SCOIL FIONNTÁIN NAOFA

Home School Communication Policy

Section1: Introductory Statement

This **Home School Communication Policy** was developed by the **Board of Management of Scoil Fionntáin Naofa, Shanahoe** in July & August 2025. Its purpose is to provide information and guidance to parents/guardians and staff on effective and streamlined home school communication procedures that benefit all stakeholder groups within the school.

Section 2: Rationale for this Home School Communication Policy

The rationale for this policy is the realisation that in order for home school communication to be appropriate, meaningful and effective, it should be regular, focused, directed and follow certain procedures. In order to achieve this aim, the procedures outlined in this policy will be put in place consistently from the beginning of the school year 2025-2026. It is envisaged that regular communication throughout the school year will better serve to motivate children's learning and better inform parents of their children's ongoing progress.

Section 3: Relationship to the Characteristic Ethos

Part of our vision in **Scoil Fionntáin Naofa, Shanahoe** is to foster and create an environment which is characterised by high levels of collaboration, collegiality, co-operation, reflection and discussion, between all partners, including pupils, staff members, Board of Management members, the parent body and the wider school community. Emanating from this, we strive to ensure that a culture of shared ownership and shared responsibility will be in existence within the school community. This in turn enables a shared purpose and vision to be created, realised and 'lived out' for the overall improvement and development of the school as a whole. The school duly recognises the vital role of parents as the primary and natural educators of their children and to this end, parents are regarded as being key partners in the school. Parents are involved in and consulted with regard to various different aspects of school life.

Section 4: Overview of Strategies/Procedures to Support Effective Home School Communication in Scoil Fionntáin Naofa, Shanahoe throughout the school year

1. Induction meeting and visit for parents/guardians of incoming Junior Infants in late May/earlyJune before formal commencement in the school at the beginning of the next school year i.e at the end of August of the same calendar year;
2. Ongoing whole school updates to parents/guardians issued via the Aladdin portal, as either emails or noticeboard messages **N.B Parents need to monitor their emails and the Aladdin Connect app closely on a daily basis. The school/staff cannot take any responsibility for emails or messages that are overlooked;**
3. Whole class updates from teachers via Aladdin as and when necessary/required, as either emails or noticeboard messages **N.B Parents need to monitor their emails**

and the Aladdin Connect app closely on a daily basis. Class teachers cannot take any responsibility for emails or messages that are overlooked; ;

4. Support Plan meetings (and review meetings) or phone calls with parents/guardians of children in mainstream in receipt of SET supports ('*School Support*' & '*School Support Plus*') as per the '*Continuum of Support*' in September, February & June respectively;
5. '*Additional Care Needs Plan*' meetings (and review meetings) or phone calls with parents/guardians of children in mainstream in September, February & June respectively;
6. '*School Support Plus Plan*' meetings and '*Additional Care Needs Plan*' meetings (and/or review meetings) for parents/guardians of children in the Sonas Class in September, February & June respectively;
7. Daily Home School Communication in the Sonas Class i.e through the use of home-school communication books;
8. Parent Teacher Meetings for Senior Infants to 6th Class in November each year and for Junior Infants in January, with a booking system for same in operation on Aladdin Connect;
9. Sharing of posts on the school website www.shanahoens.net with parents/guardians being signposted to view new posts on the website, via Aladdin Messages;
10. Regular posts on the school's social media channels namely Facebook ('*Shanahoe National School*'), Instagram ('*Shanahoe_NS*') and Twitter/X ('*Shanahoe_Ns'*);
11. End of Year Reports for all classes issued via Aladdin one calendar week prior to closure for the Summer holidays, to facilitate parents/guardians to liaise with class teachers, if necessary;

Section 5: Contacting the School Office/School Staff

- Our school secretary's hours are 9a.m to 12 midday from Monday to Friday. She can be contacted on the school landline at (057)87 39715 or by email at shanahoens@gmail.com
- As all of the staff including the principal, have full teaching duties, the school landline will most likely not be answered after 12 midday on any given day. In this regard, a message needs to be left on the answering machine and these messages will be checked at the end of each school day;
- **N.B After 12 midday on any given day from Monday to Friday (inclusive), parents/guardians are advised to email the Principal/Deputy Principal/their child's Class Teacher directly to their dedicated email address which is checked regularly throughout the day by all of the aforementioned parties, as opposed to phoning the school office.**

Section 6: Communication with Teachers (to include Classroom Teachers/Special Class Teacher & SET)

1. If a parent/guardian wishes to discuss a matter or indeed has an issue or concern regarding 'in class' or teaching matters, they are required in the first instance to make contact with their child's class teacher or SET teacher, as the case may be, with a view to discussing/addressing/resolving it. This is in line with the provisions of our '*Parental Complaints Procedure* which can be found on the school website under the '*Parents*' tab.

