



# Coláiste Mhuire, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath

## Communications Policy 2023



Good Communication is essential to maintaining a positive, working and learning environment. Creating an atmosphere of mutual respect in a happy, caring and supportive environment means that people feel included, consulted and informed.

### **Aim**

At Coláiste Mhuire we aim to have clear and effective communication among staff and with students, parents/guardians, members of the Board of Management and the wider school community, inclusive of all educational stakeholders. We strive to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are clear, professional, timely and appropriate.

### **Objectives**

All communications at Coláiste Mhuire should:

- Keep staff, students, parents/guardians and other stakeholders well informed
- Be open, honest, ethical and professional
- Be actioned within a reasonable time frame
- Use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context and audience
- Use jargon free English and be easily understood by all.

### **Promoting Communication**

This policy encourages the use of the most effective communication mechanisms. (see appendix 1 for the range of communications mechanisms used in the school)

### **Staff Communication**

The school encourages best practice in communication at intra-departmental level between year heads, class teachers and subject teachers; and between senior management and all staff.

- Staff meetings will be held once a term.
- Meetings between management and post-holders and heads of departments on a needs basis.
- Department meetings will be held once a term.
- Meetings between the year heads and class teachers are held on a needs basis.
- New teachers are offered an induction course at the start of the year. They are also supplied with an updated staff handbook. NQTs (Newly

Qualified Teachers) are provided with additional support through the Droichead programme.

- Notices are posted in the staffroom and are updated regularly.
- Information will be shared via email and the Colaiste Mhuire VS Ware website.
- A monthly newsletter from the Principal to teachers.

### **Teacher with student**

The quality of the relationship between teachers and students is very important in supporting and promoting teaching and learning in the school. This relationship is based on mutual respect.

The student contract found in the journal is the primary document outlining how to establish and maintain good communications/relationship between students and staff. Page 4 of the student journal must be signed by both the student and the parent/guardian- this is the consent to observance of code of behaviour and sanctions.

Google Classroom is used by each teacher for their classes (non-exam subjects are at the discretion of the teacher). Announcements, messages and various links for teaching resources can be sent using this.

### **Teacher with parent/guardian**

Maintaining clear communication between teachers and parents/guardians is important in achieving the objective of educating our students to the highest standards.

An important aspect of this relationship is the subject teacher, class tutor or year head reporting the student's progress and behaviour to the parent/guardian.

The student journal is important for the exchange of information between teachers and parents/guardians. The student journal is the primary source of contact between teachers and parents/guardians. Other means of communication may be used when necessary e.g letters/phone call/email.

Parent teacher meetings occur once a year per year group (Transition Years are excluded from these).

Meetings occur between teachers and parents/guardians at the request of either party at a time convenient to both parties.

Reports are sent via post three times a year after each sitting of the Term Exams- these exams take place in October/November, January/February and May.

A weekly email is sent by the Year Head to parents/guardians in that specific year group.

### **Special needs assistant**

SNAs assist in the care of students with special educational needs within the school. They play an important role in ensuring that the student understands his school tasks and is enabled to participate in school to the best of his ability. It is the policy of the school to support effective communication between the SNA, student, parents/guardians and teachers, taking into account the particular special needs of the students involved. Students with special educational needs are provided with a communications journal- this acts as a support to the student journal. The SNA informs the parent/guardian of any issues that may have arisen during that particular day.

### **Administration staff**

The administration staff is involved in a wide range of supporting activities for all staff, students and parents/guardians. They assist with the smooth running of the school on a day to day basis. The school reception is open on a daily basis and can be contacted in person, via phone or email.

### **Ancillary staff**

The ancillary staff is responsible for maintaining a safe, orderly and clean environment. Maintaining courteous and professional relationships with the ancillary staff is important for all members of the school community.

### **Student Council**

The Student Council is an important communication mechanism between the students and other school partners and they meet once a week. There is a designated liaison teacher assigned to the student council. Meetings are attended regularly by either the Principal or the Deputy Principal.

### **Parent Council**

The Parents Council supports all works and efforts to foster quality education for all. The parent council meets twice per term. All parents are welcome to attend at any time and an invitation to meetings is shared via email. Meetings are attended by the Principal or the Deputy Principal and a full report is provided.

### **Board of Management**

The Board of Management has the responsibility for running the school and they meet at least twice per term.. The Board includes the Chairperson, four trustees, two parent nominees, two teacher nominees, and the Principal acts as the Secretary. Minutes of the meetings are recorded and held, and an agreed report is shared with all stakeholders.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Agreed forms of communication used in the school**

#### **Verbal**

Interpersonal communication, classroom work, announcements, meetings etc

#### **Written**

- Letters/notes to staff, students, parents/guardians etc
- Notice boards in staff room and in different areas of the school
- Calendar of events in the staff room
- Student Journal
- Newsletters
- Website. The school website offers information on policies, examinations, evening study etc.
- Social media- Facebook, Twitter, Instagram

#### **Meetings**

- Students Council
- Staff meetings
- Parent teacher meetings
- Professional Development staff days
- Subject department meetings
- Parents Council Meetings
- Board of Management meetings
- Management operates with an 'open door' policy to staff and students.

#### **Electronic**

- Intercom on a daily basis
- Text messages
- Email between all users and staff of the school
- Telephone
- School website
- Coláiste Mhuire VS Ware
- Display screens in the GP Area and on various corridors throughout the school



# Coláiste Mhuire

## An Muileann gCearr

### Communications Policy

The Board of Management formally adopted this policy on the 23rd, March 2023.

Signed:

Maira Mahon

**Ms. Moira Mahon**

**Chairperson of the Board of Management**

Date:

23/3/2023.



Iontaobhas Scoileanna Éamairín Rís  
Edmund Rice Schools Trust