na hInse** would like to assure you of our support for your child at these difficult times. It is important to inform us of any such situation which may cause anxiety for your child, cause a deterioration in their schoolwork or

result in increased absenteeism. We will work together with families and other external agencies, where relevant, to support the child through the difficult time.

5. Pupil Emergencies while attending *Coláiste na hÍnse* during the school day

In the event of a pupil emergency while at school, the parents/guardians of the pupil will be contacted by phone. In the event that the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact person on file as per enrolment form, will be contacted. Please ensure that the school have all up to date contact numbers for parents/guardians and emergency contact persons.

6. Communication with Parents/Guardians of students requiring SEN supports

- Parents/guardians are asked to record information regarding their son/daughter's SEN needs when completing their school application and admissions form. The inclusion of psychological reports or assessments at this time is very good practice as it gives the school time to arrange additional supports in advance.
- The school has a SEN co-ordinator who liaises with agencies working with students with additional SEN needs i.e. the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), the area Special Education Needs Officer (SENO) and Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- In preparation for each new academic year the SEN Co-ordinator together with members of the school leadership team hold entrance examinations for incoming 1st years in late February/early March. Due to COVID-19 restrictions the 2021 entrance examinations have been necessarily delayed.
- After this data has been compiled, the school meets with members of staff in each child's primary school to discuss the needs of each child coming into first year the following year.
- The SEN co-ordinator liaises with the school's senior leadership team to create a learning support plan for each child requiring this support. This plan is created over the summer months preceding entry. Each child's learning support plan is communicated to the child's parents/guardians.
- At the end of each academic year each child's learning support plan is evaluated and amended as required. These decisions are communicated to parents/guardians and any concerns discussed.
- If a parent/guardian is concerned about their child's progress, an appointment can be made through the main office to speak with the school's SEN coordinator.

7. Informal Meetings with the Teacher/Year Head

There will be occasions where a parent/guardian needs to speak to a teacher/Year Head urgently. Sometimes these meetings will need to take place without prior notice. All such requests should be processed through the main office at the school.

In general, meetings with the class teacher/ Year Head at the school door/at reception to discuss a concern pertaining to a pupil is discouraged for the following reasons:

- The class teacher is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of the students in his/her care. Teaching staff are regularly reminded not to leave their classroom at any time while they have pupils in the classroom. Teaching staff are also reminded that they must be on time to class to ensure health and safety of all.

- A pupil may also feel quite uncomfortable if their parent/guardian is speaking to the teacher at the main door of the school/main reception area while their peers observe the interaction between parent/guardian and class teacher.
- Sensitive conversations regarding concerns about pupils' behaviour, academic progress, mental health and wellbeing are best dealt with in an appropriate space e.g. an office where there are less opportunities for distractions during the conversation/meeting.

8. Formal Meetings with the Teacher/Year Head

If a parent/guardian wishes to make an appointment at any stage throughout the school year to discuss their child's progress, they may do so by prior appointment. In the case where parents/guardians are separated, request can be made to meet with school personnel together or individually.

9. Dropping off lunches/sports gear for pupil's during the school day

We ask parents/guardians to work with their son/daughter in ensuring that when the child arrives at school, they have all the necessary books, resources, lunch box and sports gear with them for the day. Should a situation arise however that a parent/guardian needs to drop something into the school for their son/daughter we ask you to report directly to the school office. **The school secretary will then make arrangements for the item to be passed on to your son/daughter.** You will appreciate that this will ensure that class interruptions are kept to a minimum and parent/guardians will appreciate that this approach supports the school in the implementation of its Child Safeguarding Statement. Please note that during the current pandemic, we are asking that visits to the school by parents/guardians are kept to an absolute minimum.

10. Accessing copies of the school's Communication with Parents/Guardians Policy

A copy of the school's Communication with Parents/Guardians Policy will be available to download on the school's website www.colaiskenahinse.iskelly. A hard copy of this policy will also be available on request from the school's main office.

11. Monitoring and Review of this Policy

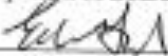
This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier, where deemed necessary or as required by legislation or Department of Education and Skills Circular.

12. Ratification of Policy

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on: _____

Signed: 
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 25/05/2021

Signed: 
(Principal – Secretary to the Board)

Date: 25/5/21