



St. Mary's Road  
Buncrana,  
Co. Donegal

## St. Mura's National School

Tel. No. 074 9362309

Roll No.16854V

e-mail [stmurasbuncrana@gmail.com](mailto:stmurasbuncrana@gmail.com)

# General Policies

Secretary  
10/20/2009

# GENERAL POLICIES

## Absence

### Teachers

Where a teacher is absent without substitute cover, the children are sent to the other classroom.

Substitute teachers are employed according to the regulations of the DES. Every effort is made to employ qualified teachers in substitute positions.

Circular 18/00 outlines DES arrangements in relation to substitution for brief absences of permanent and temporary teachers.

See <http://www.into.ie/ROI/WorkingConditions/LeaveOfAbsence/BriefAbsences/> for more detail.

In the event of a course day absence, the class teacher leaves work for the children to do during the day. (See Course Days)

In the event of a sudden absence, the person taking the class sets work for the pupils to do.

The prior approval of the Chairperson of the Board of Management must be granted for all absences.

See also Sick Leave and Circular 32/07.

### Children

In line with the Education Welfare Act 2000, every absence by a child must be explained in writing by a parent/guardian.

Written explanations are provided to the class teacher and are retained.

Children are not permitted to leave the school premises during school hours except with the consent of a parent/guardian.

Section 21 of the Education Welfare Act 2000 places an obligation on the school to notify the Education Welfare Officer of absences exceeding 20 school days or more.

In St. Mura's N.S. this is the responsibility of the principal.

See also Attendance.

## Accidents

All reasonable precautions are taken to keep and maintain the school building, school equipment, the playing area and other areas of the school site in such a condition that it does not create a hazard likely to cause injury to pupils, teachers or other persons.

School policy and procedure endeavours to provide effective and adequate supervision of pupils at all times during school hours.

Games or activities which are deemed to place pupils at any risk of injury are not allowed.

All employees are encouraged to think 'Safety First' in all school-based activities.

When an accident does happen, however trivial, the details are recorded in an accident book. The details include date, time, nature and location of the accident, what action was taken afterwards and who witnessed the accident.

In the event of a serious accident, more detailed accounts are recorded.

Where a child is injured in an accident, the parent/guardian is informed immediately. In an emergency situation, where it is not possible to make contact with a parent/guardian, qualified medical treatment should be sought at the earliest opportunity.

### SAMPLE ACCIDENT REPORT FORM

NAME OF CHILD \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS \_\_\_\_\_ TEACHER \_\_\_\_\_

PLACE OF ACCIDENT/INJURY \_\_\_\_\_

DAY, DATE & TIME OF ACCIDENT/INJURY: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF SUPERVISOR PRESENT \_\_\_\_\_

NAMES OF WITNESSES (Teachers/Supervisors/Pupils/Others) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH ACCIDENT/INJURY OCCURRED \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIPTION OF INJURIES \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DETAIL PROCEDURES TAKEN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PERSONS INFORMED \_\_\_\_\_

FINAL OUTCOME \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

GENERAL COMMENT \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PRINCIPAL'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## **Accommodation**

Current accommodation comprises 2 classrooms, learning support/staff room, principal's office. Each classroom has its own toilets and a toilet suitable for disability access has also been provided.

## **Accounts**

School accounts are administered by the Treasurer of the Board of Management.

A financial report is given to the Board of Management at each meeting.

General day-to-day accounting is managed by the Principal teacher, supported by the school secretary.

All receipts for expenditure are retained and filed.

## **Administration**

General administration of the school is carried out by the Principal with the assistance of the 2<sup>nd</sup> teacher.

Office administration is the responsibility of the School Secretary.

## Adult Bullying

The Board of Management of St. Mura's N.S. seeks to provide a supportive work place where all staff are free from all forms of harassment/bullying.

All complaints relating to bullying/harassment will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly and promptly. All parties involved will be treated with respect.

Victimisation as a result of a member of staff raising a complaint will be treated as harassment/bullying and subject to disciplinary action. Similarly, staff will be protected from victimisation or discrimination for assisting in an investigation.

### Definition of harassment/bullying

For the purposes of this policy, the following definition of bullying/harassment is understood:- "Persistent offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or abuse of power, carried out by an individual or a group either directly or indirectly, which makes the victim feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable, or undermines their self-confidence and which may cause them to suffer stress.

Harassment/bullying may take subtle forms or insidious forms, which gradually wears a person down over a period of time. Harassment may take place where there are no witnesses and victims may be afraid to make a complaint because they fear that they may not be believed or that the harasser/bully may themselves be afraid to come forward because they fear that they too may become victims.

*Bullying/harassment is to be understood not necessarily by its intention but by the impact of the behaviour on the recipient.*

### Who is involved?

Individuals or groups of people can be responsible for or be the victims of harassment/bullying. It can occur at any level in the school.

