**Owenbeg N.S.**

**Roll No.: 03924S**

**Parents/Guardians as Partners Policy**

**Introductory statement**

This policy was developed by the staff of Owenbeg N.S., the Board of Management and the Parents’ Association in the school year of 2023-2024.

Its purpose is to provide information and guidelines to parents/guardians and staff on parent/staff meetings and parent/staff communication in Owenbeg N.S. The school and the family strive to be mutually supportive and respectful of each other so that the child’s education can be effective. All of the stakeholders in Owenbeg N.S. aim to work for the benefit of the child and their learning.

**Parents/guardians are encouraged to:**

* Develop close links with the school
* Participate in meetings in a positive and respectful manner, affirming the professional role of the staff and all staff members in the school.
* 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 (See School Ethos and Mission Statement)
* Become actively involved in the school/parent association
* Participate in policy and decision-making processes affecting them

**Staff are encouraged to:**

* Participate in any meetings with parents/guardians in a positive and respectful manner and, in keeping with Owenbeg N.S. Charter, affirm the role of the parent as the ‘primary and natural educator’ of their children (as per Article 42.1 of the Irish Constitution)
* Collaborate with the parents/guardians in an open two-way communication so that both parties are working together to develop the full potential of the student
* Be aware of the activities of the Parents’ Association and link in with them where possible to support their fundraising activities

**Structures in place to facilitate open communication & consultation with Parents/Guardians**

* **School Website**: [www.owenbegns.ie](http://www.owenbegns.ie) The school website is used as a means of communication relating to our school news, school life, achievements and school events. It is used to disseminate news to our school community. It contains copies of our up-to-date school policies and newsletters.
* **School Social Media Accounts**: @owenbegns : Facebook and X (Formally Twitter): The school has dedicated Facebook and X social media pages where parents/guardians and the wider school community are updated regularly on achievements, and the day to day activities in the school. See the Acceptable Use Policy for further information on how these pages will be used.
* **Phone calls** via school office (096) 49253
* **Text messages** through Aladdin
* **Email:** The school email address is [owenbegns@gmail.com](mailto:owenbegns@gmail.com)
* **Termly newsletters** to keep parents/guardians up-to-date with school events, holidays and school concerns
* **Homework Journals** and communication diaries are used to relay signed
* **Parent/Teacher Meetings:** One to one meetings between parents/guardians and teachers, parents/guardians and Behaviour Analyst, parents/guardians and therapists
* **School reports** for each pupil at the end of each school year
* Meetings between parents/guardians and the trans-disciplinary team working with the student to ensure agreement on goals being worked towards
* Meeting for new parents/guardians
* Details of classroom staff communicated to parents/guardians at beginning of school year and any regular updates re temporary, substitute or work experience personnel as they change. Advance notification to be given where possible if a regular member of staff is leaving so that parents/guardians can prepare the student for the imminent change
* Communication and consultation throughout the year (formal/informal)
* Thorough on-going communication between the Principal and the Parents Association, parents/guardians are invited to discuss and contribute to the drafting and review of relevant school policies.
* Any policies under review will be made known to all parents/guardians in written format, on a regular basis
* messages. Parents/guardians and teachers are requested to sign diary each day to certify that homework has been completed and communication book/weekly reports have been checked.
* Parents/guardians invited to events throughout the year e.g. Christmas play, sports day, open nights, Graduation, staff and family BBQ

     In all matters pertaining to the wellbeing and education of pupils, only the parents/legal guardians named on the enrolment form will be consulted by staff.

**Parent/teacher meetings**  
  
The aim of parent/teacher meetings is:

* To improve communication between the school and parents.
* To let parents/guardians know how their children are progressing in school
* To inform staff on how children are coping outside school
* To establish an ongoing relationship and communication with parents/guardians
* To help staff/parents get to know the children better as individuals
* To help children realise that home and school are working together

**Reporting to parents/guardians**

Parents/guardians have the primary responsibility for their children’s learning and development. Schools can strengthen the capacity of parents/guardians to support their children in this way by sharing meaningful information with parents/guardians about the progress that children are achieving in the education system. This information needs to draw on the different sources of evidence that staff 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/guardians will often be able to enrich staffs’ knowledge of their students’ progress through providing further information about the students’ learning at home.

**Report card templates**

Schools should help parents/guardians to understand fully the evidence of learning that the school reports to them, especially information from any standardised tests. The NCCA has provided a range of standard report templates to assist schools in reporting information about the progress of primary pupils to parents/guardians, including information from standardised tests. The NCCA report card templates were developed through a process of consultation with schools and parents/guardians and take account of research commissioned by the NCCA.

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/guardians can support their child’s learning

All primary schools **must** use one of the report card templates (available at www.ncca.ie) for reporting to parents/guardians on students’ progress and achievement at school with effect from the date of this circular.

**6th Class Education Passport**

As part of the 6th class transfer to secondary school, parents are encouraged to complete the NCCA Education Passport Parent Profile about their child. This is relevant for the secondary school.

