



Christian Brothers College Cork

Home-School Communication Policy

3rd Edition

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION POLICY

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This policy replaces and updates the Home-School Communication Policy of 2016.

RATIONALE

A Home-School Communication Policy is necessary in order to provide a clear outline of the procedures in place in CBC for reporting on pupil progress and on how information on school activities, procedures and policies is disseminated to parents. It also provides parents with clear guidelines on how to contact the school should they need to pass on essential information relating to their son or raise any concerns they have as regards his progress.

POLICY CONTENT

1. In CBC a large amount of resources are targeted towards good, immediate and effective communication between the school and home.
2. The first contact between the school and home takes place when teachers from the Intake Committee visit local primary schools. They provide a prospectus, a letter from the Principal and an application form at this point in addition to making a presentation on the school and answering any questions arising from this presentation.
3. The next contact takes place on the College Open Night. At this event the Principal and other key school personnel outline the school's ethos, procedures and achievements and give parents of potential students a clear overview of the school.
4. Once a student has been offered a place in CBC the school initiates contact with the primary schools. A transfer form is sent to the primary teachers in which they can indicate important information such as special educational needs, etc. This enables the student to make the transfer to second-level as seamlessly as possible.
5. Parents are always welcome to make an appointment to see the Principal, Deputy Principal or Year Head. These are also available for contact over the phone.
6. A Parent-Teacher Meeting is held annually for each class. These take place during the first two terms. At these meetings parents have the opportunity to meet with all of their son's teachers and to discuss his progress with them.
7. The Deputy Principals, in particular the Dean of Discipline, the Discipline Committee, and Year Heads may initiate contact with parents in relation to pastoral or disciplinary concerns about a student. They may request a meeting with his parents if this is deemed necessary. A booklet entitled *Philosophy, Pastoral Care*

and Discipline is provided to all First Year parents before the start of the school year.

8. Each year group is allocated a Year Head. The Year Head is responsible for the day to day management of the overall year group. The duties of the Year Head include the following: monitoring timekeeping and punctuality; discipline and uniform. Individual teachers who have problems with a pupil will refer the pupil to the Year Head. While the Year Head's role includes disciplinary matters it is also pastoral. All Year Heads have their own offices and may be telephoned in their offices at designated times usually from 8.45 am – 9.25 am each morning. Parents should ring the main phone number where they will be redirected to the relevant Year Head. Parents are also able to communicate with the Year Head through the College App re absences, permission to leave etc.
9. A message may be left during school hours with the School secretaries requesting an appointment to speak with or meet a Subject or Class Teacher. Each class has a designated Class Teacher. Class Teachers will compile a Progress Report on the student should it be requested by parents.
10. Parents of First Year pupils are invited to an Induction Day to mark the beginning of the school year. During the first month, they are again invited to the school for a meeting of all First Year parents with the Principal, Deputy Principal, First Year Head, First Year Class Teachers, the Chaplain, the Guidance Counsellor and Learning Support Teacher and Head Rugby coach. At this meeting parents are given an opportunity to indicate how their son is settling into the College. They may also raise questions they may have about school procedures at this meeting. A booklet entitled *Parents Guide to CBC* is published every year by the Parents Council. Hard copies are available at the First Year information night and an electronic version can be accessed on the CBC website under 'publications'.
11. Parents of Fourth Year pupils are invited to the Transition Year Information Evening in September and to the Transition Year Open Evening in May of each year. Parents of Third Year students are also invited to the TY Open Evening as it gives them a clear insight into the valuable work done during Transition Year.
12. A meeting is held in the first half of the first term for parents of Sixth Year students. This meeting focuses primarily on career guidance and how to best plan their study during the course of the final year of second level education.
13. A meeting is held in the first half of the first term for parents of Third Year students. This meeting focuses on how to best plan their study during this exam year.
14. Parents of Sixth Year pupils are invited to the Graduation Ceremony at the end of Sixth Year. This takes place in the College Hall.
15. An Awards Night is held in November of each year. Parents and family of all award recipients are invited to the ceremony which takes place in the College Hall.
16. All students take Winter and Summer Examinations in most subjects every year. These are instrumental in developing expertise in sitting examinations and give a clear view of the pupil's performance. Third and Sixth Year students have a

November assessment. This allows ample time for students to receive feedback on their progress before the Pre exams in February.

First, Second, Fifth years and Transition Year students have house exams during the final week before Christmas break, and the last week of May.

