



# Swords Educate Together National School

Roll Number 20145 O

## General Information

<b>Name of School:</b>	Swords Educate Together N.S.
<b>Address:</b>	Applewood, Swords, Co. Dublin.
<b>Telephone:</b>	01 8903899
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@swordseducatetogether.ie">info@swordseducatetogether.ie</a>
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.swordseducatetogether.ie">www.swordseducatetogether.ie</a>
<b>Denominational Character:</b>	Equality Based
<b>Patron:</b>	Educate Together

## SCHOOL COMMUNICATION POLICY

### 1. Introduction

Good communication is essential to the smooth running of an efficient school. In recognition of this fact, Swords Educate Together National School has in place a policy on school communication between the various individuals, groups and organisations connected with the school to provide information and guidelines to parents and staff on parent/staff communication including formal and informal meetings.

### 2. Rationale

Swords Educate Together NS staff and Board of Management believe that:

- ***Good communication between home and school is important because with positive and active partnership the child gets the best that primary education can offer.***
- ***Teachers can do a better job where they are supported by and working closely with parents. We know from research that children do better, behave better and are happier at school where parents and teachers work closely together and when parents are able to give their children support at home.***

*National Parents Council document Working Effectively as a Parents Association*

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Principal: Karl Breen

Deputy Principal: Eoghan Beglan

### **3. Swords ETNS staff and Board of Management are committed to:**

- *Developing close effective links with parents*
- *Participating in meetings in a positive and respectful manner, affirming the central and fundamental role of parents as Primary Educators of their children*
- *Maintaining the ethos, values and distinctive character of Swords Educate Together National School*
- *Supporting and facilitating the Parent Teacher Association.*
- *Encouraging and facilitating the participation of parents in school policy and decision making.*

### **4. In Swords ETNS, parents/guardians are encouraged to:**

- *Develop close links with the school*
- *Collaborate with the school in developing the full potential of their children*
- *Share the responsibility of seeing that the school remains true to its ethos, values and distinctive character*
- *Become actively involved in the school and Parents Association*
- *Participate in policy and decision-making processes affecting them.*
- *In all matters pertaining to the wellbeing and education of pupils, only the parents/legal guardians will be consulted by staff. It is essential that all parents and legal guardians are named on the enrolment form.*

### **5. Positive Respectful Behaviour**

Positive and respectful communication is of high importance to our school. This not only extends to the children but to all of the stakeholders e.g. the staff, parents and the wider community: anyone entering our building should feel safe to do so. Adults in the school community have a responsibility to ensure their own behaviour models the types of behaviour expected of children. We expect communication at all times between all stakeholders to be respectful and in line with our Ethos.

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## 6. Keeping Children safe and healthy

- It is vital that the school is immediately informed if family events/situations occur that may cause anxiety to your child and could affect his/her education. **Your first point of contact should always be your child's class teacher.**
- The school should at all times know who is collecting your child. The school secretary should have a list of people and their contact information, those whom have been authorised to collect your child. **Should this change the onus is on you to inform the school secretary of the change.** You can provide this information by email or by dropping in to the school office. Under no circumstances will a child be released to anyone unauthorized/unknown to the school. If, at any time, parents alter the pickup arrangements for their child, the school should be given written authorization by the parent immediately. In an emergency situation, the parent must leave a message on the answering service or speak with the principal/teacher.

## 7. Facilitating open communication and consultation with Parents

### ***Consultation throughout the year including:***

- *Open day for parents of new Junior Infants (in mid June each year)*
- *Parent/teacher meetings one-to-one annually*
- *Meetings with parents whose children have special needs*

### ***Written communication including:***

- *Homework diary (1 st – 6 th class), to inform parents about assigned homework, to confirm that homework has been completed and to relay messages between parents and teachers*
- *Regular newsletters keep parents up-to-date with school events, holidays, decisions taken to change current policies and procedures, or to introduce new ones and other school concerns*
- *School report for each pupil at the end of each school year*
- *Text messages/emails for general reminders (e.g school closures, school events)*
- *Home/School Communication Journal/Diary for SEN children.*

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*All communication sent from the school will be sent to the parent's email address/child's home address as given on the enrolment form, unless otherwise requested by parents*

**Other structures and processes including:**

- *Parents are invited to discuss and contribute to the drafting and review of some school policies. The PTA receive such policies in draft form and provide feedback to the Board of Management. The document once ratified by the Board is made available to all parents via the school website or in hard copy if requested. Any feedback arising is brought to the attention of the Board.*
- *Parents are invited to events throughout the year e.g. Sports Day and school concerts*
- *Involvement of parents in curricular areas when appropriate including Learn Together, Maths/Science Week, Robotics/STEM etc.*

## **8. Procedures for parents to initiate communication with the school**

Communication relating to a child's learning, behaviour or classroom based queries should, in the first instance be directed towards **the class teacher**. If a parent wishes to consult with a teacher, he/she can contact the school secretary to arrange a suitable time. If the issue remains unresolved after this initial communication, the Principal may become involved if necessary. In the unlikely event that a parent has a complaint, Appendix 1 outlines the procedures to be followed.

