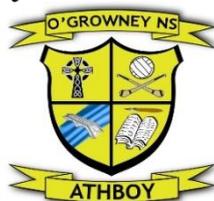


## Policy Document No. 11



### O'Growney National School

## Parental Involvement

The Constitution acknowledges that the primary and natural educator of the child is the family. A parents' role confers on them the right to active participation in the child's education. This includes their right as individuals to be consulted and informed on all aspects of their child's education at school level, and their right as a group to actively participate in the education system at school, regional and national levels.

O'Growney National School welcomes the co-operation and involvement of parents / guardians in many ways and at many levels. Established home-school links endeavour to ensure supportive co-operation between school and home.

Parents / guardians are invited to become involved in various aspects of school life e.g. serving on school bodies, fundraising, policy making, organising or assisting at school events and in the classroom, where necessary.

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 characterised by a shared sense of purpose, mutual respect and a willingness to negotiate.”*

A high level of parental involvement is a feature of our school and requires a commitment from parents.

Parents as a group have a range of talents, abilities and skills that have the potential to enrich and extend the educational opportunities provided for the children. It is our policy to identify parents with specific skills and to invite those parents to share their skills with us at a school and a class level.

Respect for the professional role of the teacher and the statutory responsibilities of the Principal, Patron and the Board of Management is always an important consideration.

### 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.
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## **How to Get Involved**

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 Parents' Association.

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 co-ordinated way.

On-going 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 with swimming, tours and trips, organising the school library, art and P.E. resources, and may also like to make costumes for school concerts.

## **Guidelines for Getting Involved**

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.

The highest standard of behaviour and language is expected.

Punctuality and consistency are crucial

The school ethos must be upheld at all times and it is important to keep in mind that the school is an all-inclusive, co-educational, child centred and democratic. Consequently, respect for all the partners in education - children, teachers and parents - must be upheld at all times.

## **Parents' Association**

The school has an active Parents' Association, which promotes the well being of the school. The activities of the Parents' Association provide an organised forum through which parents can make a positive contribution to their children's education.

The Parents' Association plays an important part in the life of the school and supports the school in every way. All parents are encouraged to become involved in the Parents' Association and to support the activities and projects that are a feature of our school.

The new committee of the Parents' Association is elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Parents' Association, which is held annually in October. The Parents' Association is affiliated to the National Parents Council.

Each year the Annual General Meeting of the Parents' Association elects an officer board.

- The Parents' Association holds regular meetings.
- The Principal and / or teachers representative may attend the meeting.
- The Parents' Association, in consultation with the Principal, organise various fundraising activities throughout the year.

The Parents' Association has a written constitution.

## Parents' Guide

The publication *'Your Child in the Primary School – Tips for Parents – A Parents' Guide'* informs parents / guardians about the school and its general policies. In particular the booklet outlines the Code of behaviour and discipline. This booklet is available on the school website [www.ogrowneyns.ie](http://www.ogrowneyns.ie)

Parents / guardians are reminded of many of the school procedures in newsletters which are circulated regularly to them.

## Parent / Teacher Meetings

Annual Parent /Teacher meetings are held each year in February in accordance with Circular 14/04. Parents / Guardians are given a 5-10 minute appointment for each child in advance.

A school family register, which is updated each year, allows for the efficient allocation of times to families with more than one child in the school. Two afternoons is allocated for the purposes of these meetings, which start at 3.15 p.m. – 5.45 p.m. and continue at 5-10 minute intervals.

Parent / Teacher meeting report sheets are available to teachers who choose to use them as a method of conducting the meetings.

Prior to the meetings, a meeting is held among staff outlining

- the aims of the meetings
- suggestions on how to conduct the meetings
- suggestions with regard to preparing for the meetings.

Where necessary, teachers are available to meet parents by appointment during the school year.

## Review and Monitoring:

This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily accessible to parents on request or on the school website. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron, if requested.

**Policy ratified by the Board of Management on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2016.**