

## Parental Communication & Parental Involvement

Presentation Girls' School strives to maintain open lines of communication between all the stakeholders in the school community. We, in Presentation Girls' School, welcome the cooperation and input of parents /guardians in the learning and development of their children.

Our school is a community where pupils, teachers and parents work together to provide the best learning experience for the children in our care. The home and school work together to foster the social, emotional, spiritual and intellectual development of every pupil. We also seek to nurture strong moral values and a sense of respect of self and the world around us.

### Aims:

- To promote good working relationships between parents, teachers and pupils based on trust and respect
- To establish clear procedures for communication between parents and teachers.
- To expand the educational opportunities for our pupils, where appropriate, by accessing the skills and talents of parents/guardians and the wider community.
- To share the responsibility among all the stakeholders of seeing that the school remains true to its ethos, values and distinctive character.

### Structures in place to facilitate Open Communication and Consultation with Parents

- The school facilitates an introductory meeting with parents/guardians of new Junior Infants in May.
- In June parents/guardians, accompanied by the prospective Junior Infants, are invited to make a short visit to the Junior Infant classroom.
- Parent/Teacher meetings are held in the first term for all classes with the exception of Junior Infants. Parent / teacher meetings for junior infants are held in Term 2.
- Further meetings are facilitated, if required.
- Regular newsletters keep parents up to date with school events.
- Our school website provides information on policies, enrolment forms, school calendar etc.
- The Aladdin App is used to update parents/guardians on current events and facilitates the following:
  - Enable parents to log school absences.
  - Notify teachers of late arrival and early collection.
  - Ensuring that the school has their most **up to date contact information**
  - Allowing schools to gather **permission(s)** from parents
  - Allowing parents to quickly and efficiently select preferred slots for **parent teacher meetings**
  - Keeping parents apprised of their child's **attendance**
  - Keeping parents up to date on **school and classroom news** via noticeboard messages
  - Allowing parents to view what items their child had for **homework** today
  - Allowing parents view their child's approved **report card**
  - Allowing parents to view their child's latest **standardised test results**.
  - Allowing the teacher/parent communicate with parents when the need arises
- A homework diary (1st to 6<sup>th</sup> class), may also be used as a communication link between parents/guardians and teachers. Parents/guardians are asked to sign this diary each night to certify that work has been completed to an acceptable standard.

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- A school report, prepared by class teacher, is available for parents/guardians to download at the end of the school year.
- Parents/guardians are invited to events throughout the year e.g. Nativity plays, Nano Nagle Play, Graduation.
- Written/electronic communications from parents/guardians in relation to absences, late arrivals/ early departures, attendance at after school activities are kept in pupils' school records.
- In all matters pertaining to the wellbeing and education of pupils only the parents/guardians named on the enrolment form will be consulted.
- **It is vital that the school is informed if family events/situations occur that cause anxiety to the child and therefore adversely affect her education.**

## **Learning Together:**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to support their child's learning through supervision of their child's homework and support in the following areas: paired reading, spelling, independent reading, language development, tables, ag spreagadh na páistí chun Gaeilge a labhairt sa bhaile, poetry, local history, local geography, environmental awareness , preserving and raising self esteem of the child.

Parents/guardians are strongly discouraged from taking pupils out of school during term time in order to facilitate family holidays.

## **Formal Meetings:**

Parent Teacher meetings are held in November each year.

Parents/guardians are invited to discuss their child's progress at an appointed time. Separated parents may request individual meetings.

## **Informal Meetings:**

If a parent/guardian wish to meet with a teacher an appointment may be made through the school secretary or via Aladdin App. Informal conversations concerning a pupil, at collection time, should be avoided.

## Parental Complaints Procedure

- Complaints are infrequent but the school would wish that they are dealt with informally, fairly and quickly.
- If a parent/guardian has concerns about their child they should in the first instance discuss the matter with the child's class teacher.

The following is the revised complaints procedure, agreed with all the management bodies of primary school and effective from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. It is designed to provide an open and clearly defined process to facilitate parents/ legal guardians in raising concerns about their child's education in an agreed, fair and transparent manner, with a view to seeking an early resolution to the issue.

