



St. Matthew's National School Cranfield Place, Sandymount, Dublin 4

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PARENT / TEACHER COMMUNICATION PROCEDURE

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and guidelines to parents and staff on Parent/Teacher Meetings and the Parent/Teacher communication in St. Matthew's N.S.

Good communication between parents and teachers is essential to the positive, supportive environment we work to create. The home is central to the development of the child and the nurturing of good, moral values. Both St. Matthew's and the family strive to be mutually supportive of each other so that the child's education can be effective. All the stakeholders aim to work for the benefit of the child and their learning.

PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO

- Develop close links with the school and collaborate with the school in developing the full potential of their children.
- Share the responsibility of seeing that the school remains true to its ethos values and distinctive character.
- Become actively involved in the Parent Association, Library Committee, and Garden Committee etc.
- Participate in policy and decision-making processes affecting them.
- Participate in meetings in a positive and respectful manner, affirming the professional role of the staff.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

School Communication:

- School notices and termly emails are issued via email
- School messages are via the Aladdin App
- Messages may be communicated via class whatsapp groups also
- Class blogs are available to parents on the school website, www.stmatts.ie

Teacher Communication:

- Class meetings are held in September so that parents can be informed of the requirements of the new class and to outline the programme of work, homework and expectations for the year.
- A standardised written report on each pupil is provided at the end of each school year.
- Individual formal Parent/Teacher meetings take place in November for 1st-6th Class and in February for Infant Classes. Please find details below.
- There is ongoing consultation with parents throughout the year as required.
- There are additional meetings with parents whose children attend support teaching or who have special or behavioural needs.
- Parents will be informed of their child's standardised test results in May/June.
- Teachers will contact parents via seesaw, by phone or via email.

- Parents are invited to assemblies, school concerts and to children's choir events etc.
- There is an Open Session for parents of new Junior Infants in May/June. Parents and pupils are invited to the school hall/Junior Infants Classroom and are welcomed to the school by

the Principal and class teacher. It is also an opportunity for parents to meet one another and learn about the school and for children to meet their peers.

FORMAL PARENT TEACHER (P/T) MEETINGS

Formal timetabled Parent/Teacher meetings take place in November for First–Sixth Class and in February for Infant Classes. The Principal and Teachers agree the meeting schedule and parents are invited to sign up for the meetings in advance. The school aims to co-ordinate sibling meeting times. Teachers use a prepared written report based on school guidelines.

The purpose of Parent/Teacher meetings is to:

- Let parents know how their children are progressing in school
- Inform teachers on how children are coping outside school
- Establish an on-going relationship and communication with parents
- Allow Teachers/Parents get to know the children better as individuals
- To help children realise that home and school are working together
- To share with the parent the problems and difficulties the child may have in school
- To review with the parent the child's experience of schooling
- To identify ways in which parents and teachers can support the child further

Requests can be made by either parent to meet their child's teacher(s) together or separately for parent/teacher meetings.

Parents/guardians have the primary responsibility for their children's learning and development. Schools can strengthen the capacity of parents to support their children in this way by sharing meaningful information with parents about the progress that children are achieving in the education system. This information needs to draw on the different sources of evidence that staffs use, such as conversations with the learner, data-collection and documented progress on objectives and milestones reached in their short and long-term planning, examination of students' own self-assessment data, documented observations of the learner's engagement with tasks, outcomes of other assessment tasks and tests, and examples of students' work. In turn, parents will often be able to enrich staff's knowledge of their students' progress through providing further information about the students' learning at home.

ADDITIONAL MEETINGS

Communication between parents and teachers is vital and is strongly encouraged at St. Matthew's. Informal communication is important and it naturally takes place early in the morning between teachers and parents while children are settling into their classroom or at home-time. This informal chat is very important; however, 'meetings with teachers at class doors' to discuss a concern or a child's progress is discouraged on a number of grounds:

- A teacher cannot adequately supervise a class while at the same time speaking to a parent.
- It is difficult to be discrete when so many children are standing close by.
- It can be embarrassing for a child when his/her parent is talking to the teacher at a classroom door.

When a parent wishes to meet a teacher to discuss a concern or development:

- A parent should contact the teacher via seesaw or email giving a reason for requesting a meeting.

- If a parent rings or calls into the School Office to request an appointment with a Teacher, parents will be given a 'Request to meet a Teacher Form which asks for a reason for the meeting.
- The teacher will then give the parent a time and date at which they will be available to meet the parent.
- These meetings generally take place immediately before or after school. They can only be arranged within the school day in exceptional circumstances.

