



Dunderrow National School Policy on Parental Involvement

Parental Involvement-Introduction:

Our school is a community where pupils, parents and teachers collaborate and work in partnership for our children. When parents decide to send their child to our school they are entering a very important relationship. "Partnership is a working relationship that is characterized by a shared sense of purpose, mutual respect and a willingness to negotiate." Gillian Pugh, Working Towards Partnership in the Early Years.

The school catholic ethos will be upheld at all times but it is important to keep in mind that the school is welcoming to all denominations , co-educational, child centered and democratic. Consequently, respect for all the partners in education - children, teachers and parents - must be upheld at all times.

Rationale:

This policy was formulated by all pupils staff and parents of the above school so as to consolidate our commitment and understanding that:

Dunderrow N.S. seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are valued. This work can best be done where there is a high level of openness and co-operation between staff, parents and pupils. Dunderrow N.S. is democratically run. This means that management committees that are democratically elected run it, and the involvement of all parents is sought and encouraged.

Dunderrow N.S. wishes to meet the requirements of the Education Act, 1998; Education Welfare Act, 2000 The patron of Dunderrow N.S. is Bishop John Buckley ,Bishop of Cork and Ross.

Assist in the process of School Self Evaluation (Looking at Our School) .

Aims and Objectives:

- To build a school community committed to supporting all its pupils
- To establish procedures for the sharing of information in relation to pupil progress and attainment
- To enrich and extend the educational opportunities provided for pupils by accessing the skills and talents of parents.

Guidelines For Parents:

These guidelines address parental involvement in the following areas

Parent Association

Board of Management

Involvement in classroom activities

Organizational policies and curriculum plans

Communication

Guest speakers

Benefits of Parental Involvement

- Children benefit from greater diversity in the classroom.
- Children profit from more one-to-one attention.
- Parental skills may support and complement work already taking place.
- Parental involvement actively supports and encourages the child's learning.
- A wide range of activity is facilitated. This can be interesting and fun, and can lead to a broader and more holistic education
- It promotes 'good parent/teacher relationships and a better level of understanding between home and school' (National Parents' Council).
- It enhances communication, trust and respect between parents and teachers.
- Parents can learn about the curriculum.
- Parental involvement allows children to see that school is an extension of home and therefore fosters the idea of the 'school family'.
Parental skills can contribute to the smooth running and development of the school.
- Parental Involvement provides the opportunity of making lifelong friends.

Parents' Association:

As a parent /guardian you are an automatic member of our Parents Association. The school has an active P.A..It works in close co-operation with the school and provides support and help for parents and the school.

- *All parents of school going children are invited to get involved.*
- *Members elected at annual AGM in term1 each school year.*
- *Parents association uphold to an agreed constitution.*
- *Affiliated members of NPA-National Parents Council.*

P.A. aims :

- To help the school achieve its aims in any way it can – providing the best education possible for all children.
- To liaise with the Principal and the teaching staff.
- To represent the views of parents and to provide a forum for consultation with the Principal on relevant issues, policy making etc.,.

- To provide support for parents especially new arrivals in the school.
- To provide practical help when required in the school.
- To facilitate social opportunities for parents at school-based meetings , annual functions and events.
 - To help the school / BOM financially (Fundraising) when suitable opportunities arise.
 - To inform parents on ongoing school activities by P.A newsletter.

Members of Parents Association 2013/2014 are-**See Appendix 1**

Board of Management:

The B.O.M has responsibility for the effective running of the school with powers conferred on it by Dept of Education and Science and the Catholic Primary Schools Management Association.The B.O.M is made up of eight people 2 parents representatives,2 community representatives,2 members of teaching staff(one of whom is the principal)and 2Patron's/Diocesan nominees.

