



St Francis National School

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Parental Involvement Policy

Introduction

- Our school is a community where pupils, parents and teachers collaborate and work in partnership for our children. When parents decide to send their child to our school they are entering a very important relationship.
- In keeping the school's mission statement and ethos, our school is democratically run. This means that management committees that are democratically elected run it, and the involvement of all parents is sought and encouraged.
- A high level of parental involvement is a feature of our school and requires a commitment from parents.
- Parents as a group have a range of talents, abilities and skills that have the potential to enrich and extend the educational opportunities provided for the children. It is our policy to identify parents with specific skills and to invite those parents to share their skills with us at a school and a class level.
- Respect for the professional role of the teacher and the statutory responsibilities of the Principal, Patron and the Board of Management is always sought
- Parents are invited to become involved in the school in many ways and at many levels, for example:
 1. Serving on school bodies (Board of Management, Parent-Teacher Association, Green School's Committee).
 2. Fundraising
 3. Policy making, e.g. Code of Discipline; Parent-Teacher Association Constitution; Homework; Healthy Eating Policy.
 4. Helping out on occasions when extra hands are welcome (Book fair, Christmas plays, sports day etc.).

Benefits of Parental Involvement

- Children benefit from greater diversity in the classroom.

- Children profit from more one-to-one attention.
- Parental skills may support and complement work already taking place.
- 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
- It promotes 'good parent/teacher relationships and a better level of understanding between home and school' (National Parents' Council).
- It enhances communication, trust and respect between parents and teachers.
- Parents can learn about the curriculum.
- Parental involvement allows children to see that school is an extension of home.
- Parental skills can contribute to the smooth running and development of the school.
- Parental Involvement provides the opportunity to foster stronger home/school links.

How to Get Involved

- Parents are, first of all, invited to consider their skills, interests and time available, and communicate this information to the secretary, principal, class teacher and/or to the PTA. (Invitation on enrolment form).
- Parents can work in conjunction with the teachers in a planned and co-ordinated way. For example, they could help with reading during morning activity time, organising the school library, art and P.E. resources, assist with tours and trips etc...
- Parents are currently involved in many extra-curricular activities and would be particularly welcome to initiate project work with the children in the areas of the school garden, sport, music etc.

Please note that an appendix to this document contains guidelines for parental involvement in the school.

Appendix

Guidelines for Getting Involved

- Parents who volunteer to work with school staff during school time agree to undergo Garda Vetting as a matter of course.
- Parents come into the classroom at the invitation of the teacher by prior arrangement and for an agreed purpose.
- The happiness, welfare and safety of our children are our primary concern. A child's personal history and academic achievements are **strictly confidential**. Any doubts about issues of confidentiality **must** be discussed with the teacher.
- Respect for the teachers in their professional capacity is essential.
- Discipline remains the responsibility of the teacher.
- All work will be supervised by the teacher.
- Parents who participate in activities which may include their own child should be conscious of and sensitive to the needs of the entire class, not just the needs of their own child. Where practical parents will be asked to work in a class other than their child's class.
- Parents coming into the classroom must consult with the teacher before inviting other parents/individuals to participate.
- In the interests of safety, toddlers and younger children not enrolled in the school cannot be accommodated during a classroom activity.
- The highest standard of behaviour and language is expected.
- Punctuality and consistency are crucial.
- No fees are payable.
- In the case of an ongoing project that takes place over a number of weeks, parents will meet with the teacher to discuss the activity. It remains the responsibility of the teacher to determine its appropriateness (e.g. is it suitable for the age group, has something similar already been done etc.). The teacher has the final say in the event that he/she feels it is falling short of its original aims and objectives.
- The school ethos must be adhered to consequently, respect for all the partners in education - children, teachers and parents - must be upheld at all times.

Responsibility for Review:

All members of staff, Parents Association, BoM.

Timeframe for Review:

To be reviewed every third year or as required.

Next review:

April 2025

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Ratified by the Board of Management on 5/4/2022 (Date)

Signed:  (Chairperson, Board of Management)