It is recognised that parents/legal guardians are the primary educators in a child's life and as such from time-to time concerns may arise regarding which they may need to engage with the school. It is expected that engagement will be timely, courteous and resolution focused to ensure that the important relationship between the parent and school can be preserved and respected. It is expected that all parties concerned will engage proactively.

### Procedural Points

The procedure is a staged procedure where every effort is made to resolve matters at the earliest possible stage. In most cases, concerns will be dealt with either informally or formally at the earlier stages of the procedure. Where it has not been possible to agree a resolution at the earlier stages, the procedure does allow for the escalation of the matter to the Board of Management. This procedure sets out, in four stages, the process to be followed in progressing a complaint and the specific timescale to be followed. It is expected the parties will follow each stage in sequence.

- Where the term written correspondence is used, this refers specifically to a letter or email correspondence from a parent/legal guardian(s).
- Only complaints about a teacher which are written and signed by a parent/legal guardian, and which relate to their own child, will be investigated.
- Where a complaint raised by a parent/legal guardian is deemed by the Board of Management to relate to the following, this procedure will not apply;
  - matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education;
  - frivolous or vexatious complaints and complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in a school; or
  - complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure.
- In all circumstances, any form of written correspondence for the attention of the Board of

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Management must be supplied to the Chairperson of the board of management only. Any deviation from this could be deemed prejudicial and as acting outside the scope of this agreement.

- Days in this procedure refer specifically to school days. A school day is a day on which the school is in operation. Holiday periods, school closures and leaves of absences are not counted as school days for the purpose of this procedure.
- Group/collective complaints are not provided for and each parent/legal guardian raising a concern will be dealt with separately through this process.
- The procedure is a domestic forum and accordingly, neither management nor the INTO intends that there would be legal representation at any stage.
- Issues should be raised in a timely manner. It is in the best interests of the child that issues are raised to achieve early resolution at the earliest possible stage with the teacher, ideally while the pupil is in that teacher's class.

## **Stage 1 Discussion**

### **1.1 Parent / Guardian meets teacher**

- A parent/guardian should make an appointment with the teacher with a view to resolving the complaint. Further meetings with the teacher can be convened, as appropriate.

### **1.2 Parent / Guardian meets Principal**

- Where the parent /guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher he/she should seek an appointment with the Principal with a view to resolving the complaint. Further meetings with the teacher can be convened, as appropriate.

### **1.3 Parent Guardian meets Chairperson**

- Where the matter remains unresolved, the parent / legal guardian should seek and appointment with the Chairperson of the Board of Management with a view to resolving the complaint. Further meetings can be convened by the Chairperson, as appropriate.

## **Complaint resolved**

The complaint may be resolved at this stage.

## **Stage 2 Written**

### **2.1 Written Complaint sent to Chairperson**

- If the complaint has not been resolved at stage 1, the parent/ legal guardian who wishes to pursue the matter further should submit the complaint in writing to the Chairperson of the Board of Management. This commences stage 2.

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## **2.2 Chairperson provides a copy to the teacher**

- The Chairperson should provide a copy of the written complaint to the teacher against whom the complaint has been made, without delay.

## **2.3 Chairperson convenes a meeting**

- The Chairperson should seek to resolve the complaint between the teacher and the parent/legal guardian within 10 school days of the commencement of stage 2.1. This may require one or more meetings to be convened by the Chairperson with the teacher/ parent/legal guardian and other school personnel as deemed appropriate by the Chairperson.

## **2.4 Complaint resolved**

### **Stage 3 Board of Management**

#### **3.1 Chairperson makes a formal report to the Board**

- If the complaint remains unresolved following stage 2 and the parent/ legal guardian wishes to pursue the matter, they should inform the Chairperson in writing of this fact. The Chairperson should make a formal report to the Board of Management within 10 days of receipt of this written statement. At this meeting, the Board can decide to proceed to either stage 3.2 or 3.3

#### **3.2 Complaint concluded**

- Where the Board considers the complaint, the process may be concluded at this stage, if the board considers that:
  - a) The complaint is frivolous/vexatious;
  - b) The complaint has already been investigated by the board;
  - c) The complaint is more appropriately dealt with through a more relevant DE circular, or;
  - d) where recourse to law has been initiated.

