

Scoil Bhríde, Clara, Co. Offaly Communication Policy

Introduction:

Effective communication is a cornerstone of a positive and supportive school environment. At Scoil Bhríde, we are committed to maintaining open, respectful, and transparent communication with all members of our school community, including staff, students, parents, and the wider community. This policy outlines the practices and guidelines for how communication will be handled within the school.

1. Aims of the Communication Policy:

The aim of this policy is to:

- Foster effective, timely, and respectful communication between all members of the school community.
 - Ensure transparency in school operations, decisions, and events.
 - Provide clear and accessible channels for communicating with parents, staff, and students.
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2. Communication with Parents/Guardians:

Parents are key partners in the educational journey of students. To ensure smooth communication, Scoil Bhríde provides several avenues for engagement:

- **Regular Updates:** Parents will receive regular updates on school activities, events, and important notices through a variety of channels including Aladdin, emails, and the school website.
 - **Parent-Teacher Meetings:** Parent-teacher meetings are held annually in **November**. These meetings provide parents with the opportunity to discuss their child's academic progress, behaviour, and other relevant concerns with teachers.
 - **Emergency Communication:** For urgent or important matters, parents should contact the school office directly by phone during school hours (9:20 AM – 3:00 PM). Please note that Aladdin messages should not be used during this time as teachers will not receive messages during teaching hours.
 - **Aladdin School Management System:** Parents can access important information about their child's progress, attendance, and reports through the Aladdin Parent Portal. Parents are also able to update their contact details, such as phone numbers or email addresses, directly in the system to ensure accurate communication.
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3. Communication with Students:

Effective communication with students is essential to support their academic and personal development. The following practices are in place:

- **Clear Instructions:** Teachers will provide clear, age-appropriate instructions regarding lessons, assignments, and school activities.
 - **Feedback:** Teachers will regularly provide feedback on student progress in a constructive manner, both in written form (via journals, reports, etc.) and during face-to-face discussions.
 - **Student Involvement:** Students are encouraged to express their thoughts, concerns, and ideas through structured opportunities such as class discussions, assemblies, and student councils.
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4. Communication with EAL Pupils & Their Parents

Scoil Bhríde is an inclusive school growing in diversity. We welcome students and their parents from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds and are committed to ensuring that all pupils and parents feel supported and understood.

- **Digital Tools:** To help overcome language barriers and promote effective communication, our staff use a range of digital tools when necessary. These may include:
 - Translation Apps (e.g., Google Translate, Microsoft Translator)
 - Google Lens (for translating written materials)
 - Canva (for creating visual supports)
 - **Home Language:** We encourage EAL students and their parents to continue using their home language alongside English, as research shows that maintaining a strong first language supports overall language development.
 - **HSCL Teacher/Translators:** For situations where deeper communication is required, our HSCL Teacher plays a key role in bridging language gaps and providing additional support. When necessary, professional translators may also be arranged to ensure clarity in important conversations.
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5. Communication with Staff:

Scoil Bhríde places great value on fostering a collaborative and supportive working environment for all staff members. The following guidelines are in place:

- **Staff Meetings:** Regular staff meetings will be held to discuss school matters, including updates on curriculum, student progress, and school policies.
- **Internal Communication:** Teachers and staff members will use the school's communication channels, such as Aladdin, Google Suite for Education, emails and shared platforms, to stay updated on school events, meetings, and any changes in

policies or procedures. A weekly Monday message is posted to Aladdin at 9:20. Staff have the opportunity to read this message while pupils are at assembly.

- **Support and Concerns:** Staff members are encouraged to communicate openly with the school leadership team, whether it is regarding curriculum changes, student needs, or personal professional development.
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5. Parent-Teacher Meetings:

Scoil Bhríde holds **annual parent-teacher meetings** each November. These meetings provide an essential opportunity for parents to meet with their child's teachers to discuss academic progress, behaviour, and other aspects of their child's school experience.

- **Booking Parent-Teacher Meetings:**
Parents can book appointments for these meetings through the **Aladdin Parent Portal**. This system will allow parents to select a time slot that works for them. In the case of multiple teachers, parents may book appointments with each teacher individually.
 - **Alternative Meetings:**
While the main parent-teacher meeting takes place in November, additional meetings can be scheduled as needed throughout the year, based on specific concerns or requests from parents or teachers.
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6. Communication Hours (9:20 AM - 3:00 PM):

- **Phone Communication:**
During school hours, between 9:20 AM and 3:00 PM, it is requested that all urgent communications be made by phone to the school office. This ensures that important messages, such as changes in pick-up arrangements or other urgent matters, are relayed promptly and effectively.
 - **Non-Urgent Communication:**
Aladdin messages should not be used during school hours for urgent matters. Teachers will not be able to monitor messages during teaching time, so we request that parents use Aladdin for non-urgent matters which the teacher will receive at 9.20 the next morning.
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7. Updating Contact Details:

Scoil Bhríde encourages parents to keep their contact information up to date to ensure accurate communication.

- **Aladdin Portal:**
Parents can easily update their contact details (e.g., phone numbers, email

addresses) directly in the Aladdin Parent Portal. If parents experience any issues with updating details, the school office is available to assist.

