



## Parental Involvement Policy

### Introduction

Kildare Town Educate Together National School is a community where pupils, parents, teachers and SNAs collaborate and work in partnership for our pupils. When parents decide to send their child to our school they are entering into 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." Gillian Pugh, 'Working Towards Partnership in the Early Years;'

In keeping with the principles of multi-denominational education, KTETNS is democratically run. This means that management committees that are democratically elected run it, and the involvement of all parents is sought and encouraged.

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.

Parents as a group have a range of interests, 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 interests and skills and to invite those parents to share these interests and skills with us at a school and a class level.

Parents are invited to become involved in the school in many ways and at many levels, for example:

- Serving on school bodies (Board of Management, Parent's Association etc.)
- Fundraising
- Organising Social events
- In the classroom

### Benefits of Parental Involvement

- Children benefit from greater diversity in the classroom.
- Parental skills may support and complement work already taking place.
- Parental involvement actively supports and encourages the child's learning.
- A wider range of activities can be 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 have an opportunity to become more familiar with 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.



## How to Get Involved

### During School time

- Parents are, first of all, invited to consider their interests and skills and time available, and communicate this information to the class teacher, the principal and/or to the PTA.
- Parents can consult by appointment or in writing with the class teacher or principal about interests and skills 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.
- Ongoing 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, class/whole school projects, organising the school library, school resources. They can share their expertise in curricular areas eg. Sports, Art & Crafts, Science, IT, Music, Drama, etc.

### Outside of School Hours

Parents can become involved in :

**The Board of Management** - The BOM is appointed for a period of four years. The structure for the Board is –

- Two nominees of our patron body, Educate Together
- Two parent nominees, selected from parents in the school (one mother, one father)
- One staff nominee, elected by the teaching staff
- The school Principal

These 6 members unanimously appoint two members from the wider community.

**After School Activities.** These activities take place at 1.10 for Infant children and 2.10 for senior classes when the school day is over. Parents interested in setting up an afterschool activity must contact the school to discuss further.

**Parent's Association.** The PA committee members meet regularly to plan social events, talks for parents and staff, extra curricular enhancing events for pupils and fundraising events. These ideas are agreed by the PA members at a meeting at the beginning of each term. A calendar of events for each term is approved by the Board of Management.

**Volunteering.** Parents are asked from time to time to volunteer to help out with school events and tasks that enhance the day to day running of the school, for example Power Hours and other initiatives where appropriate.

### Guidelines for Parental Involvement in School Activities

- Parents come into the school classroom at the invitation of the principal / teacher by prior arrangement and for an agreed purpose. The class teacher, in consultation with the



principal, holds the final decision on the suitability and viability of all suggestions. Parents who become involved in school events or projects do so in consultation with the principal.

- No activity can take place without prior consultation and agreement. Arrangements for school projects/ activities are agreed in consultation with the principal. Arrangements for classroom projects /activities are agreed with the class teachers.
- The happiness, welfare and safety of our children are our primary concern. All organisational arrangements are discussed and agreed with the teacher in advance. 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 and SNAs 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 group/class, not just the needs of their own child.
- Parents coming into the school /classroom must consult with the principal/teacher before inviting other parents/individuals to participate.
- In the case of an ongoing project that takes place over a number of weeks, parents will meet with the teacher /principal to discuss the activity. It remains the responsibility of the teacher to determine its appropriateness (e.g., is it suitable for the age group, has something similar already been done etc.). The teacher has the final say in the event that he/she feels it is falling short of its original aims and objectives.
- The school ethos must be upheld at all times and it is important to keep in mind that the school is multi-denominational, co-educational, child centred and democratic. Consequently, respect for all the partners in education - children, parents teachers, SNAs, and school staff - must be upheld at all times.
- In the interests of safety toddlers and younger children cannot be accommodated during a classroom activity.
- The highest standard of behaviour and language is expected.
- Punctuality and consistency are crucial.
- In compliance with our Garda Vetting Policy parents will have no unsupervised access to children. In certain cases if a parent is working with the school on a regular basis or for certain activities Garda vetting may be required. Forms are available from the office.

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