Procedures and Practices: Boolavogue National School



#### School Calendar.

The opening date for the new school year is decided by the staff in June and is sent out to parents in late June with booklists and pupil report cards. A finalized calendar is sent out in early September. The initial calendar may be subject to changes.

#### Visitors.

#### Sales reps/visitors are expected to make appointments with the school secretary if seeking to meet with the principal or staff. If they arrive unannounced the principal may ask them to leave a card or a catalogue or to call at a more convenient time. Parents are encouraged to arrange an appointment with staff also as it can allow for meaningful time to address their concerns or suggestions.

#### Arrival and Dismissal of pupils.

Morning

Pupils assemble in the yard between 9.10 and 9.20 a.m. where they are supervised and wait in an orderly manner to be escorted to their classrooms. Pupils are not permitted to be on the school grounds before 9.10. a.m.

Evening

At 3.00 p.m. Pupils are escorted to the front gate. Pupils are forbidden to run out to the gate. Further information is available in our supervision policy.

#### Emergency closures.

Should some exceptional circumstances arise (for example, failure of the heating system or damage caused by vandalism), the Board of Management may close the school even if the school cannot be kept open for 183 days (Rule 60).

**Rule 60** (Exceptional Closings)

“Exceptional cause” may include the following closures:

Inclement weather; Heating breakdown; Death of a teacher in the school; Death of a President/Bishop; Essential repairs\*

\***Rule 52** (1) states: “Works of maintenance should be carried out, as far as possible, during the vacation periods”.

**Rule 62** (Closing of School in the interests of Public Health)

When the closing of a school is deemed necessary in the interests of public health, the written recommendation of the Medical Officer of Health should be obtained by the Chairperson of the Board and forwarded to the Department. The responsibility for closing the school rests with the Board of Management. Circular 28/94 advises management authorities that the Director of Community Care/Medical Officer of Health is the appropriate person to decide on matters in relation to public health. Directors of Community Care/Medical Officers of Health may delegate that authority to the Senior Area Medical Officers or the Area Medical Officers who normally are local General Practitioners.

Procedures need put in place in advance of such closures: Every effort is made to inform all parents as early as possible. If a parent/guardian cannot be contacted there are other emergency contacts on the enrolment form who are contacted.

1. **Supervision duties.**

All teachers carry out supervision duty. The Special Needs Assistant also supervises for both breaks daily.

One teacher is on yard at each break. The Rota (below) is drawn up by the Deputy annually and reviewed as necessary. Teachers also carry out morning supervision from 9.10-9.20am

Further information is available in our supervision policy.

#### Photocopying and copyright.

Every effort is made to photocopy sheets on both sides in a bid to conserve paper. Only texts that have granted permission to photocopy are copied. Parents are expected to contribute towards the cost of photocopying and purchase of Art & Craft materials.

1. **Text book selection.**

Boolavogue National School presently has a policy of moving away from dependence on commercial textbooks and focusing more on lessons based on the school’s curricular policies.

1. **Book rental.**

A book rental scheme is in place in Boolavogue National School, administered by St. Cormac’s Parents Association. This scheme aims to help manage the cost of school books each year and reducing the burden on parents.

1. **Mobile phones.**

**Pupils**

Pupils are forbidden to carry their mobiles on the school premises. If a pupil is found in possession of a mobile phone, it will be confiscated and their parents will be contacted to arrange collection. If necessary, with written permission a child may be permitted to bring a mobile phone to school for use outside of school hours. During the day it will be stored in the teacher’s desk or school office.

**Teachers**

Mindful of the duties and responsibilities assigned to staff in working with children, it is vital that staff be engaged with children at all working times. In this context, access to phones should be limited to urgency only.

Work Calls

* Calls to parents/guardians should be kept as short as possible. Where a lengthy conversation with parents/guardians is required, appointments should be made to meet parents
* Calls to other professionals and organisations should be make in consultation with the Principal and classroom supervision will be arranged where appropriate

Personal Calls

* In general, personal calls should be carried out during break time
* In cases of urgency, a staff member should use discretion in making calls
* Incoming personal calls should be reserved for urgent matters

Mobile Phones

* Mobile phones may be turned on during lunch time
* In case of urgency, staff should use discretion in making calls

**Texting should follow the rules in relation to calls**

1. **Healthy Lunches and Litter Prevention.**

Boolavogue National School operates a healthy eating policy. Pupils are given time to consume lunch in the classroom to reduce littering and encourage students to consume all of their lunch.

1. **Class and Classroom Allocation.**

It is the responsibility of the Principal to allocate classes and classrooms. Staff is asked to nominate their preferred class every year. The Principal makes a decision based on the needs of the pupils and the abilities, experience, personality and preferences of each teacher.