If parents wish to drop in lunch boxes, sports gear etc. this can be done through the secretary's office as it is important to keep class interruptions down to a minimum. The school secretary can then relay messages onto children.

Occasions occur where a parent needs to speak to a staff member urgently. Sometimes these meetings need to take place without prior notice. The Principal will aim to facilitate such meetings making every effort to ensure that the children in the class do not lose out on any of the teaching/learning time.

When a teacher would like to meet a parent to discuss a concern or development:

- The teacher will send the parent an email, message on seesaw or speak to the parent during an informal part of the day (morning time/home time etc).
- The teacher will give a reason for the meeting
- These meetings generally take place immediately before or after school. They can only be arranged within the school day in exceptional circumstances.

When a parent would like to meet a principal:

- The principal is very happy to meet parents regarding enrolments, finances, secondary schools etc. However, when it comes to a concern or complaint, a parent must first approach the class teacher regarding the matter.
- If the concern or complaint remains, a parent may then seek to speak to the principal regarding the matter.
- If a parent contacts the office to make an appointment with a principal, s/he will be given a 'Request to meet a Principal Form'.
- If the matter has not been discussed with the Class Teacher, the parent will be redirected to meet the teacher first.
- A parent must give a reason for the meeting. The template in the Appendix can be used.
- The principal will then give the parent a time and date at which they will be available to meet the parent.
- In the rare circumstance that a complaint remains unresolved, s/he may consult the Parental Complaints Procedure.

END OF YEAR REPORT

Schools aim to help parents to understand fully the evidence of learning that the school reports to them. In line with Departmental advice, the school uses an NCCA standard report template. The report cards provide for reporting in four key areas:

- The child's learning and achievement across the curriculum
- The child's learning dispositions
- The child's social and personal development
- Ways in which parents can support their child's learning

TEXTS, EMAIL & SOCIAL MEDIA

At St. Matthew's N.S., we want to communicate with parents and deal with queries and concerns in a fair, just and respectful manner.

Complaints and queries must not be made by approaching other parents via text, email or social media. The Board of Management would deem such communication as wholly unacceptable and against the school ethos. If you have a concern, speak to your child's teacher.

BEHAVIOUR OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN THE SCHOOL

Positive and respectful communication is of high importance to our school. This not only extends to the children but to all of the stakeholders, for example, the staff, parents and the wider community. While the behaviour of children in our school is of vital importance, adults in the school community also have a responsibility to ensure their own behaviour models the types of behaviour expected of children. In this context, threatening, violent or abusive behaviour, against any members of our school community, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All members of our community have a right to expect the school to be a safe place in which to work and learn.

All stakeholders are responsible for their own behaviours in the school. Examples include:

- All stakeholders are expected to communicate in a respectful and courteous manner; a manner in which they themselves would wish to be addressed.
- Conduct which undermines the safe and calm environment in school, such as shouting, swearing, threatening violence or other aggressive tones are not acceptable.
- Threatening, harassing or abusive telephone calls, emails, letters or other forms of written communication will not be tolerated.
- Defamatory comments about school staff, proprietors or other parents on communication apps and social media sites will be treated in a very serious manner by the Board of Management.
- All stakeholders will treat our children with the utmost respect. Approaching someone else's child in order to chastise them will not be accepted.
- Staff should not be asked to speak about another parent's child. The staff of the school will respect your child's right to privacy so it is asked that parents respect other children's rights to privacy
- When stakeholders meet, we ask all parties to be punctual, meetings should be kept to a reasonable amount of time. Times of meetings should be agreed beforehand and these should be respected.
- Staff Members are generally available to listen to a quick issue in the morning and after school. However, should a parent need to have a discussion or meeting, an appointment should be made at a convenient time for both parties.

Where the behaviour of parents or visitors falls below expected standards, the school will take appropriate action, for example:

- they may be asked to remove themselves from the building.
- in certain cases, the Gardaí will be called
- a report will be given to the Principal and Board of Management. The Board of Management reserves the right to:
 - issue verbal warnings or written warnings
 - refuse access to a parent to the school premises
 - implement a 'two members of staff present' at meetings system regarding the parent. The second staff member may be the Board's Chairperson.

- The Board will refer to circular 40/97.

Please note:

Normal permitted times on the premises are at drop-off in the morning (8:30 am to 8:50 am) and at pick up (1.10pm or 2.10pm). If a child is registered to attend after-school-care or an after-school club, these timings will extend to reflect the normal drop-off or collection times associated with these activities. Access onto the school property at any other time is by appointment only.

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