Link to '*Parental Complaints Procedure*'
https://www.shanahoens.net/parental-complaints-procedure.html

2. If a parent/guardian, wishes to communicate directly with their child's class teacher or SET teacher, they will send them an email to their dedicated school email address to arrange a meeting or phone call. Dedicated email addresses for the Principal/Deputy Principal/Class Teachers/Special Education Teachers and the School Secretary, can be found on the school website www.shanahoens.net under the *'Our School'* tab and then '*School Information/Staff';*
3. If an appointment or a phone call with a teacher is required to discuss an issue/concern, the parent/guardian in question will liaise with the class teacher or SET via the teacher's dedicated email to select a suitable appointment time for this meeting or phone call to take place. Impromptu meetings or phone calls with teachers to discuss issues/concerns cannot be facilitated. Teachers will respond to all requests for meetings/phone calls within two school days of receiving them;
   N.B Staff are not authorised to use their own personal phones to communicate with parents/guardians nor are they authorised to share their personal phone numbers with parents/guardians. If in exceptional circumstances a staff member has to use their own phone to call a parent/guardian (i.e. if offsite on a tour/outing), they will ensure that their number is blocked/withheld in advance of making the phone call;
4. If a meeting is convened with a parent or a phone call organised to discuss a matter/ issue/concern, the teacher in question will complete a *'Meeting Record Sheet'* under the following headings:
   (a)Purpose of Meeting:
   (b)Date:
   (c)Face to Face ___ Telephone Call: ____
   (d) Present at Meeting:
   (e)Points Discussed at the Meeting;
   (f)Outcome of the Meeting/Follow Up.
   - When a face to face meeting is convened, the content of the '*Meeting Record Sheet*' under the headings above will be discussed with the parent/guardian in question. When both parties (teacher and parent/guardian) are in agreement regarding the content in/of the '*Meeting Record Sheet*', it will be countersigned by both parties. The original copy will be given to the parent/guardian there and then at the meeting, and the duplicate copy will be retained by the teacher in question and stored in the child's individual file;
   - When a pre-arranged phone call has taken place to discuss an issue/matter/concern, the content of the '*Meeting Record Sheet'* under the headings above will be discussed with the parent/guardian in question over the phone and recorded by the teacher in question who will then sign it. Both copies (original and duplicate) of the '*Meeting Record Sheet*' will then be sent home by the teacher to the parent/guardian in question for signing. The parent/guardian will be advised to keep the original and to return the signed duplicate to the school on the following school day for filing in their child's individual file;
5. **N.B** Issues/Concerns/Matters regarding children in the school should not in any circumstances be discussed 'off site' or outside of the official channels as outlined above, by teachers/staff and parents/guardians. If any staff members are found to be breaching procedure and protocol in this manner (as set out heretofore in this '*Home*

School Communication Policy'), the issue will be considered a disciplinary matter and will be dealt with by the Board of Management of Scoil Fionntáin Naofa, Shanahoe in line with the relevant disciplinary procedures as set out in Circular 0049/2018: *Disciplinary Procedures for Teachers and Principals in Primary, Voluntary Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools* and Circular 72/2011 *Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures for Special Needs Assistants in Recognised Primary and Post-Primary Schools* from the Department of Education.

Section 7: Home School Communication in the Sonas Special Class

1. A daily home school communication book is completed in the Sonas Class by the class teacher;
2. From the beginning of the school year 2025-2026, a standardised '*Home School Communication Book*' specifically for Scoil Fionntáin Naofa, Shanahoe has been introduced which adopts a '*Two Stars and a Wish*' approach i.e Two things that worked/went well for the child in question on a given day and one thing that they found challenging/difficult. It is a 'page a day' book with sections for the '*Two Stars & a Wish*' approach, as outlined, which will be completed and signed by the class teacher and then a section for a parent/guardian comment which will be signed by the parent/guardian in question that afternoon/evening;
3. **N.B** Given the complex special educational needs in the Sonas Class setting and the fact that the teacher in that classroom has six home school communication books to complete each day, daily home school communication will be limited to the home school communication book only. **Should a parent/guardian of a child in the Sonas Class wish to discuss a matter/issue/concern with the class teacher they need to contact the teacher via their dedicated email address to arrange a meeting or phone call to discuss the matter, as set out in section 6 above.** Similarly, if the parent/guardian of a child in the Sonas Class needs to communicate with the class teacher during the course of the day, they should do so via the teacher's dedicated email address. Similarly, if the class teacher needs to communicate with a parent/guardian during the course of the school day they will do so via email or by telephone (school landline), if necessary.
4. N.B Given the nature of the special needs experienced by the children in the Sonas Class and the behaviours of concern that can come about as a result, injury may be sustained as a result of self-harm or aggression towards or from other children in the class. Where such an injury occurs, a '*Home School Incident Report*' will be completed by the Sonas Class teacher as soon as possible/practicable after the incident. This procedure will come into effect from the beginning of the school year 2025-2026.

