**Parental Involvement Policy**

**Introductory Statement**

This policy was drafted as a collaborative exercise between Board of Management,

staff and parents. This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis. The Board of management, teachers and Parent Association are responsible for the implementation of the policy.

**Rationale**

This parental involvement policy was drawn up for a number of reasons:

• Parental involvement benefits pupil learning

• It promotes partnership between parents, teachers and the Board of

Management. This is vital to the health of the school community.

• Education Act 1998; Education Welfare Act 2000.

• For the purpose of School Self Evaluation

• It provides good parent/teacher relationships and a better level of

understanding between home and school (National Parents’ Council).

• It enhances communication, trust and respect between parents and teachers.

**Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school**

Rahealty National School seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential in a

caring environment where the talents of each child are valued. This work can best be

done where there is a high level of openness and co-operation between staff, parents

and pupils.

**Aims**

* Helping parents to develop a positive role in complementing and supporting the

work of the school in educating their children.

* To build a school community committed to supporting all its pupils.
* To establish procedures for the sharing of information in relation to pupil

progress and attainment.

* To enrich and extend the educational opportunities provided for pupils by

accessing the skills and talents of parents

**Guidelines (content of policy)**

These guidelines address parental involvement in the following areas

1. Parent Association

2. Board of Management

3. Vision / Mission and Aims

4. Organisational policies and plans

5. Communication

6. Home/ School/ Community

7. Guest speakers

**1. Parent Association**

The Parent Association is the structure through which parents/guardians in the school

can work together for the best possible education for their children. We at Rahealty have a very strong Parent Association who meet regularly (about every six

weeks). All parents and guardians are welcome to attend these meetings. The

A.G.M. is held each September/October, and the Association is affiliated to the

National Parents Council.

The Parent Association are involved in a wide variety of areas in the school. They organise fundraisers in collaboration with staff, have input in policies, organise and cater for events , help arrange school tours, organise professionals to come and teach the kids their expertise ex: Pottery. The parents association is a vital cog in the well running of our school.

**2. Board of Management**

Section 15 of the Education Act 1998 states that (1) It shall be duty of the board to

manage the school on behalf of the patron and for the benefit of the students and their

parents and to provide or cause to be provided an appropriate education for each

student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

The Board of Management meets, on average, every six weeks during the school year

(September to June) or as required. The Board is comprised of 2 direct nominees of

the Patron; 1 Teachers Nominees; 2 Parent Nominees and 2 Community Nominees.

**3. Vision / Mission and Aims**

Our vision centres on the child and an inclusive environment. As such Parents/Guardians are partners in all aspects of school life and are facilitated to engage in policy making, classroom activities, extracurricular activities and any community events.

**4. Organisational Policies and plans**

We regularly send policies to parents prior to ratification to get their opinion and view. For example a distribution of medicine policy draft would be sent to the parents association prior to ratification to get their knowledge and viewpoint. Any recommendations are always welcome.

**5. Communication**

 **Parent Teacher Meetings:**

These are held every November over two days or alternatively one evening. Parents are given an option of an afternoon or an evening meeting. Dates are set by the staff and management but any parent who is unable to attend will be facilitated at a convenient date.

**School Report**:

There is a yearly school report which is generated through ‘Aladdin’. This is

disseminated to parents through the post in accordance with departmental

guidelines. Every school report is read and signed by the Principal. Reports are

written in collaboration between class and resource teachers.

**Newsletter**: Newsletters (usually two per year) or school website updates

will be issued from the school giving general information on school activities,

parent classes/courses and upcoming events.

**Notes Home**:

Notes are sent home through the homework journal or in the children’s school

bags, unless they are of a serious nature when they are sent by post.

**Homework Journal**:

Homework policy requires that parents monitor and sign their children’s

homework journal daily. The homework journal is also used as a means of

communication between home and school. Teachers inform parents of any issues

as they arise and parents are able to comment or raise an issue to the teacher

through the journal.

**Parent/guardian requested meeting**:

Parents are aware that they should contact the office to arrange a time to meet any

member of staff. They are informed of this through the homework journal and

enrolment policy. Informal meetings of a short duration occur at the beginning

and end of days.

**Teacher requested meetings**: Procedure in relation to these meetings - letter of

notification outlining purpose, time, etc. Procedure for recording decisions agreed.

Arrangement for supervision of class if meeting takes place during school time,

etc.

**Open Days**:

The Schools hold an open day for prospective parents in February each year.

People are notified of this through the Parish Newsletter, Local Newspaper and word of mouth.

 **Notice Board**: Information notice boards are located near the reception. Parents will be notified regularly using these notice boards of activities, parent classes/courses and upcoming events.

**Written Communication from parents/guardians**:

Comments from parents can be given to the class teacher through the homework

journal.

**Fundraising:**

The Parents Association undertake fundraising activities for their own association

and for the school communities. This is done in collaboration with school

management.

**6. Home /School/ Community**

Activities are planned in consultation with the parents council and wider parent community. These activities include: After school activity programme, music and art events, sporting events, the development of a school garden, class trips where necessary, extra –curricular

activities which are held in the school (e.g. pottery classes for children) refer to

APPENDIX 1

**7. Guest speakers**

Guest speakers, including parents and grandparents who have skills and knowledge to

share, may be invited to classrooms with approval from the principal and/or board of management.

They will be accompanied by a teacher during their time in school.

**Implementation Date**

The policy will be implemented from May 2017

**Ratification & Communication**

This policy will be reviewed as necessary.

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 1**

***Guidelines for parental involvement in classroom activities.***

• Parents come into the classroom at the invitation of the class teacher/principal, by

**prior arrangement** and for an agreed purpose. A volunteer form must be signed

for child protection purposes.

• The happiness, welfare and safety of the children are our primary concern. A

child’s personal history and academic achievements are **strictly confidential**: it

is important the parent does not discuss their thoughts on how a pupil might be

doing [academically/behaviourally/socially/emotionally] with any party.

(Uncertainties in this area should be discussed with the class teacher or principal

only.)

• **Respect** for the teachers in their professional capacity is **essential.**

• Discipline/behaviour remains the responsibility of the teacher.

• All work will be supervised by the teacher.

• Parents who participate should be conscious of and sensitive to the needs of the

entire class, not just the needs of their own child.

• Parents coming into the classroom must consult with the principal

before inviting other parents/individuals to participate.

• In the interests of safety, toddlers and younger children cannot be

accommodated during a classroom activity.

• The highest standard of adult behaviour and language is expected.

• Punctuality and consistency are crucial.

• **No fees are payable**. Any previously agreed expenses that a parent wishes to

reclaim must be sanctioned in advance by the Board of Management, and must

be accompanied by receipts.

• In the case of an ongoing project that takes place over a number of weeks,

parents will meet with the teacher/principal to discuss the

activity. It remains the responsibility of the teacher to determine its appropriateness (e.g. is it suitable for the age group; has something similar already been done, etc.)

• The teacher has the final say in the event that he/she feels an activity is falling

short of its original aims and objectives.

• The school ethos must be upheld at all times. Consequently, respect for all the partners in education – children, teachers and parents – **must be upheld at all times.**