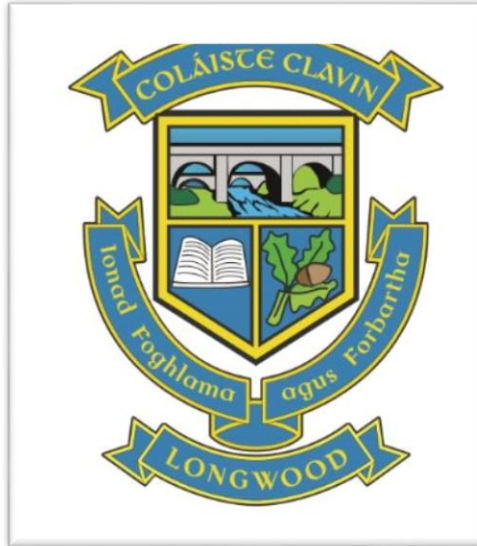


COLÁISTE CLAVIN



COMMUNICATION POLICY 2020-2021

1. Introduction and Objectives

1.1. Mission Statement

- Coláiste Clavin is a supportive and inclusive community with a professional and committed staff providing our students with a holistic education to enable each individual achieve their full potential.

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2. Objective of the Communication Policy

2.1. The Communication Policy of Coláiste Clavin expresses the vision, mission and the values of our school. It outlines the expectations of staff, parents, and students into every facet of communication within the school. The aim of the Policy is to foster and maintain an orderly, harmonious school community where high standards of communication are expected and supported in everyday life.

2.2. The goals include:

- Creation and maintenance of a school climate that encourages, supports and reinforces good communication.
- Creating a positive and safe environment for communication between the school community.
- Allowing students to understand the necessity for respectful and courteous communication.
- Fostering the holistic development of all students within the school by creating relationships that are based on mutual respect among students, staff and parents.

3. What the Communication Policy does

3.1. Coláiste Clavin sets high standards and all members of the school community are expected to behave at all times in ways that show respect for others.

This is a whole school policy for students and staff in the school. It deals with communication within the school and between the school and our partners. To contribute to ensuring inclusivity and co-operation this policy emphasises maintaining and improving the current channels of communication among the users of the school and with the partners in education. It also emphasises our value of respect in all levels of communication throughout our school community.

Relationship to school mission statement

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. This requires that we use of a variety of channels of communication so as to ensure that the relevant people receive the necessary information.

Goal- what is the policy intended to achieve?

The goal of this policy is to contribute to effective communication within the school between students and staff, between staff and management, between staff members, with the Board of Management, with parents and with the local community, so as to maintain a good working, social and personal environment. This will promote efficiency and contribute to achieving the objectives of the school.

Overall approach to effective communication

- All parties will be communicated with through a variety of agreed channels of communication.
- The target audience will be involved actively rather than passively where possible in the communication
- There will be provision for reinforcement (and repetition).
- There will be opportunity for feedback to check that information is being received and understood.

Means of communication

This policy encourages the use of the most effective communications mechanisms, depending on context, while ensuring the rights of staff, students and parents.

- i. The school encourages openness in internal communication and the sharing of relevant and appropriate information through a variety of mechanisms. (see Appendix 1 for the range of communications mechanisms used in the school)
- ii. The school is committed to consultation with staff and students over school matters, in a way that is consistent with effective management.
- iii. The staff recognise the importance of face-to-face communication, in that it can frequently be more effective than written communication
- iv. The school seeks constantly to improve communication and will consult staff and students to seek their views.
- v. All internal communications should be expressed with professionalism and respect.
- vi. All internal communications should be expressed clearly.
- vii. As far as possible staff and/or students are informed of important school issues no later than the media or other external bodies.

Use of email and the web

- Email and the web are frequently used modes of written communication for all staff and students.
- Online teaching and learning are growing in popularity as a means of providing educational opportunity for students.
- Clear guidelines are provided by the College on the use of electronic media. Refer to the Mobile Phone Policy and iPad Policy along with the ICT Acceptable Use Policy for details.
- IT access is made available to the widest possible number of staff and students, and Coláiste Clavin is a digital school where iPads are used daily by students.
- The school App iClassCSM is utilised in order to aide communication with parents and staff, as is twitter @clavincolaiste and the school website www.colaiстеclavin.ie

Best practice is promoted and followed in the production of web pages and social media content on behalf of the school, notably with regard to clarity of structure and currency of information.

Personal and confidential information

- Personal data is protected in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988.
- The privacy of personal communications is preserved in accordance with the Human Rights Act.
- Some categories and items of information regarding both staff and students need to be kept confidential. All staff are bound to take care with the handling and transmission of confidential information, with regard to how and to whom the information is transmitted.
- Internal communications using electronic media must be conducted under the internet usage policy of Coláiste Clavin

Policy in relation to some significant communication channels

(i) Teacher with Teacher:

Recognising its importance, the school encourages best practice in communication at intra-departmental level; between year heads and class teachers and subject teachers; and between senior management and all subject teachers. Also, good personal relationships between staff members are encouraged.

Department meetings will be held at least 3 a year per subject. The minutes are recorded and posted on the school sharepoint site, and are emailed for record purposes to the Principal and Deputy Principal. Meetings between the year heads and class tutors are facilitated regularly.

New teachers are offered an induction course at the start of the year. They are also supplied with an updated staff handbook and are allocated school email account which is used for all official communication between staff, students, parents and management.