- **Importance of Accurate Details:**

It is crucial that parents update their contact information as soon as any changes occur, ensuring that important communications, including emergency alerts, attendance reports, and school updates, are received without delay.

8. Methods of Communication:

Scoil Bhríde utilises several communication methods to keep all members of the school community informed:

- **Digital Communication:** Aladdin, emails, texts and the school website, are used to keep parents informed about school activities and updates.
 - **Face-to-Face Communication:** In addition to formal meetings, staff are available for one-on-one discussions with parents by appointment.
 - **Telephone Communication:** For urgent matters, parents can contact the school office directly by phone.
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9. Contacting Teachers:

We understand that parents and guardians may wish to speak with teachers regarding their child's education or well-being. To ensure that all concerns are addressed appropriately and that the teacher has sufficient time to meet with you, we ask that parents follow the procedures outlined below.

- **Making an Appointment:**
If you wish to speak to a teacher, please contact the school office to arrange an appointment. You can do this by phone or through the Aladdin Parent Portal. The office staff will assist in scheduling a suitable time for the teacher to meet with you.
- **Teacher Availability:**
Please note that teachers are not always available to take calls during school hours as they are often engaged in teaching or other responsibilities. It is not always possible for a teacher to return a call on the same day, so we kindly ask for your patience when waiting for a response.
- **Leaving a Message:**
If you are unable to reach the teacher directly, please leave a message with the office, and the teacher will get back to you as soon as possible. If your message is urgent, the office will ensure that the teacher is notified promptly.
- **Respecting Teacher Time:**
Teachers are committed to providing the best possible education for your child, and having scheduled meetings helps ensure that they can give each concern the necessary attention. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this regard.

10. Addressing Issues Between Students:

To ensure the safety and well-being of all students and to maintain a respectful and positive environment at Scoil Bhríde, we have clear guidelines regarding how concerns related to conflicts or issues between students should be addressed.

- **Refrain from Approaching Other Children Directly:**
If there is an issue between your child and another child in the school, we ask that you **do not approach** the other child directly. It is important that such matters are handled by the appropriate staff in a way that ensures the safety and respect of all children involved.
- **Contact the Teacher:**
If you are concerned about an issue between your child and another student, please bring the matter to the **class teacher's attention**. Teachers are trained to handle such situations in a fair and appropriate manner, ensuring that all students involved are supported and that any issues are addressed promptly.
- **Respect for School Protocols:**
If a parent approaches another child directly on the school grounds, the school will request that they leave the premises. This policy is in place to protect the students and to maintain a safe and respectful environment for all. In such instances, the **Board of Management** may be consulted, and the situation will be considered under **Child Protection procedures** to ensure the safety and well-being of all students.

By following these guidelines, we can ensure that any issues between students are addressed appropriately and in line with the school's policies, maintaining a safe and supportive environment for everyone.

11. Supervision Times (9:10 AM & 3:00 PM):

To ensure that all students are supervised safely and that teachers are able to focus on their responsibilities, we kindly ask parents and guardians to refrain from approaching teachers at certain times during the school day.

- **Supervision Times (9:10 AM & 3:00 PM):**
Teachers are responsible for supervising students during the morning arrival (from 9:10 AM) and afternoon dismissal (at 3:00 PM). During these times, teachers are focused on ensuring the safety and well-being of all students. Therefore, it is not possible for them to engage in conversations with parents or guardians at these times.
- **Scheduled Appointments:**
If you wish to speak with a teacher, please make an appointment in advance by contacting the school office. You can do this by phone or through the Aladdin Parent Portal. The office staff will arrange a suitable time for you to meet with the teacher.

- **Respecting Teacher's Time:**

We ask that all parents respect these supervision times to help ensure a smooth and safe start and end to the school day. Approaching teachers outside of scheduled times can cause disruptions in their supervision duties.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in maintaining a safe and organised environment for all students.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation:

The implementation of this Communication Policy will be monitored and evaluated regularly to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.

- **Monitoring:**

The policy will be reviewed periodically by the school leadership team in collaboration with staff, parents, and the Board of Management. Feedback from stakeholders will be sought to assess how well the policy is working and whether improvements are necessary.

- **Evaluation:**

The school will evaluate the effectiveness of communication methods and procedures, considering factors such as clarity, timeliness, and accessibility. Adjustments will be made as needed to address any concerns and ensure continuous improvement.

13. Ratification and Approval:

This Communication Policy was ratified by the **Board of Management** of Scoil Bhríde on . It was signed and approved by the **Principal** and **Chairperson** to ensure commitment to its effective implementation.

Signed:

Principal: Sandra Grennan

Chairperson: Mary Ledwith

Date of Ratification: 04/02/2025

A signed copy of this document is available in the office.

Conclusion:

At Scoil Bhríde, we are dedicated to fostering strong, positive communication between all members of our school community. By using a variety of methods and ensuring clarity and transparency, we strive to create an environment where students, parents, and staff can work together effectively to achieve the best outcomes for our students. We encourage all members of the school community to engage with these communication practices to ensure a positive and supportive school experience. Thank you for your cooperation.

