



## **Communication Charter**

### **Rationale**

Good communication between all of those involved in school i.e. teachers, SNAs, children, parents and ancillary school staff is very important for the effective running of our school.

St Vincent's Special School aspires to provide a safe, happy environment in which all pupils can meet their full potential. This is achieved where there is a high level of openness, co-operation and respect between staff, pupils, parents and the Board of Management.

### **Aims**

Our aim is to promote and support good communication structures between all of those in our school community - staff, children, parents, Multi-Disciplinary Team and Board of Management.

### **Parents are encouraged to:**

- Develop close links with the school
- Participate in meetings in a positive and respectful manner, affirming the professional role of all staff members in the school
- Collaborate with the school in developing the full potential of their children
- Participate in policy and decision-making processes affecting them

### **Staff are expected to**

- Participate in any meetings with parents in a positive and respectful manner
- Collaborate with the parents in an open two-way communication so that both parties are working together to develop the full potential of the children
- Collaborate with the Multi-Disciplinary team and ensure all prescribed programs and recommended practices are followed.
- Create links in the local community to support pupil activities

### **Staff Communication**

The school has adopted 'Working Together – Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations'. A copy is available in the Principal's office and may be downloaded from the INTO website <http://www.into.ie/ROI/InfoforTeachers/StaffRelations/WorkingTogether/>

Regular staff meetings are held to work on the school's development and the school plan. In addition to formal communication that takes place during staff meetings, the Principal is available to meet with any member of staff who wishes to discuss school matters with her.

Emails and Aladdin are used for circulating minutes of staff meetings and various correspondences. Reminders or notifications of emergencies, such as school closures may be sent through text. Daily notices are communicated through the staff sign in book or Aladdin.

### **Communication with Parents/Guardians**

IEP meetings are held in January

Parents are welcome to make an appointment to discuss their child at any time during the school year.



Parents are encouraged to fill in the school journal daily  
Parents are regularly contacted by phone to relay any information or incidents concerning their child.  
End of year pupil reports are issued in June  
Text-a-parent is used for emergency updates e.g. school closure due to unforeseen events.  
The School Calendar is issued to parents in June.

### **Parent Contact Details**

Parents' contact details including emergency contact details must be provided to the school. During the first term of each school year, parents will be asked to update their contact details as held by the school. These contact details are used only for the purpose of communicating with parents on issues relating to their child. It is vital that the school is aware of any changes to methods of communication with families. The responsibility for informing the school of a change of address, phone numbers or emails is the sole responsibility of parents.

#### **Parents Association (when established)**

The Chairperson of the parent's association will liaise with the Principal regarding all of its activities and events. A specific communication process will be developed by the PA with the principal when the PA is established. See [www.npc.ie](http://www.npc.ie) for more details.

### **Board of Management**

The Board of Management is comprised of a Chairperson, a Patron nominee, two community nominees, two parent nominees and a teacher nominee. The Principal reports to the Board of Management. The teacher and parent nominees are elected but they do not represent the teaching or parent body. Nominees bring "a teacher's/ parent's view" to Board of Management deliberations. To this end, their contribution to the Board is a very important one, and they are not required to consult with the wider staff or parent population, take instruction from them or report back to them.

Communication with the Board of Management can be done by letter and this correspondence will generally be considered at the next scheduled Board meeting. It should be noted that the complaints procedure should be followed if a complaint is being made. The Board of Management is only involved when prior resolutions have been sought, documented and have been exhausted. Policies are available on the school website.

### **Communicative Behaviour of all Stakeholders in the School**

Positive and respectful communication is of high importance to our school for our pupils, staff, parents and the wider community. Anyone entering our school building should feel welcome

All adults in the school community 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.

- All stakeholders are expected to speak to each other with respect. Shouting or other aggressive tones are not acceptable.
- All stakeholders will treat our children with the utmost respect.

### **Staff are expected to**



- Communicate effectively with pupils/students, colleagues, parents, school management and others in the school community in a manner that is professional, collaborative and supportive, and based on trust and respect
- Ensure every Child's voice is heard and there is no restricted communication by:
  1. Giving the pupils time to answer
  2. Having the appropriate communication device/book/visuals/ use of lamh as available at all times to the individual pupil.
- Ensure that any communication with or regarding pupils/ students, colleagues, parents, school management and others is appropriate, including communication via electronic media, such as e-mail, texting and social networking sites.
- Ensure communication is carried out during working hours and contact outside of these times should only be in an emergency or unavoidable situation. E.g. if the Principal has to cancel a school bus, parents will be notified as early as possible to arrange alternative transport.
- Uphold confidentiality – discussion of individual pupils or school matters outside the school environment, contravening to GDPR regulations/Laws

#### **All stakeholders are expected to**

Respect each child's right to privacy, so it is asked that communications are particular to the class, family or group member only to which the stake holder s pupil/child is involved

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. Meetings should be recorded in minutes.

#### **Ratification & Communication:**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 and communicated to the school community thereafter.

#### **Review Timetable:**

This policy will be reviewed in 2 years' time and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.