**Formal Meetings- Student Support Plans**

Formal timetabled parent/staff meetings on the subject of the **Student Support Plan** take place no later than September/October. However, if a parent/guardian wishes to arrange a meeting at any stage during the year to discuss their child, they may do so by prior appointment.

* All communication sent from the school will be sent to the child’s home address as given on the enrolment form, unless otherwise requested by parents/guardians, or placed in the family’s designated cubby hole as appropriate
* In the case of separated parents/guardians, requests can be made by both parents/guardians to meet their child’s staff(s) individually for parent/staff meetings.

**Informal Parent/Teacher Meetings**

Owenbeg N.S. encourage communication between parents/guardians and staff. Meetings with the class staff in the reception lobby to discuss a child’s concern/progress are discouraged on a number of grounds.

* A staff member cannot adequately supervise their student/class while at the same time speaking to a parent
* It is difficult to be discreet when there are potentially other parents/guardians and children standing close by.
* It could cause distraction for a child when his/her parent is talking to staff at a classroom door

Occasions occur where a parent needs to speak to a member of staff 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.

If parents/guardians wish to drop in lunch boxes, sports gear etc, this can be done through the school office as it is important to keep class interruptions to a minimum.  
  
Parents/guardians are strongly discouraged from taking pupils out of school during term time in order to facilitate family holidays.

**Parents’ Association**

We have an active and supportive Parents’ Association in Owenbeg N.S. Details on the Parents’ Association and National Parents Council are available through the school website. The Parent Association is a support for parents in the school. The business of the Parent Association will be conducted in accordance with the constitution of the Parent Association. The Parents’ Committee organise events such as the annual Bake Sales, suggest/organise extra-curricular activities, fundraising opportunities, arranged talks for parents from external speakers etc. The Committee also has a role in the development and review of certain school policies.

**Complaints Procedure**

Complaints are infrequent but the school would wish that these would be dealt with informally, fairly and quickly.

The parental complaints procedure was revised and agreed by the Irish National Teachers’ Organisation and the Catholic Primary Schools Management Association in 2023. It is designed to provide an open and clearly defined process to facilitate parents/legal guardians in raising concerns about their own child/children in an agreed, fair and transparent manner.

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 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.

A link to the revised Parental Complaints Procedure can be found at: <https://www.cpsma.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/parental-complaints-procedures.pdf>

**Behaviour of all Stakeholders in the School**

Positive and respectful communication is of high importance to our school. This is something we work on with the students in the school but this also extends to all of the stakeholders e.g. the staff, parents/guardians and the wider community.  Anyone entering our building should feel safe to do so. While the behaviour of children in our school is of vital importance and is a major part of our education model, adults in the school community also have a responsibility to ensure their own behaviour models the types of behaviour expected of children.

It is important that all stakeholders are responsible for their own behaviours in the school.  Examples include:

* All stakeholders are expected to speak to each other with respect.  Shouting or other aggressive tones are not acceptable.  If a stakeholder displays anger or aggression to another member of the school, they may be asked to remove themselves from the building.  In certain cases, the Gardaí may be called.
* All stakeholders will treat our children with the utmost respect while on the premises.
* 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/guardians respect other children’s rights to privacy.
* When stakeholders meet, it is important to respect that the time of meetings should be kept to a reasonable amount of time.  Times of meetings should be agreed beforehand and these should be respected.
* Staff 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. This ensures that issues can be resolved.  Classes begin at 9:20 am and finish at 3:00pm and this time should not be interrupted.

**Visitor Code of Conduct**

*A notice containing the below information will be displayed in the front hallway of the school building.*

We aim to provide a high quality education service in a safe and secure environment. In order to provide this we require that everybody treats each other with due respect.

* All visitors to the school (including parents/guardians) must ring the doorbell once and wait.
* The visitor will wait in the front hallway.
* Visitors are not permitted to enter the school building unaccompanied, without a member of staff
* If the visitor is collecting a child early, prior notice is needed for the school please.
* All children being brought in late or taken early must be signed in or out by an authorised adult. The visitor book is for this purpose.
* If any parent/guardian wishes to speak to a teacher, please contact the school by letter or phone call to arrange for an appointment.
* All visitors who are carrying out work in the school will be given a visitor’s badge to wear while in the school.

**The Staff and BOM of Owenbeg N.S. appreciate your understanding and co-operation with the above.**

**We ask all visitors to note that the following behaviour will not be accepted:**

* Behaviour, which is disruptive or interferes with the smooth running of the school.
* Harassment of staff, pupils or other members of the public by use of abusive, racist, obscene, threatening or intimidating language.
* Bad language of any description.
* Use of aggression, violence or threat of violence towards staff, pupils or any members of the school community.
* Malicious damage to and/or theft of school property.
* The improper use of devices capable of recording audio, video or images.
* The use of alcohol, tobacco or illicit drugs.

**Ratified by the Board of Management**

**Chairperson:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Principal:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**