



Cadamstown National School

Parents as Partners Policy

Introduction

The Board of Management and staff of Cadamstown National School genuinely value the wonderful relationship we share with the parents/guardians of the children in our school. We strive to ensure that the core values of respect, empathy and trust underpinning the relationship are maintained and nurtured.

The Board of Management and staff fully endorse the following statement in the Primary Curriculum:

Parents are the child's primary educators, and the life of the home is the most potent factor in his or her development during the primary school years.

Regular consultation with parents helps teachers to come to a deeper appreciation of children's needs and so to plan more effective learning experiences. It also provides the means by which teachers keep parents fully informed about children's progress. Good communication between parents and schools will help build a shared understanding of the principles of the curriculum, the learning goals of the school, and the approaches and methodologies it adopts.

In a more general context, the involvement of parents in the organisational planning of the curriculum and their active participation in the life of the school enhances co-operation and interaction between home and school.

Parents also have a special contribution to make in creating and fostering a positive school spirit in which all members of the school community can feel a sense of belonging and have an interest in the school's development.

Aims

1. The Board of Management and staff fully accept that parents/guardians are the primary educators of their children.
2. Cadamstown National School promotes positive practical collaboration and co-operation with parents that result in improved teaching and learning opportunities for the children.
3. Management and staff are committed to open, honest and frequent communication with parents/guardians.
4. 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.
5. Respect for the professional role of the teacher and the statutory responsibilities of the Principal, Patron and the Board of Management is always an important consideration.

Guidelines / Ways to become involved

Parents are invited to become involved in the school in many ways and at many levels, for example:

- Serving on school bodies (Board of Management, Parent Association)
- Policy development e.g. Code of Behaviour; Relationships and Sexuality Education; Parent; Homework; Healthy Lunch Policy
- In the school during particular activities e.g. helping out at and coaching sporting activities.
- Fundraising

Parents' Association

We have an active and supportive Parents' Association in our school. The principal, staff and Board of Management of Cadamstown National School are fully encouraging of the Parent's Association in the school. We welcome and listen to their input on school matters and help them in fundraising activities.

Our Parents' Association functions in accordance with the guidelines set out in the National Parents Council publication called *Working Effectively as a Parent Association*.

The Parents' Association meet several times a year and **all parents** are invited to attend. Parents have an opportunity to suggest items to be placed on the agenda before the meeting. The Parents' Association also help teachers to run fundraising events such as Family Fun Day, Christmas Concert and other events throughout the year. Occasionally they organise their own fundraising events.

Board of Management

Our BOM is constituted of eight members, two of whom are Parent Representatives. These are elected following the Procedures and Guidelines for Boards of Management.

Policy Development/Consultation

Parents are invited to take part in the review of policies in the school. Parental consultation regarding policies where appropriate is conducted through various methods including during Parents' Association meetings. Parents are made aware of draft policies on our school website and a hard copy is also available for perusal in school. On occasion parents may be invited to form a subcommittee in the formulation/revision of certain policies e.g. RSE.

Curriculum

- Parents are informed on curricular updates on an ongoing basis as the school recognises the importance of the parental role in supporting the learning of the child and the school plan.
- Parents support the child's learning in many ways – by communicating to the school the child's learning needs and progress/barriers to progress, through homework, paired reading, spelling, independent reading, language development, preserving and raising self esteem of child, approaches to number operations, maths language, tables, ag spreagadh na paisti chun Gaeilge a labhairt sa bhaile, poetry, local history, local geography, environmental awareness, living things etc.
- The school on an ongoing basis identifies parents with particular knowledge or skills in curriculum areas and encourages them to share these skills with the pupils during school time
- **Learning Support & Special Needs:** Parents are facilitated on an on-going basis to support their child's learning needs etc.

- **Extra-Curricular Activities:** Parents play an important role in supporting teachers to develop, promote and manage extra-curricular activities e.g sports, dance, music etc.