The present B.O.M members are: **see appendix 2**

How to Get Involved-School and Classroom Activities:

- Parents are, first of all, invited to consider their skills, interests and time available, and communicate this information to the class teacher, the principal and/or to the PTA.
- Parents can consult with the class teacher about hobbies, skills or interests they can share with the class bearing in mind that needs change from year to year.
- Parents can work in conjunction with the teachers in a planned and coordinated way. For example, they could help with library and shared reading book exchange, assist at art times, work with the children at various curricular activities and lend a welcome hand in many other areas which can be identified with the teacher.
- Ongoing projects over a number of weeks may enhance and enrich the work the children are involved with in the classroom: parents are encouraged to discuss any ideas they may have with the teacher.
- Parents can help in many curricular areas e.g with transportation to/from swimming, field trips, art and P.E. , and may also like to make costumes for school concerts.-
- Parents are also currently involved in many extra-curricular activities such as , , football, music and art, and would be particularly welcome to initiate project work with the children in specific areas of interest .Opportunities are endless - baking, woodwork, cultural exchanges and discussion... the school welcomes all ideas.

See Appendix 3 .

Guidelines for Getting Involved in Classroom Activities:

- Parents come into the classroom at the invitation of the teacher by prior arrangement and for an agreed purpose.
- The happiness, welfare and safety of our children are our primary concern. A child's personal history and academic achievements are strictly confidential. Any doubts about issues of confidentiality must be discussed with the teacher.
- Respect for the teachers in their professional capacity is essential.
- Discipline remains the responsibility of the teacher.
- All work will be supervised by the teacher.
- Parents who participate should be conscious of and sensitive to the needs of the entire class, not just the needs of their own child.
- Parents coming into the classroom must consult with the teacher before inviting other parents/individuals to participate.
- In the interests of safety toddlers and younger children cannot be accommodated during a classroom activity.
- The highest standard of behavior and language is expected.
- Punctuality and consistency are crucial
- No fees are payable. Any expenses that you wish to reclaim must be sanctioned in advance by the teacher, and must be accompanied by receipts.
- In the case of an ongoing project that takes place over a number of weeks, parents will meet with the teacher to discuss the activity. It remains the responsibility of the teacher to determine its appropriateness (e.g. is it suitable for the age group, has something similar already been done etc.). The teacher has the final say in the event that he/she feels it is falling short of its original aims and objectives.

Organizational policies and curriculum plans:

A consultative process will be followed in involving parents/guardians in policy formation. A number of strategies are used e.g. questionnaires may be issued to all parents/guardians or to a representative sample, Feedback arising from focus group meetings, consultation with parent association, policy committees, representative/s at planning events. Day to day feedback is also valued. (the topic/area being addressed will inform the method of collaboration and consultation)

The role and responsibility of parents have in relation to school policies is outlined in the procedures that are agreed to in the formation of any given school policy, e.g.

Administration of Medicine	Learning Support and Special Needs
Anti-Bullying	Lunches
Attendance	Mobile Phones
Book Fairs	Newsletter/Brochure
Calendar	Opening and Closing Times
Child Protection	Open Days
Code of Behaviour	Parent Teacher Meetings
Environmental Awareness	Sporting Practices

Excursions
Homework

Substance Use
Uniform

All policies are available for viewing in principals office and many are available on school website www.dunderrow.ie

Curriculum Plans

The school has in place, using a consultative process, defined best practices for parents/guardians in relation to curriculum plans e.g. parental role in supporting the child's learning in each class - clarification of content, methodologies, assessment ...

Policies include:

Subject policies for each curricular subject

Assessment Policy

Record Keeping

Parent Teaching Meeting Policy

Home School Communication Policy

Homework Policy

Learning Support Policy

Special Needs Policy

English as an Additional Language Policy

Interculturism

Induction of new Pupils

RSE/Stay Safe

Substance Use

Extra Curricular Activities

Parental Involvement

Promoting Good Attendance

All policies are available for viewing in principals office and many are available on school website www.dunderrow.ie

Parents , Grandparents with particular knowledge or skills in each curriculum area are welcome to participate in school life e.g.

Language: poet/author, member of drama group, etc.

Mathematics: architect, builder, carpenter, accountant, etc.

Arts: artist, actor, musician, dancer, etc.

SPHE: district nurse, dietician, guard, etc.

SESE: scientific background, historian, town planner, etc.

P.E.: sportsperson, representatives from local sports groups, etc.

Health and Safety

Communication

The school has in place, using a consultative process, defined best practices for parents/guardians in relation to communication.

