



## YELLOW FURZE NS



### Policy on Communications & Home School Liaison February 2021 Revision 3

Good communications both external and internal are vital to the smooth and efficient running of the school and to this end; Yellow Furze N.S. has a policy on communicating with the various groups, organisations and individuals connected to the school.

#### **Communications – Staff:**

Formal:

- Croke Park hours (up to 36 hours annually) are used to facilitate Staff Meetings – rough timetable issued in September / October.
- Agenda preset in consultation with staff.
- These meetings are minuted and items arising actioned.
- Departmental circulars are available online – these are drawn to the attention of staff during the meetings.
- As per DES guidelines for termly staff meetings – children go home at 12.50pm.

Informal:

- Daily communication between all members of staff is ongoing on an informal basis.
- Teachers communicate with each other by telephone during the day as required. Covid-19 restrictions preclude the use of notes.

#### **- Board of Management:**

The Board of Management holds at least one meeting per term but may meet more often if it is deemed necessary. The agenda is set for each meeting and each member of the board is notified by text message or email of the date and time. Meetings are minuted; communications to the Board are retained by the secretary and dealt with at subsequent meetings. Owing to Covid-19, meetings take place via Zoom.

#### **- Inspectorate:**

The Principal communicates with the Inspectors as necessary by telephone or they will call in unannounced on inspection visits.

#### **- Other Agencies:**

There is regular two way communication with the Department of Education & Skills, H.S.E., N.E.P.S, TUSLA, Gardaí, County Council, Secondary Schools and Revenue as necessary.

#### **- Professional Development:**

Teachers avail of training opportunities in the Education Centres as required and also have regular communication with sales representatives of the various text book and school supply companies. They may also avail of the professional development courses held during the summer holidays.

### **Communication – Parents:**

Communication between parents and teachers is fostered in many different ways:

1. Use of homework notebook pre Covid-19, currently using a digital platform such as Class DOJO or telephone /Zoom calls.
2. Willingness of teachers and/or principal to meet with parents. It is requested that appointments be made prior to such meetings. Informal daily contact with parents is ongoing, particularly in infant classes.
3. The 'Do This in Memory' sacramental programme for First Holy Communion involves parents from September to April/May.
4. The 'You Shall be My Witnesses' programme for the Confirmation class involves those parents for a faith development program prior to the Confirmation ceremony.
5. Notes and newsletters are sent or emailed home as required.
6. Texting – we operate the text-a-parent service through the IPPN.
7. Children are not permitted to have mobile phones in school.
8. A school report on each child's progress is emailed to the child's home in early June, giving parents time to contact the school if concerns arise.

Note: It is good practice to use the online class platform i.e. Class DoJo for communication between parents and school during periods of remote learning and as required. Emails can be sent using our online pupil management app – Databiz. If the teacher /SNA uses a class Gmail or other class email account for communication purposes with the parent body, the 'BCC' facility should always be used to prevent an inadvertent breach of data protection. Teachers /SNAs should not use their personal phone numbers or emails for school purposes.

### **Parent Teacher Meetings**

These are held annually in December – parents book a time slot through our pupil management app – Databiz.

### **Custody / Separation:**

At Yellow Furze N.S., we encourage parents experiencing separation to come and speak confidentially to the Principal and teachers concerned. We aim to handle such matters with sensitivity and compassion as our primary concern is for the well-being and overall development of the child. However several issues will arise as a result of separation and/or custody issues and our policy regarding same is outlined below:

#### **Parental responsibility:**

- In the absence of information to the contrary, both parents will be assumed to have and will be treated as having equal parental responsibility.
- The school cannot be asked to withhold a child from a parent with parental responsibility unless a valid Barring Order exists. Where such an order exists, the school must be provided with a copy and photographs of the Barred Parent.

#### **Contact Details:**

- If the child spends time in both homes, the school must be provided with both sets of contact details and emergency numbers.
- The school must be notified in writing of any changes to a child's collection arrangements.

#### **Communicating with Parents:**

- Where school notes, reports and communications are sent home with a child, the school assumes that the parent who receives the communication will notify the other parent.

- Where the school contacts a parent by any other method (e.g. telephone call /email) it is assumed that the parent who is contacted will notify the other parent of all arrangements.
- The school will accommodate requests for separate / duplicate communications and parent – teacher meetings if required.

### **Home - School Communication**

We consider our school as part of a whole school community involving parents, students, teachers and the wider community. For this reason we encourage all partners to take an active part. We already have a very vibrant Parents Association and we encourage parents to become involved.

Parental involvement is encouraged in many different ways. In Yellow Furze National School, we have the following parent/partner groups working in the school:

- Post Office Savings Scheme (suspended owing to Covid-19)
- Fundraising with prior approval from the BOM. (Socially distanced.)
- Involvement in Sacramental preparation.
- School Sports days
- Celebrations, concerts and school Masses.
- Grandparents Day
- Green Day
- Welcome cup of tea for parents of new Junior Infants in September –

Through these structures we make every effort to make parents feel welcome and valued at all times and also try to establish and improve communication channels.

### **Parents Association:**

- The Parents Association meet approximately every month. If required, the Principal attends for part of each meeting so that issues pertaining to the parent body can be addressed.
- We request the PA executive to give us feedback on school policies as they are updated.
- We discuss our plans for the year with the PA Executive in terms of the financial support necessary and agree a plan on what can be achieved together. This refers to extra-curricular activities and events or enhancing the facilities in the school. Fundraising ideas are then presented to the BOM for approval.

### **Notification of Absence:**

In the event of a child being absent through illness or any other reason

- A note should be sent to the child's teacher on the return of the child to school.
- A parental declaration form should accompany the child on his/her return to school or emailed in advance of his/her return, stating that to the best of the parent's knowledge, the child has not got an infectious disease and that all medical and public health guidelines have been followed.

If the absence is anticipated to be prolonged, the principal should be notified as soon as possible. Absence notes should be kept by the class teacher until the end of the school year, and filed under the requirements of Data Protection thereafter.