   The *'Autism Class Home School Incident Report'* will be completed under the following headings:

   (a) Date and day:
   (b) Child in Question:
   (c) Approximate time of the incident;
   (d) Description of the incident;
   (e) Nature of the injury that occurred as a result of the incident
   (f) Course of action taken by the staff to address the injury;
   (g) Signed by the class teacher;
   (h) Reviewed by the Principal (Deputy Principal in the absence of the Principal)

(i) Date: (By Principal/Deputy Principal in the absence of the Principal);
(j) Signed by the Parent/Guardian;
(k) Dated by Parent/Guardian:

5. As with the '*Meeting Record Sheet'*, as aforementioned, this '*Home School Incident Report'* will be completed on/in a duplicate book by the class teacher who will then sign it. Both copies will then be sent home to the parent/guardian of the child for review and signing. They will be advised to retain one copy and to return the duplicate copy to the school on the following school day.
6. In the case of any form of a head injury, the Sonas class teacher or yard duty teacher (if the head injury occurs on the yard/playground) will contact the parent/guardian of the child in question to outline what happened. It will then be up to the parent/guardian in question to decide if they wish to collect their child early from school.

Section 8: Special Education/Additional Needs Meetings

1. '*Meeting Record Sheets'* will also be completed by the Special Class Teacher and SET when they are having initial Support Plan consultation meetings with parents/guardians at the start of the school year. This will also apply with regard to initial Additional Care Needs Plan consultation meetings at the start of the year. The same protocol (as outlined in section 6 above) for completion of the '*Meeting Record Sheet*' will apply in these cases;
2. *'Meeting Record Sheets'* will also be completed when class teachers are having a meeting with a parent/guardian with a view to starting a child on the '*Classroom Support'* level of the '*Continuum of Support'*. The same protocol (as outlined in section 6 above) for completion of the '*Meeting Record Sheet*' will apply in these cases;
3. For *'Support Plan Review Meetings'* for children on the three stages/levels of the *'Continuum of Support'* namely (a)Classroom Support (b)School Support and (c)School Support Plus, the *'Support Plan Review Record Sheet'* for the specific level in question will be completed by the teacher as follows:
    - **Classroom Support Plan Review Sheet**: To be completed by Class Teacher;
    - **School Support Plan Review Sheet**: To be completed by SET;
    - **School Support Plus Plan Review Sheet:** To be completed by SET or Special Class Teacher (if it is for a child in the Sonas Class);
4. Following '*Support Plan Reviews'* as outlined above, <u>two copies</u> of the '*Support Plan Review Sheet'* will be sent home to parents/guardians for signing with them being directed to retain one and return the other to the school on the following school day for filing in their child's individual file. **N.B** This will apply to children on all levels of the '*Continuum of Support'* namely 1. Classroom Support 2. School Support 3. School Support Plus (for children on School Support Plus in both mainstream and the Sonas Class);
5. Following '*Additional Care Needs Plan Reviews*' for both children in the special class and in mainstream, <u>two copies</u> of the '*Additional Care Needs Plan Review Sheet'* will be sent home to parents/guardians for signing with them being directed to retain one and return the other to the school on the following school day for filing in their child's individual file. The '*Additional Care Needs Plan Review Sheets*' will be completed by the following teachers:

- **Children in the Sonas Class:** To be completed by the Special Class Teacher;
- **Children in mainstream:** To be completed by the SET;

6. **N.B** A record of all SEN meetings for those children on the *'Continuum of Support'* at all three levels of same, will be logged in the digital version of the '*Log of Actions*' in the child's individual Support Plan. Where a '*Meeting Record Sheet*' (as outlined above) has been completed in the case of the initial planning/consultation meeting for Support Plans and *Additional Care Needs Plans* this will be recorded in the relevant section of the *'Log of Actions'* i.e. something to the effect of "see/refer to '*Meeting Record Sheet'* on file".

