

Brannoxtown Community National School

Communications with Parents¹ Policy

Brannoxtown Community National School (CNS) is a primary school under Patronage of the Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB). Brannoxtown CNS opened in September 2018 with Principal, Dr. Sarah FitzPatrick. Brannoxtown CNS operates within the regulations laid down by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and follows the Primary School Curriculum (DES, 1999) which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998). The Principal and the Board of Management fully subscribe to the principles of partnership, accountability, inclusion, respect for diversity, parental choice and equality, in developing and implementing all school policies.

1. Introduction and Rationale

This policy on Communications with Parents was developed to provide information and guidelines to parents and school staff about communications from Brannoxtown CNS to parents of children attending the school, and from parents to members of management and teaching staff at the school.

Two parents (one male, one female) are nominees of parents on the Board of Management. An Agreed Report is prepared by the Board of Management at the end of each meeting. The report, published on the school website, provides information for all parents on matters of interest to them, discussed at the Board meeting, e.g. school policies that have been developed, reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management.

In addition, this policy supports all parents to have a say in their child(ren)'s learning and development at Brannoxtown CNS.

2. Policy Aims:

This policy supports our school to:

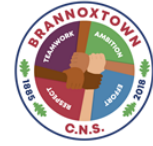
- Develop close links between parents and staff
- Provide structured opportunities for parents and school staff to work together to support children to reach their full potential
- Encourage and support parents to become actively involved in the school
- Update parents on what's happening in the school
- Promote partnership with parents (Education Act, 1998 and Education Welfare Act, 2000).

3. Communication and Consultation with Parents

The following communication methods enable parents and teachers to work together to support children's learning and development

Communication Method	Notes
i. Parent Teacher Meetings	<p><u>Mid-Year Parent Teacher (PT) Meetings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-year meetings are held for each child once annually, in Term 2. Parents are encouraged and supported to attend these meetings as they are a valuable opportunity to discuss their child's learning and development.

¹ The word 'Parents' refers both to Parents and Guardians of children attending Brannoxtown CNS.

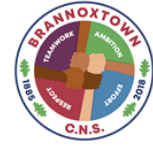


	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Before the meetings, parents are invited to complete a 'Parent Form' which seeks parents' views on their child's strengths, and (any) challenges and invites parents to share any concerns.• Discussion focuses on each child's progress (dispositions, concepts and skills) and on identifying any additional supports that may be needed to ensure their child can achieve their full potential during their time at our school.• These meetings also provide opportunities for parents to talk to teachers about their child's development and life outside school. <p><u>Additional PT Meetings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There may be occasions when a parent needs to speak to a class teacher, at short notice.• Inpromptu requests for meetings with the class teacher at the class door are not possible because the class teacher is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of the students in his/her care and must remain with children. Additionally, it is not appropriate to speak about a student at the door of the classroom within earshot of the child and his/her class.• Instead, important conversations about children's learning and development should be scheduled in an appropriate space e.g., an office or empty classroom with fewer opportunities for distractions, following adequate preparation.• To request a meeting, parents may email the school or message the teacher on Class Dojo. Staff will always endeavour to respond to a parents' request as soon as possible.
ii. Written Communications	<p><u>Class Dojo:</u> Each classroom has a Class Dojo account that facilitates communication between teachers and parents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using Class or School Story, teachers can share videos, photos and messages about learning and upcoming events.• Parents can use Class Dojo to communicate messages that relate to children's absences or appointments between the hours of 8am and 3pm, Monday to Friday.• Class Dojo is not considered an appropriate tool for communicating sensitive information about children's learning and development.• If a child is absent from school, homework is not assigned/shared on the Class Dojo.• During the school day, teachers may not have an opportunity to respond to a parent's message on Class Dojo, however, an icon (within the app) shows parents when the teacher has read the message sent.• Teaching and class supervision are the priorities for teaching staff, to ensure adequate care for children at school, at all times. Teachers will check Class Dojo at least once daily. <p><u>Written Reports on Pupil Progress:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reports issue to parents in June, each year. A text notifies parents that reports have been sent. <p><u>Emails and phone calls:</u> In addition to Class Dojo, parents may communicate with the school by email or by phone (on Tuesdays):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Email: brannoxtowncns@kwetb.ie.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Phone</u>: 045-483729 (Tuesdays). <i>Parents may phone the school landline during the School Secretary's Office Hours on Tuesdays, i.e., 10am to 3pm.</i>• <u>Homework Diary</u>: <i>Parents can send a message to teachers using the notes pages at the back of the school's Homework Diary.</i> <p><u>Aladdin texts and emails:</u> The school has purchased a subscription to the Aladdin software system which enables us to send pre-scheduled school text-messages and emails to parents from PC/laptop. These messages are sent to the contact number provided by parents in their child's Enrolment Form.</p>
iii. School News	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School News (videos, photos and text) is shared weekly on Class Dojo.<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Whole-school news: School Story◦ Classroom news: Class Story.• Newsletters update parents on school activities and student achievements. Newsletters are printed for each family at the end of term. They are also emailed to families of the school and available on the Brannoxtown CNS website in the 'Parents' section of the site and also under the link to 'News'.• Teachers author a school update which is published in the print-edition of the Bridge magazine monthly.
iv. Policies and School Events	<p><u>Policies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Brannoxtown CNS school policies are developed through discussion with staff, parents and pupils. When approved by the Board, policies are published on the school website. Feedback on policies is always welcome and a feedback form is published also on the school policy webpage. The Board of Management follows a schedule for development, review and implementation of all school policies, beginning with the most important. <p><u>School Related events:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents are invited to attend and contribute to school events including open days, sporting activities, graduation night and other relevant talks/information sessions facilitated by the school, parents themselves and/or outside speakers, in line with health and safety policies. <p><u>Parents Association/Group:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When established, the Parents' Association at Brannoxtown CNS will be an integral part of the school community.¹ Expressions of interest in contributing to a parents' group for BCNS (in a leadership/support role) will be invited from parents in Term 1 of the 2022/2023 school year.
v. Website	<p><u>Parents' Webpages:</u></p>