1. **Keeping of class records and Roll Books.**

Boolavogue National School keeps records on file and on computer. For further detail please see our Data Protection, Attendance and Assessment Policies. Class teachers maintain attendance records through our online administration software, Alladin. **The Roll is called by 10.10 daily.** Teachers also keep records of pupil behaviour, punctuality, assessment and homework.

1. **Transfer of essential information/Transition to Second Level**

When a pupil transfers to another school copies of the pupil’s records will be given to the parents/guardians of said pupil for receiving school’s records.

The Education Passport is completed each year and forwarded onto secondary schools once once a request has been made for the information.

Support Teachers, at their discretion and with parental consent, arrange a trip to the receiving Second level school for some SEN pupils where the need arises. Cf Special Needs Policy.

1. **Teacher Absences**

**EPV (Course Days)**

* Teachers must check in advance with the Principal if they wish to avail of EPV days. Notification must be given at the beginning of the school year by teachers that are entitled to such leave and evidence of having attended a course that qualifies for EPV days must be given to the Secretary for filing.
* It is envisaged that only one teacher from Mainstream classes may take a course day, unless exceptional circumstances exist.
* Should there be more applications for course days than this, they will be sanctioned on a ‘first-come, first-served’ basis
* Teachers working in support positions are not included in this number since they do not need to have a class supervised for the day
* Any teacher needing to take more than one course day at a time, must apply in writing to the Board of Management
* In general , it is encouraged that course days should be taken two weeks before the end of the school year. The final month of the school year is punctuated with school tours, sports events etc., and teachers’ efforts to complete their annual programme of work can be hindered by the responsibility of having extra pupils in their classroom at this time of year.
* For all planned absences, as well as making the necessary alternative yard duty arrangements, the teacher should assign ample, appropriate work for the class. Lists of pupils assigned to individual classes should be given to the member of the ISM team responsible for dividing the class.

Learning Support/Resource teachers should advise the relevant class teachers of their planned absence.

**Notifying the school of an unexpected absence**

* Staff member to make phone contact with the Principal at the earliest possible opportunity.
* The Principal should be contacted at the following number in the following order: Mobile, School Phone 053 9136177.
* If the Principal cannot be reached, a message may be left regarding the circumstances of the absence, together with a contact phone number for the staff member to be reached before the end of the school day.
* A substitute teacher may only be employed on the second day of a teacher absence, unless there are two teachers absent on the same day. In this case, a substitute teacher, if one is available, will be employed on behalf of one of the absent teachers
* All class teachers are required to have appropriate work available in advance of such an absence.
* In the event that a substitute teacher is not available or may not be employed on behalf of a class teacher, a member of staff will be responsible for collecting the folder of work and dividing the class in question among other designated classes
* If the absent teacher is on lunchtime supervision duty, the Deputy will make appropriate arrangements to cover for the teacher’s absence
* If a teacher is absent for a longer period than four weeks, the substitute teacher will be asked to cover the teacher’s supervision duties and an application for payment made at the end of the year on the substitute’s behalf
* A medical certificate must be submitted on the fourth day of the sick leave and must cover the full absence.

1. **Staff meetings.**

Boolavogue National School has staff meetings at least once a term. An agenda is circulated prior to each meeting and minutes of each meeting are recorded by the recording secretary. Minutes records are made available to staff. Each staff meeting allocates time to curricular and organisational policy development and/or review.

1. **Reception of Subs/ Student teachers.**

All sub teachers are presented with a “routine information” sheet on arrival in the school. Substitute teachers will cover any supervision duties for the teacher who they are replacing

1. **School Tours**

All pupils at Boolavogue National School go on a school Tour in May/June. There are other excursions throughout the school year.

1. **Extra curricular activities.**

Boolavogue National School has a deep interest in the promotion of extra curricular activities and organises sport and leisure activities for all pupils. This includes hurling, football camogie, girls’ football, swimming, quizzes, scor, music, Drama, gardening, Green Schools and Student Council.

1. **Promotion/Marketing of Commercial Products.**

Boolavogue National School does not generally endorse products of companies.

1. **Participation in Competitions/ Festivals.**

Boolavogue National School endeavours to allow pupils to participate in a wide range of competitions. In the sporting calendar the school participates annually in the Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO) mini-sevens, Rackard League, skills competitions. The school also participates in Art, quiz, poetry competitions as well as the INTO handwriting competition.