Section 9: Meeting with the Principal/Deputy Principal

- As with class teachers and SET, the Principal and Deputy Principal (in the absence of the Principal) are available by appointment to have a meeting or a phone call with a parent/guardian to discuss a matter/issue/concern;
- Both the Principal and Deputy Principal should be contacted at their dedicated email address(es) to request and arrange this meeting or phone call;
- The same procedure with regard to completion of the *'Meeting Record Sheet'* following the meeting or phone call, as outlined in section 6 above, will be followed at the end of this meeting or phone call with the Principal/Deputy Principal;

Section 10: Formal Parent Teacher Meetings

1. As outlined heretofore, formal parent teachers meetings for mainstream classes will take place as follows:
   (a) Senior Infants to 6th Class: Mid-November:
   (b) Junior Infants: Mid-January.
2. The Parent Teacher Meetings for Senior Infants to 6th Class will take place over two afternoons in mid-November after school hours (as part of Croke Park Hours for the teaching staff). The dates for these meetings will be communicated to parents early in September to allow them to plan accordingly for same;
3. A booking system for parent teacher meetings will be set up/in operation on Aladdin Connect and parents/guardians will be directed to make bookings by a specified date;
4. Only in very exceptional circumstances, can formal parent teacher meetings be convened outside of these specific days/times;
5. If a parent/guardians do not present at their allocated time without providing a valid reason for non-attendance, parent teacher meetings will not be rearranged/reconvened.

Section 11: Absences from School

As the primary and natural educators of their children, parents/guardians have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school unless there is an unavoidable and legitimate reason for their absence.

1. Parents/guardians must supply written explanations for all absences to the school via Aladdin Connect on the first day of each absence and on everyday thereafter. Absences should be recorded as early as possible on Aladdin Connect. Pre-planned absences i.e appointments, holidays etc. need to be recorded in advance of the absence occurring N.B Please note that if parents don't provide an absence reason, the absence will be logged as '*Unexplained'* on Aladdin by the class teacher;
   Absence reasons must be logged as follows on Aladdin Connect;

1. *Illness;*
2. *Urgent Family Reasons;*
3. *Expelled;*
4. *Suspended;*
5. *Other;*
6. *Transfer to another school;*
7. *Holiday.*

N. B This section on 'Absences' is taken directly from our '*Attendance Strategy*' which can be accessed under the policies tab on the school website www.shanahoens.net

Section 12: Late Arrivals or Early Collections from School

- Parents are requested to log all late arrivals or early collections on the Aladdin Connect App in a very timely manner.

Section 13: Communication re. Accident or Injury

- It is school policy to make direct contact with parents/guardians as soon as possible/practicable after a child sustains any form of a head injury. This communication will be by phone call and the teacher in question will describe the nature of the head injury to the parent/guardian, how the child is presenting following the head injury and the course of action that was taken by the teacher;
- It will then be up to the parent/guardian in question to decide if they wish to collect their child early from school;
- In the event of more minor injuries i.e cuts/scrapes etc. the class teacher will send a brief email to the parent in question outlining the nature of the injury and the course of action taken;
- For more serious injuries such as sprains/potential sprains/breaks etc. that cannot be addressed through standard first aid practices at school level, the class teacher will phone the parent/guardian as soon as possible/practicable.

Section 14: Links to Other Policy Documents

- Parental Complaints Procedure;
- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment;
- Safety, Health and Welfare Statement and Risk
- Data Protection Policy;
- Acceptable Use Policy for ICT;
- Attendance Strategy;

Section 15: Roles and Responsibilities

- The Board of Management of **Scoil Fionntáin Naofa, Shanahoe** formulated this **Home School Communication Policy** and in that respect will be responsible for its ongoing implementation and review;
- The Principal will oversee the daily implementation of the policy on behalf of the Board of Management of **Scoil Fionntáin Naofa, Shanahoe**
- All staff (Principal/Deputy Principal/Class Teachers/SET/Secretary/SNAs/Bus Escorts) of **Scoil Fionntáin Naofa, Shanahoe** are expected to adhere in full to the provisions of this **Home School Communication Policy;**

- All parents/guardians are expected to adhere in full to the provisions of this **Home School Communication Policy;**

Section 16: Success Criteria for this Home School Communication Policy

- All stakeholders (Board of Management, Staff and Parents) are fully aware of the procedures and protocol for effective **Home School Communication** in **Scoil Fionntáin Naofa, Shanahoe**, as outlined in this policy;
- School staff and parents adhere in full to the provisions of this policy to ensure effective, purposeful and streamlined communication in **Scoil Fionntáin Naofa, Shanahoe** which ultimately benefits all of the children attending the school;
- All home school communication in **Scoil Fionntáin Naofa, Shanahoe** is in line with the procedures and protocol as set out in this policy.

Section 17: Ratification, Communication, Review

This **Home School Communication Policy** was ratified by the **Board of Management of Scoil Fionntáin Naofa, Shanahoe** at its meeting on 25 August 2025.

Micheál Delaney

Chairperson of the Board of Management

- It will come into effect from the date of ratification, as outlined above.

- It will be forwarded to parents/guardians via email following ratification and posted under the *'Parents'* tab on the school website www.shanahoens.net. It will be shared with parents/guardians via email at the start of each new school year. It will also be available in hard copy on request from the school office.

- This **Home School Communication Policy** will be reviewed again in **June and July** 2027 or earlier should a review be deemed necessary.

ENDS