Parents will be able to access their son's report on VShare after both of these exams. The reports will include the level the student has sat in the examination, the mark and grade he has achieved and a comment from the Subject Teacher. Where parents are separated or divorced access to the report will be provided to both parents where this is requested.

17. Third and Sixth Year students sit a Pre-Junior and Pre-Leaving Certificate in February of each year. These aim to give the students practice in sitting examinations which cover the whole course, are of the same duration as the state examinations and held in similar conditions. Results can be accessed by parents on VShare.
18. While the College App is the primary means of communicating everyday information between the College and the home, the Homework Journal is also useful in respect to communication. It contains useful information and is updated annually. Where a student has missed twenty days of schooling in a school year, the College is obliged to inform the Education Welfare Board (TUSLA). Parents can use the Homework Journal to monitor attendance.
19. The school has an active Parents Council including two parent representatives from each school year and a liaison Assistant Principal, currently Mr Tom Casey. The Parents Council meets monthly and works in partnership with the College. Parents may communicate with the Parents Council via the dedicated email contact address (parentscouncil@cbccork.ie). The Parents Council shares information in different ways including the Annual General Meeting, publication of an Annual Newsletter distributed to the home of each family, *Parents Guide to CBC* booklet mentioned above and via the College App re ongoing workshops provided for parents and students. For example, Fatherhood and Parenting Programmes and Drug Awareness & Careers Information exhibition.
20. A School Newsletter is produced on an annual basis for all members of the school community. A Transition Year Newsletter is also produced and circulated to parents twice a year.
21. The School Calendar is available to view on the College App at the beginning of the school year. This details the dates of school holidays, mid-terms, parent-teacher meetings and other significant dates in the school year.
22. In the case of students whose first language is not English, the school will, where possible, provide additional English classes. All efforts will be made to relay information concerning these students in as effective a way as possible to their parents.
23. The College has a website and an App which are frequently updated and reviewed. These provide information on the College and also give details of ongoing events.

The CBC App is the primary source of communication between the College and home. It contains Absentee Forms, Permission to Leave Forms and Permission Forms. A written explanation for a student's absence is necessary, a phone call is not sufficient. Where a student has missed twenty days of schooling in a school year, the College is obliged to inform the Education Welfare Board. Teachers may also use the journal to inform parents of homework which has not been presented.

24. The College has an e-mail address (enquire@cbccork.ie) which can also be used.
25. The College actively engages with both parents and students through the Student Council and Parents Council. They are regularly requested to engage in surveys to illicit their views on various issues that arise e.g Participation in Sports Survey.
26. The School is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003. Personal data will be used for the purposes of student enrolment, registration, administration, child welfare and to fulfil any other legal obligations. While the information provided will generally be treated as confidential to the school, from time to time it may be necessary for us to exchange personal data on a confidential basis with other bodies including the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Social Protection, An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive, the National Education Welfare Board. Contact details will also be used to notify parents of school events or activities. We rely on parents / guardians to provide us with accurate and complete information and to update us in relation to any change in the information provided. Parents who wish to update or access their son's personal data should write to the Principal.
27. The College has an Administration of Medication Policy (2019). It is the responsibility of parents to inform the College of any medical issues their son might have and to update these records if any changes occur. This can be done using the College App.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Board of Management

1. To ensure that the policy is developed and evaluated from time to time.
2. To approve the policy.
3. To consider reports from the Principal on the implementation of the policy.

Principal

1. To ensure good quality contact between the school and home.
2. To direct resources towards continued high quality home-school communication.
3. To monitor the implementation of the policy.

Year Heads and Class Teachers

1. To produce progress reports on students if requested by parents.
2. To provide support and guidance, especially for those experiencing difficulty.

Subject Teachers

1. To implement the policy and provide feedback to parents where requested.
2. To inform parents if a pupil is not achieving the grades he / she believes the pupil capable of achieving.

Parents are encouraged

1. To support school policy.
2. To ensure that the Homework Journal is monitored on a regular basis.
3. To inform the school regarding problems / circumstances / medical conditions, etc. i.e. anything that may affect the student's performance, behaviour, etc.
4. To provide us with accurate and complete information and to update us in relation to any change in the information provided.

Students are required

To have the College Homework Journal with them at all times and to maintain this in an appropriate condition.

REVIEW PROCEDURES

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis. The review team will comprise the Principal and Deputy Principals. The views and experiences of teachers, students and parents will be considered in relation to the success criteria.

Ratified by the Board of Management at their meeting on 4 March 2020