Classes begin at 8:30 am and finish at 1:10pm (Infants) and 2.10pm (1st -6 th) and this time should not be interrupted. Meetings with the staff at drop off or collection times to discuss a child's concern/progress are discouraged on a number of grounds:

- *Staff cannot adequately supervise his/her class while at the same time speaking to a parent.*
- *It is difficult to be discreet when so many children are standing close by.*
- *It can be embarrassing for a child when his/her parent is talking to staff.*

On some rare occasions a parent may need to speak to a staff member urgently. Sometimes these meetings need to take place without prior notice. The Principal will aim to facilitate such meetings making every effort to ensure that the children in the class do not lose out on any of the

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teaching/learning time. These exceptions should only include instances where there are concerns regarding a child's health, safety or welfare or when there is a family emergency. If parents wish to drop in lunch boxes etc during class time etc. this can be done through the secretary's office so that learning is not disrupted.

## **9. Online and Social Media Communication**

Swords Educate Together National School has a website [www.swordseducatetogether.ie](http://www.swordseducatetogether.ie) and Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/SwordsEducateTogether>. Parents are requested to visit these sites regularly to keep up to date on school matters. The school name or anything that identifies the school should not be used on online or on social media by members of the public including parents without express written permission from the Principal or Board of Management. Swords Educate Together National School will request removal of any online or social media sites that are not approved by the school.

## **10. Communication between Children**

Children communicate with each other formally and informally throughout the school day. It should be noted that communications between children regarding out of school activities i.e. celebration of festivals, birthday parties/outings/trips etc. should take place before or after school time. This would also include the exchange of cards and presents between children. It is expected that communication between children is respectful and positive at all times and in line with our school Ethos and Golden Rules.

## **11. Communication with other Outside Agencies**

There is regular two-way communication with other agencies such as the Health Board, Psychological Services, Social Services, Gardai, Community Employment Scheme and the County Council. Communication of this nature is usually by phone call and/or email.

## **MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY**

The implementation of the policy shall be monitored by the principal, staff and the Board of Management.

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## REVIEWING AND EVALUATING THE POLICY

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated where necessary. On-going review and evaluation will take cognisance of changing information or guidelines, legislation and feedback from parents/guardians, students, school staff and others. The policy will be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of school planning.



Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Board of Management



Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

Date: **24th May 2021**

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## APPENDIX 1:

### Complaints Procedure

Complaints are infrequent but the school would wish that these would be dealt with effectively and fairly. The following is the agreed complaints procedure to be followed in primary schools.

#### Stage 1

1. A parent/guardian who wishes to make a complaint should, firstly email a summary of the complaint to the class teacher with a view to arranging a meeting and resolving the complaint.
2. Where the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the staff member he/she can email the Principal with a view to arranging a meeting and resolving the complaint.
3. If a parent/guardian wishes to make a complaint about another child, once the complaint email has been received, the parents/guardians of the child in question shall be informed and afforded an opportunity to respond.
4. If the complaint is still unresolved, the parent/guardian can raise the matter with the Board of Management with a view to resolving it. (Stage 2)

#### Stage 2

1. If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent/guardian wishes to pursue the matter further, he/she should lodge the complaint in writing with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.
2. The Chairperson will
  - Supply the staff with a copy of the written complaint and;
  - Arrange a meeting with the staff, and where applicable, the Principal with a view to resolving the complaint. Such a meeting should take place within 10 working days of receipt of the written complaint.

#### Stage 3

1. If the complaint is still not resolved, the Chairperson should make a formal report to the Board within 10 working days of the meeting
2. If the Board considers that the complaint is not substantiated, the staff and the complainant should be so informed within 3 days of the Board meeting
3. If the Board considers that the complaint is substantiated or that it warrants further investigation, the following steps should be followed:
  - The staff should be supplied with copies of any written evidence in support of the complaint.

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- He/she should be requested to supply a written response to the complaint to the Board and should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation to the Board and to be accompanied by another person to that meeting.
- The Board may arrange a meeting with the complainant, who may be accompanied by another person to this meeting.

#### **Stage 4**

Following the Board's investigations, the Chairperson shall convey the decision of the Board in writing to the staff and the complainant within 5 working days of the meeting of the Board. The decision of the Board shall be final.

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