Notices are posted in the staffroom in an accessible area for teachers and are updated regularly. Announcements made via emails and text messages, posted in the staffroom and announcements made in the staff room on occasion.

(ii) Administration staff:

The administration staff is involved in a wide range of supporting activities for all staff, students and parents. They assist with the smooth running of the school on a day to day basis.

(iii) Ancillary staff

The ancillary staff are very important in supporting the teachers and students in having a orderly, safe and clean school environment. Maintaining courteous and professional relationships with the ancillary staff is important for all members of the school community.

In particular, teachers are requested to instruct and supervise students leaving the classroom tidy in order to facilitate room cleaning.

(iv) Special Needs Assistants (SNA)

SNAs are recruited to 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/her school tasks and can thus participate to the best of his/her ability in the school.

It is the policy of the school to support effective communication between the SNA, student, parent and teachers, taking into account the particular special educational needs of the students involved.

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

To assist in creating and maintaining a safe and comfortable environment for learning students are required to treat all school staff and students with due respect. Disrespectful, rude or aggressive communication towards any staff member is not permitted and any infringement of that will be addressed through the schools code of behaviour.

- The Student Council, and student mentors play an important role in aiding communication mechanism between the students and other school partners.
- Maintaining clear communication between teachers and parents 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's journal is an important channel of communication between the teachers and parent/s. The ePortal is used as an effective means of communication with teachers and management placing notes regarding attendance, behaviour, performance, recommendations and concerns in order to ensure that parents have immediate and ongoing information about their student available.
- Communication may also occur between teachers and parents/guardians using other means for example phone call, email, letter etc as is considered necessary at the time.
- Teachers report to parents in the end of term reports, at parent teacher meetings and at other times deemed appropriate.
- Meetings occur between teachers and parent/s at the request of either party at a time convenient to both parties. This request is made through phone call or email to the school email account colaisteclavin@lmetb.ie
- Learning good social and interpersonal skills with one's peers is an important part of school life. The school contract outlines the implementation of the policy in relation to this matter.
- Students are required to treat all students with consideration and respect and to have regard for other people's rights and feelings.

The Board of Management meets three times a year. The Board includes two teacher representatives.

The function of the teaching staff representatives is to:

- Represent views of staff at the BOM
- Report back to staff on all matters pertaining to the functioning of the school.

Roles and responsibilities on each of the partners of communication

The following have a responsibility within the school environment:

- Principal and Deputy Principal to all the relevant parties
- All events - Ensuring that all communications re personal and confidential nature are treated accordingly.

- Year Heads and Assistant year heads
- Communicating with all relevant parties in relation to the year group, pastoral, academic and behaviour

- Teachers
- Communication with all relevant parties in relation to class work, homework and behaviour

- Tutors (Class Teacher) Reporting to Year Head
- Communication with class groups in relation to pastoral issues on a weekly basis and parents in regards to any concerns

- Admin Staff
- Conducting and co-ordinating communications between
 - parents and staff and vice versa
 - parents and son/daughter
 - DES and school
 - Outside agencies and the school
 - Suppliers and the school
 - Local community and the school

- Resource Staff (Remedial)

The Resource staff play an important role in mediating between parents and staff particularly in relation to students with special needs.

In relation to students with an SNA the Resource staff have an important role in initiating and supporting the relationship between the student and the SNA. The Resource staff also play an important role in liaising with outside agencies such as Social Workers, NEPS etc.

Career Guidance

Guidance Counsellors play a critical role in communicating with students, staff and external agencies with regard to students' personal well-being and career planning.

Guidance Counsellors have a responsibility to ensure that all communications of a personal and confidential nature are treated accordingly.

- Communicate with year-heads & class-tutors with regard to student welfare and academic progress
- Regular communication with Principal and Deputy Principal
- Communicate with subject teachers in relation to academic progress of students.
- Meet with care-committee weekly.
- Liaise with Programme Co-ordinators – LCVP and TY.
- Communicate with SPHE Co-ordinator.
- Communicate with Resource and Special Education Needs teachers in relation to students with special needs.
- Liaise with outside welfare agencies – Social Workers, Child and Family Centres, Education Welfare Officer etc.
- Liaise with NEPS
- Make referrals to private Counsellors when necessary.
- Communicate with Parents/Guardians – one-to-one meetings.
- Liaise with Employers, Colleges, Training Agencies and Professional Bodies.

Respect and best practice in regard to Communication

- All communication in the school, whether internally between staff and staff, staff and students or staff and parents, will be respectful, professional and courteous. Matters that are confidential will be agreed to remain so, and good record of communication will be maintained within the school.
- Abusive, aggressive or threatening communication will cease immediately, and a written report made to school management. Referral of the matter may be made to the Board of Management, LMETB Board and Authorities as deemed necessary by the Principal.
- All emails between parties, both internally in school, and externally by staff, students and parents will be respectful and courteous. Students and staff will use appropriate language and protocols in all communication. Students and staff should use appropriate greetings. Any breach of this will result in referral of the matter to the Principal, who may close school email accounts if necessary and sanctions if required, will be made in line with the school's Code of Behavior

- Where practicable all parties will communicate during school hours. School Emails should not be sent between 6.00pm and 6.00am unless for exceptional circumstances
- Parents should address any concerns or email correspondence to colaisteclavin@lmetb.ie where it will be directed to relevant staff members
- Staff and students should use LMETB email accounts for all school/work related correspondence
- GDPR guidelines should be adhered to, special care should be taken in ccing emails, or replying to 'all' in emails