¹ Section 26 of the Education Act, 1998 states that, *...the parents of students of a recognised school may establish, and maintain from among their number, a parents' association for that school and membership of that association shall be open to all parents of students of that school.* The Parents' Association will make a vital and valuable contribution to the school's promotion, growth and development.



	<p>The parents' section of the school website includes the above newsletters as well as information about the school uniform, booklists, additional resources of interest to parents and the school calendar. A detailed School Calendar for the following Academic Year is published at Easter each year. A hard copy of the Calendar is provided for each family at the end of June for the following year.</p> <p><u>Homepage:</u> The homepage for the school site: www.brannoxtowncns.ie is updated regularly. It includes a Facebook and Twitter feed so parents and members of the public can see children's learning and development in action. It also includes a school noticeboard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important dates and developments are added to the BCNS noticeboard, which is easily accessible on our homepage. BCNS Noticeboard.
<p>vi. Social Media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • @Brannoxtown Community National School: Weekly updates on developments in our school are posted our school Facebook and Instagram pages: Brannoxtown CNS. • @Brannoxtown CNS: Our school's Twitter account, Brannoxtown CNS is used to share our learning and teaching experiences with others.

4. Family events/situations which may cause anxiety for a pupil

We ask parents to inform us of any situation which may cause anxiety for your child, and may cause a deterioration in their school work and/or absenteeism. We will work together with families and other external agencies, where relevant, to support your child through a difficult time.

5. Pupil emergencies during the school day at Brannoxtown CNS

In the event of a pupil emergency while at school, the child's parents will be contacted by phone. If parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact persons named on the child's Enrolment Form will be contacted.

6. Dropping off lunches/sports gear for pupil's during the school day

We ask parents to help children ensure they have all their necessary belongings with them for the day, e.g., books, resources, lunch box and sports gear. However, if a parent needs to drop something to the school for their child(ren), they can call to the Secretary in the School Office (1885 building) on Tuesdays (10am to 3pm) and to the Principal in Room 1 (2013 building) on alternate days. Ultimately, our goal is to support children themselves to develop important life-skills to organise their belongings each evening for school the next day.

7. Planned absences during term-time

As outlined by TUSLA, the Education Welfare Service, taking a holiday during term time means that children may miss opportunities to develop important concepts and skills. It may be difficult for children to catch-up when they return to school. We advise parents to keep children in school during term time. In circumstances where absences are planned and cannot be avoided, it is important that parents inform the school in advance, so that teachers can plan to support children upon their return to school.

8. Communications with Parents Policy: Monitoring and Reviewing

a. Success Criteria



Practical indicators of the success of this policy are evident in:

- Awareness and understanding of the policy by parents
- Appropriate use of communication methods, and ultimately
- Strong communications between home and school, from the perspectives of children, parents and school staff.

b. Implementation and Timetable for Review

This policy and related policies are reviewed annually (or in line with a change in Department legislation) and amended and updated when necessary.

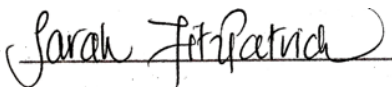
c. Ratification and Communication

The most recent updates to this policy were adopted by the Board of Management of Brannoxtown CNS at their meeting on 20th October, 2022.

Signed: 

Date: 20 October 2022

Ms. Deirdre O'Donovan
Chairperson

Signed: 

Date: 20 October 2022

Dr. Sarah FitzPatrick
Principal