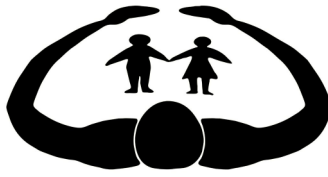


Donabate-Portrane



Educate Together

HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION POLICY

This policy was drawn up in consultation with the staff, parent representatives and the Board of Management.

Rationale:

In keeping with the principles of multi-denominational education, DPETNS is democratically run. This means that the democratically elected Board of Management, run the school and involvement of all parents is sought and encouraged at many levels. A high level of parental involvement is a feature of our school and requires commitment from all parents.

General Guidelines:

- It is crucial that Board of Management members, subcommittee members and all parents generally communicate school related information in the correct manner.
- All Board and Committee members must operate in accordance with their 'guidelines'.
- It is essential that all of the school community understand fully the communication procedures needed for an effective school. It is hoped that all individuals will work to promote these procedures and to encourage others to do the same.
- The Board of Management appoint a Communications Officer to ensure that there is a good flow of information between the various subcommittees to the Board, from the Board to Subcommittees and from Subcommittees to the Board.
- The development of strong Home/School Links is part of one of the posts of responsibility in the school.
- Good communications between home and school plays a vital part in every child's education. The staff of DPETNS is committed to creating strong home school links. As a result, there are various modes of communication in place to encourage strong home school links.

School Communication:

- The school website (www.dpetns.ie) is updated regularly and has information on important dates and events in the school. This forms one of the posts of responsibility within the school. The school's blog is accessible via dpetns.scoilnet.ie/blog.
- Parents/Guardians can contact the school by email.
- Text a Parent and email are used to contact parents with school related information.
- All families are asked to complete a family directory in September. This ensures that the school has records that are up to date.
- Regular Home/School Links letters are also distributed to families who are not contactable online.
- It is not necessary to telephone the school if your child is sick but an absence note is required when your child returns to school.

- We request that birthday invitations are not distributed at school as this can lead to upset and unnecessary disappointment for some children.
- The school office is closed during holidays with the exception of the last week in August. Messages can be left on the school answering machine and will be responded to as soon as possible.

Teacher Communication

- If parents/guardians have any concerns about their child's welfare, they are advised to speak directly to the child's teacher. Initial communication should be made through School Journal or note. If needed short messages can be communicated at the beginning or end of the school day. If there is an issue that requires discussion parents/guardians are advised to make an appointment to see the class teacher.
- Parents/ Guardians are encouraged to use the children's journals as the primary means of communication with class teachers
- Each teacher has a school appointed e-mail address (firstname.secondname@dpetns.ie), which can be used to make contact when parents/guardians feel that using the school journal as a means of communication is not appropriate.
- Formal Parent/Teacher Meetings take place once a year. Informal meetings are encouraged at the request of either parent/guardian or teacher

Guidelines for Positive Communication:

- Step 1: Any concerns/issues relation to your child need to be addressed to the class teachers. Teachers are all committed to working closely with parents and will do their best to meet parents at a mutually convenient time. It is hoped that all issues will be resolved at that stage.
- Step 2: If, following the meeting with the class teacher, a parent feels that the matter has not been resolved; an appointment should be made to meet with the Principal.
- Step 3: If a parent/guardian feels that the issue has not been resolved following the first two stages, it is necessary to communicate with the Board of Management. A letter should be written and addressed to the Chairperson of the Board of Management. The letter will be read out at the following Board of Management meeting and the members will consider and discuss the issues raised. The Board members will work towards finding a resolution and will respond directly to the parent.

If the parental concern relates to school policy/whole school issues, Step 1 above may be skipped and the parent should come directly to the Principal.

If approached, PTA members, sub-committee members and Board of Management members will promote the procedures outlined above for dealing with suggestions and concerns relation to the school.