See policies on

Enrolment

Home School Communication

Parent Teacher Meetings

Reporting

Data Protection

Parental Involvement

Homework

Learning Support and Special Needs

Promoting Good Attendance

Guest speakers :

As For communication the school has in place, using a consultative process, defined best practices for parents/guardians in relation to having Guest Speakers

- Area Of Interest Defined thro, a consultative process
- Names of guest speakers outlined
- Speakers contacted and details of event discussed
- Following consultation date/time/venue/cost/ itinerary for event etc., are finalized
- Necessary parents informed of upcoming event by note.
- Reminder sent nearer date of event.

Success Criteria:

Some practical indicators of the success of the policy

- Benefit to pupil learning
- Parental involvement is increased in school activities
- Feedback from parents/staff

Roles and Responsibilities:

Parents, pupils, staff, B.O.M and Parents Association have particular responsibilities for supporting, developing, implementing and evaluating this policy.

Implementation and Review:

The Policy is currently being implemented and will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

Ratification and Communication:

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in April 2007.

Signed: Joseph O' Leary

Chairperson B.O.M

Reviewed May 2013

Signed: _____

Noel Henderson

Chairman B.O.M

Appendix 1:

Parents Association Members 2013/2014

Veronique O'Toole **Chairperson**
Liz Fox **Secretary**
Anne Hurley **Treasurer**
Catherine Moynihan
Catherine McGuinness
Orela Walsh
Anna Boyd
Julie McNamara
Siobhain Long
Janet Woods

Appendix 2 Members of B.O.M

Board of Management 2013/2014

Patrons Nominees:

Fr. Robert Young
Mr. Noel Henderson – Chairperson

Teacher's Representatives:

Ms. Mary Cottrell – Principal – Recording Secretary
Ms.Helen O' Callaghan

Parent's Representatives:

Ms.Maria O' Donovan Joyce
Mr. Brendan Kellett

Community Representatives:

Ms. Mary Delaney
Mr. John Feeney (Treasurer)

Appendix 3-Parental involvement in Dunderrow N.S. over past 2/3 year period.

Parents have and continue to be involved in many areas of school life. They are always welcome and appreciated.

Some areas where parents have contributed to school life during the past 2/3 years are:

- 1. Healthy Cooking in our school's dedicated cookery corner. Parents from various class level cooked a variety of healthy and nutritious dishes for a number of classes.*
- 2. Parents re-painted and repaired basketball boards and hoops.*
- 3. Parental involvement in planting flowers, fruit and vegetables [e.g rhubarb and lettuce] with a number of classes in school garden.*
- 4. GAA, Parents/Past Pupils were involved in taking charge of different teams and coaching them for the day in Kinsale GAA pitch.*
- 5. Healthy Eating Week- Parents helped by organising different events for the children and also helping each of the class teachers.*
- 6. Parents constructed food pyramid to assist school in the area of health promotion.*
- 7. Sports Day- Parents are in charge of different stations at the pitch when it came to, for example, the egg and spoon race and the three legged race.*
- 8. Parents Association run many different fund raising events each year to raise money for the school for example ,they ran a hugely successful Christmas Raffle, Summer Fun Run/Walk Day etc.*
- 9. Parents also bring children to various sporting events organised within school time for example Sciath na Scol matches and the Cork City Sports.*
- 10. Parents provided all home baking and refreshments for special events.*
- 11. Refreshments are also served on Infant Opening Day, on Holy Communion Day/Confirmation Day.*
- 12. Parents Association raise money to sponsor part-payment of buses for educational trips for children, also towards dancing and swimming.*
- 13. Parents Association purchased €1700 worth of musical instruments as an invaluable musical resource for school and also purchased Jerseys and Jackets for the school.*
- 14. Organise end of year textbook sale from which school receives a percentage discount.*
- 15. Organise a Very successful Scholastic book fair every 2/3 years.*
- 16. The Parents Association organised pastoral information evenings of a topical social need e.g Cyber bullying, Drug Awareness.*
- 17. Parents are actively involved in school policy making and have participated on a number of policy committees and policy workshops in the past.*