### Forms of bullying

Harassment/bullying can be verbal, gestural or physical bullying, exclusion or extortion. It can be sexual, ageist, sectarian or racial in form or in undertone, or it can offend because of a person's disability. Some examples could be:-

- Using terror tactics, open aggression, threats or staring, shouting abuse or obscenities towards a colleague.
- Subjecting a colleague to unreasonable scrutiny, and being excessively critical about minor things.
- Regularly taking the credit for another person's work but never taking the blame when things go wrong.
- Undermining a person's authority.
- Maliciously removing whole areas of work responsibility from an individual or reducing her/his job to routine tasks which are below her/his skills capabilities.
- Setting individuals impossible objectives, or constantly changing the work requirements and then criticising or reprimanding the individual for not meeting those requirement or objectives.
- Deliberately withholding information which an individual requires in order to do her/his job effectively.
- Ostracising and/or marginalising an individual, dealing with an individual only through a third party, excluding the individual from discussions, decisions, etc.



- Spreading malicious rumours about an individual.
- Blocking another staff member's development.

### Effects of harassment and bullying

#### a) Effects on the victim

It is generally accepted that individuals who are constantly bullied lose their self-confidence, their self esteem and are at an increased risk of suffering stress. Stress is associated with a wide range of ill-health effects. The long term exposure to harassment/bullying can have serious effects on an individual's health. This could include resignation in order to avoid contact with the bully, or absenteeism, which in turn can have a detrimental effect on the person's career. In severe cases it can include nervous breakdown, heart attack or even suicide.

#### b) Effects on the school

Individuals working in a climate of fear and resentment do not perform to their capabilities. The adverse effects of harassment and bullying may result in increased absenteeism, staff turnover, low morale or poor performance levels.

### What you can do if you think you are being harassed or bullied.

If you think you are being harassed/bullied at work you should seek advice from any of the following "Contact people".

#### Contact People

Principal, Teachers' Representative of the Board of Management, INTO Staff Representative, Chairperson of the Board of Management, Nominated Board of Management member.

#### Other specific actions you may take

- Log all incidents of bullying/harassment. Record dates, times and full details of the incident.
- Write down your feelings at the time and what your own response was.
- Speak to the alleged bully and make it clear that his/her behaviour is unacceptable and ask him/her to stop. If you cannot do this verbally, then do so in writing. Keep copies of any correspondence.
- Ascertain if there were any witnesses to the harassment/bullying.
- If possible avoid being alone with the alleged bully.

*The purpose of the policy is to deter unacceptable behaviour and to create an environment where staff can work together free from harassment/bullying.*

#### Procedures

There are two procedures for dealing with cases of alleged harassment/bullying, one *informal* and the other *formal*. Individuals should familiarise themselves with the procedures below. Any of the people who are listed as 'contact people' can advise on both procedures. If the Informal Procedure is followed and the problem persists, the complaint can then be dealt with under the Formal Procedure.

**a) Informal Procedure**

If an incident occurs which offends you, it may be sufficient to explain clearly to the person engaging in such behaviour that it is unacceptable. In circumstances where this is too difficult or too embarrassing to do on your own, you should seek support from one of the 'contact people'.

If you are in any doubt as to whether a type of behaviour is harassment/bullying, do not hesitate to approach one of the "Contact People" for advice, on an informal and confidential basis.

Many incidents of harassment/bullying can be dealt with effectively in an informal way, as often the harasser/bully may be unaware of the affect her/his behaviour is having on others.

**b) Formal Procedure**

Your complaint should be made in writing to the Chairperson of the Board of Management and should detail the nature of the complaint. Your chosen contact person may help you to do so. However, you have the right to initiate a formal complaint without reference to a Contact Person.

The Board of Management will make every effort to ensure confidentiality will be observed by everyone involved while the complaint is being investigated.

There will be an independent investigation by the Board of Management.

The Board will set down a timetable for the completion of the investigation.

The Board may engage personnel outside the school to assist in the fact finding investigation.

The victim will be interviewed as will the alleged harasser.

Separate interviews will be conducted.

Your Contact Person or Staff Representative will provide help and support during this process if you wish.

The investigation will be thorough, impartial and objective. It will be carried out with sensitivity and with due respect for the rights of the complainant and the alleged bully/harasser.

The complainant and the alleged harasser/bully will have the right to be accompanied at all interviews. The alleged harasser/bully will be given full details of the nature of the complaint and will be given the opportunity to respond. Every effort will be made to ensure that meetings are conducted sensitively.

Strict confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigation into the allegation. Where it is necessary to interview witnesses, the importance of confidentiality will be emphasised.

At the completion of the investigation, a report will be prepared, which will include the nature and details of the complaint, the response of the alleged harasser, the result of the investigation and the conclusion. A copy will be sent to both the complainant and the alleged harasser.