1. **Contacts with Other Schools.**

Boolavogue National School shall use its available resources to establish or maintain contacts with other schools and at other appropriate levels throughout the community served by the school. The Principal is designated to act as liaison with other schools. The BOM, Staff, Parents and others are kept up to date on developments via newsletter and meetings.

The following list, though not exhaustive, includes some of the range of reasons for structured contact between schools:

1. Post Primary Schools: special needs, enrolment dates/procedures, placement tests, exchange of information on curriculum, transferring pupil information and visits by other school personnel. (Enniscorthy, Kilmuckridge and Wexford post primaries)
2. Special Schools/Units: shared enrolment, pupil transfer, projects involving pupils from each school, professional development /expert advice.
3. Parish schools: sacraments, GAA matches and other occasions. (Monageer NS)
4. Web based/e-mail projects with Irish or international schools
5. Primary Schools for shared teaching duties (Currently Ballyoughter NS)
6. **Milk and Saving Schemes.**

The Milk Scheme is organised by secretary on a termly basis. The milk is distributed at 12.30 each day. The parents are informed of the cost of the milk at the beginning of each term by newsletter or memo.

The parents are informed of the “Penny Bank” savings scheme by similar means. Pupils make voluntary savings contributions every Friday which collected by St. Cormac’s Parents Association.

1. **Audio Visual (AV) Equipment.**

The Class teacher is responsible for the AV equipment in their respective classrooms. A list of the schools AV equipment may be found in the school’s Information and Technology (IT) policy.

### **Financial Accountability.**

The BOM is responsible for all spending and fundraising of Boolavogue National School and associated bodies. The Treasurer of the BOM delegates responsibility on the principal, as Assistant Treasurer, to make purchases for the school on a regular basis. The principal and staff must furnish receipts for all purchases. Staff must consult with the principal before making any said purchases. To allow for day to day purchases the school keeps a petty cash office account. The Secretary keeps account of all income and spending using a Financial Spreadsheet Software. The account is presented by the Treasurer of the BOM at every meeting. Boolavogue National School’s accounts are certified annually.

1. **Fundraising.**

The school fundraises throughout the year to finance purchasing of school resources e.g. school calendar, Easter chicks, summer draw. The Parents Association also organises various events such as the Christmas Concert and Brains of Boolavogue to support the school financially. Every family is invited to make a contribution of towards photocopying expenses and the purchase of Art & Craft materials.

#### School Security.

Boolavogue National School has a monitored alarmed system and all staff members hold keys to the school. The school Secretary, Cleaner, Chairperson of the BOM and Safety Officer act as key holders. A new entry system was installed in 2015, the secretary’s office must be contacted in order to gain access to the school.

#### Use of common areas.

Boolavogue National School has four classrooms and a Learning Support/Resource Teaching Room. Pupils assemble in the yard shelter on wet mornings.

#### School Transport.

### A private bus company Gray’s bus hire, serves the school.

1. **Car Parking.**

Car parking is available for staff and parents in a car park adjoining the school premises.

1. Communication in building and grounds and transfer of essential information.

The staff of Boolavogue National School appreciates the importance of constant verbal and written communication. A whiteboard is in place in the staffroom for communication, staff meetings are held each term, each member of staff has an email address through the school’s domain name and memos are regularly issued to keep all staff informed of ongoing developments.

1. **DES updates guidelines and circulars.**

All DES circulars are available from the INTO website. All relevant circulars are discussed under “correspondence” at BOM meetings.

Staff is informed of all relevant DES updates and guidelines at staff meetings and occasionally via email.

1. **Use of the School Premises.**

The decision to grant the use of the school premises for purposes other than the education of the pupils rests with the BOM of Boolavogue National School. Nobody should be on the school grounds outside of school time.

1. **Charities.**

Pupils realise that there are many in our world, country and indeed in our neighbourhood who do not share in our relative wealth. To this end, we in Boolavogue National School strives to engage in charitable work each year.

1. **Assemblies.**

Assemblies occur at regular intervals throughout the year in the hall. Assemblies are a means of disseminating information among the staff and pupils, announcing upcoming events, celebrating pupil achievements and creating opportunities for pupil performances.

1. **Timetables**

All teaching staff tries to keep, insofar as is possible, to a prepared timetable. All timetables are appended to the Plean Scoile.

1. **Library**

The primary educators of children are the parents and as such the school shares resources and information with parents in relation to homework, shared reading etc

Each classroom has its own “mini library”. Children can access this library on an informal basis when they have completed their class work or at the teacher’s discretion.

The Wexford County Council mobile library service visits the school fortnightly. First to Sixth classes can avail of age and class appropriate library books which are changed on the next visit.

Each year a book fair is organised in the school by our school secretary.