Where the Board determines the complaint is concluded at this stage, the parent/legal guardian should be so informed within five days of the Board meeting.

- If the complaint is not resolved, the Chairperson will, subject to the general authorisation of the board:
  - (a) supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint
  - (b) arrange a meeting with the teacher and, where applicable, the Principal with a view to resolving the complaint. Such a meeting should take place within 10 days of the receipt of the written complaint.

#### **3.3 Proceed to a hearing**

- Where the Board decides to proceed to a hearing, it should proceed as follows:

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- a) the teacher should be informed that the complaint is proceeding to a full hearing and the Chairperson must ensure the teacher has been supplied with all documents which are being considered by the Board.
  - b) the Board should arrange a meeting with the parent/legal guardian if it considers such to be required. The parent/ legal guardian is entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting.
  - c) the teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of their case to the Board. The teacher is entitled to be represented by a friend or a union representative, who may be accompanied for the purpose of assistance and note taking.
  - d) the teacher should be requested to supply a written statement to the board as the employer in response to the complaint. This written statement will be confidential to the employer and will not be shared with any third party.
- e) the meeting of the Board of Management referred to in 3(b), (c) and (d) will take place within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.1. in so far as possible.

## **Stage 4 Decision**

### **4.1 Written decision from Chairperson**

- The Board will consider the complaint and the response provided and will adjudicate on the matter. The Chairperson should convey the decision of the Board in writing to the teacher and the parent/legal guardian(s) within five days of the meeting held at stage 3.3.

### **4.2 Complaint concluded**

The decision of the Board shall be final.

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## Parents' Association

### Role and Responsibility

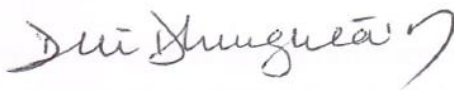
- The Parents' Association is formed from members of the parent body and membership is open to all parents / guardians of pupils in the school.
- An annual general meeting is held at the beginning of each school year where officers of the Association are elected. A constitution has been drawn up to ensure the smooth running of the association
- The Association promotes the interests of the pupils in cooperation with the staff and Board.
- All parents/guardians are notified of meetings.
- Parents/guardians are invited to contribute and support the academic, social and cultural life of our school in collaboration with the school staff.
- A programme of activities for pupils is arranged annually.
- Fundraising, sanctioned by the Board of Management, is organised to provide resources and activities within the school for the benefit of all the pupils.

## Board of Management

Two parents/guardians (1 male and 1 female) are elected as parent nominees to the Board of Management for a four year term. The nominees may be elected at a public meeting or by public vote. The parent nominees provide a parental perspective to the work of the Board of Management.

**This policy will be reviewed periodically.**

**This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024.**

Signed: 

**Chairperson, Board of Management**

Date: 29.01.24.

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## Guidelines for External Personnel

Guest speakers, drama teachers, sports coaches, parents or other invited helpers working with a class are:

- garda vetted in accordance with recent legislation
- given procedures/guidelines in relation to preparation, content and working with children.
- given adequate notice
- in the classroom at the invitation of the teacher by prior arrangement and for *an agreed purpose*
- asked to sign an agreement to abide by the school policy on Communication & Parental Involvement
- dressed appropriately
- requested to use appropriate language
- required to treat all children equally
- aware of Health & Safety procedures

Teachers remain with the class at all times while visitors are present.

Discipline remains the responsibility of the teacher.

Parents/helpers assisting with school outings are asked not to accompany their own class.

Respect for the teachers in their professional capacity is essential.

Where continuous visits are necessary visitors will meet with the teacher to discuss the activity. It remains the responsibility of the teacher to determine the content of the activity/lesson.

**The welfare of our children is our prime concern. A child's personal history and academic achievements are strictly confidential and any issues about confidentiality must be brought to the attention of the teacher.**

I have read the Communication & Parental Involvement Policy and agree to abide by the guidelines.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_



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