Communication

✓ **Parent Teacher Meetings**

We realise the importance of early and honest communication with parents and parents are invited to attend formal parent teacher meetings in the first term to discuss their child's progress academically and socially. The support teachers in the school are also available to meet parents on that day. This is in accordance with Circular 14/04. To meet the needs of parents who are unavailable to attend on the selected dates an arrangement is in place to organize a meeting on a day that suits all parties involved. Informal meetings are held as frequently as needed and parents are encouraged to (a) write a note in the homework journal if they wish to meet the teacher or (b) to arrange an appointment if the matter requires more time.

Parents are advised at formal Parent/Teacher meetings and informal meetings throughout the school year of ways in which they can support their child's learning. Hints, tips and advice are provided to parents as to how best they can support their child's learning. Parents of children attending Learning Support are invited to meet the teacher formally and informally to consult in the devising of a Staged Approach to help their child.

✓ **Homework Journals/Notes Home**

These provide an effective means of daily communication between parent and teacher. Notes are sent home regularly to keep parents informed of school developments. All notes home are stapled into homework journals so that parents receive them.

✓ **Welcome Letter**

The Principal sends out a 'Welcome letter' at the start of the school year. The letter also contains blanket consent forms regarding trips/outings/Internet Use etc. It also contains a copy of the school calendar and a copy of the School Rules. Parents are also reminded of the importance of school attendance and punctuality in this letter.

✓ **Induction Meeting for new parents**

An induction meeting is held each year in June for the parents of the incoming Junior Infant Class. Parents are invited to this meeting by letter. Parents receive an induction booklet at this meeting. School policies and information is discussed. This meeting provides a forum to allay any fears they may have regarding their child's learning and happiness. Parents are made aware that Cadamstown National School is a very open school that encourages and fosters good communication between all the partners in education. Parents' questions are invited and answered at this meeting. The newly enrolled Infants are also invited to attend this gathering to visit their surroundings so as to allay any fears they may have.

✓ **End of Year Report Cards**

Parents/Guardians receive an End of Year Report Card in June every year. This Report Card outlines each pupil's progress for the year including his or her performance on Standardised Tests (1st to 6th). An NCCA explanatory letter is also included with the Report Card to explain test scores.

✓ **Website**

This is an excellent means of communication between parents and school. All organisational policies that are of relevance to parents are in the Policies section under the Parents tab. When these draft policies go on the website, parents are invited to suggest additions and amendments to the policy. The website is used to celebrate activities, achievements, examples of pupils' work etc. in the school and also to disseminate information and school news. It is updated regularly.

✓ **Text a Parent and Email**

The school has contact numbers and e-mails of the parents, the parents also have the e-mail of the school principal and this is encouraged as an extra line of communication. The School regularly contacts parents and vice-versa. Email addresses for the officers of the Parents' Association have been compiled so that they can be sent e-mails.

✓ **School Events**

The school hosts many events during the year to encourage the participation of parents/guardians in school life. Examples of these include Sports Day, book Fair, Christmas Concert, St. Patrick's Day Parade etc. Parents are also encouraged to participate in the preparation of the children for the Sacraments of Communion and Confirmation. Occasionally the school will organise guest speakers on matters of relevance e.g. Healthy Eating, Internet Safety etc.

✓ **Liaising with other agencies**

Parents are made aware of the role of the Education Welfare Officer in communicating with parents whose children have missed more than 20 school days, in relation to placement of pupils in other schools.

Success Criteria:

- - Parents feel welcome in the school and feel comfortable approaching teacher with any issues that have arisen
 - Benefit to Pupil Learning
 - - Feedback from parents/staff
 - Parental Involvement is increased in school activities

Review

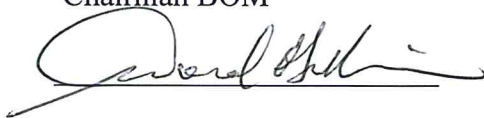
This policy will be reviewed every three years.

Ratification

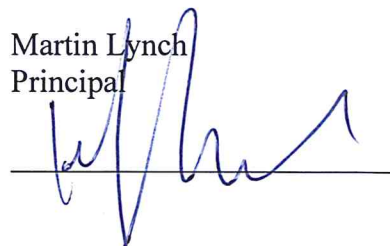
This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 21st October, 2020.

Signed:

Mr. Donal O'Sullivan
Chairman BOM



Martin Lynch
Principal



Date: **21/10/2020**

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