If a report concludes that harassment/bullying did take place, the harasser will be subject to a formal interview and the complaint will be treated as a disciplinary matter using the Board of Management's Disciplinary Procedure.

However, in some circumstances the use of the Disciplinary Procedure may not be appropriate. In such cases, the outcome could result in training, counselling and a period of monitoring and appraisal.

If the period of appraisal is not satisfactory, then the Disciplinary Procedure may then be invoked.

There will be a right to appeal a decision using the agreed Appeals Procedure.

*Nothing in the Formal or Informal procedure can override an employee's statutory rights.*

#### **Implementing and Monitoring the Code**

All staff in St. Mura's N.S. have a duty to ensure that their working environment is free from harassment/bullying.

See also Working Together (INTO) [www.into.ie](http://www.into.ie).

## Ancillary Staff

The following ancillary staff are employed in St. Mura's N.S.

**a) Cleaner**

- One cleaner is currently employed in St. Mura's N.S. on a part-time basis (8 hours per week)
- Duties include:
  - general daily/weekly cleaning.
  - heavier cleaning work during the summer holidays.

**b) Secretary**

- One secretary is currently employed in St. Mura's N.S. (8 hours per week)
- Duties include typing, filing, accounts, answering telephone queries, updating records, drafting correspondence, photocopying, etc.

**c) Special Needs Assistants**

- Special Needs Assistants (SNA) are recruited specifically to assist in the care of pupils with special needs. The duties of SNAs are, as sanctioned by the Department of Education And Science, of a non-teaching nature.
- 1 part-time SNA is currently employed in St. Mura's N.S. She assists with the special care needs of 1 pupil.
- Seniority of SNAs is established when they are appointed by the BOM.

## Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment is of central importance in monitoring and enhancing the quality of education at school. Consequently, assessment procedures are an integral part of the School Plan for this school. The following outlines the assessment procedures in operation in St. Mura's N.S.

Non-standardised, school-based tests are administered as follows:

- a) 1<sup>st</sup> Class to 6<sup>th</sup> Class are tested twice during the school year i.e. Christmas and end of year; and
- b) Infants are tested at the end of the school year only.

The following curricular areas are tested:

- a) Junior and Senior Infants are tested in Maths and Work Recognition in English.
- b) 1<sup>st</sup> Class are tested in English and Maths.
- c) 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class are tested in Maths, English, Irish, SESE, SPHE ...

All school tests are based on the content of the schemes of work which teachers use as the basis for their curriculum programme.

Results are filed and passed on with the class each year.

Parents are advised of the results of their own children's tests.

Teacher observation and judgement are the main tools used in the assessment of pupil progress in areas of the curriculum that do not lend themselves easily to quantitative marking systems such as music, art, PE, drama.

Teacher vigilance and observation are aspects of assessment in the affective, social and emotional development of all children.

Informal testing is carried out by teachers in their own classrooms on an on-going basis. The methods used include teacher observation, teacher designed tasks and tests, pupil projects and portfolios, self-assessment by pupils, samples of pupils' work, general record keeping. All of these can inform the pupil's annual report.

Learning Support and/or Resource teachers use the following diagnostic tests:

Written reports should be:

- clear, concise and factual
- presented to the Principal for signing and a copy of the report entered into the pupil's file.
- signed and dated

### Reporting to Outside Agencies on Individual Pupils

All requests should be notified to the Principal. When the report is complete, it should be sent to the Principal for review and additional comment before being forwarded to the outside agency. A copy should be kept in the school for record purposes. Parental permission to report will be sought as appropriate.

See separate heading on Standardised Testing.

## Attendance

The aims of the attendance policy in St. Mura's N.S. are to:

- encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually.
- share the promotion of school attendance amongst all in the school community.
- inform the school community of its role and responsibility as outlined in the Education Welfare Act.
- identify pupils who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems.
- ensure that the school has procedures in place to promote attendance/participation.
- develop, subject to available resources, links between the school and the families of children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems.
- identify and remove, insofar as is practicable, obstacles to school attendance.

The school will ensure that:

- The importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school.
- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.
- Pupil attendance is recorded daily.
- Parents or guardians are contacted when reasons for absences are unknown or have not been communicated.
- Pupil attendance and lateness is monitored.
- School attendance statistics are reported as appropriate to:
  - The Education Welfare Board.
  - The Education Welfare Officer.
  - The Board of Management.

## Punctuality

School is open from 9 a.m. and children are required to be in their classrooms not later than 9.20 a.m. All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. The school will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. The Principal is obliged under the Education Welfare Act, to report children who are persistently late, to the Education Welfare Board.

## Guidance for Parents

Section [(21) (9)] of the Act states that: "a pupil's absence can only be authorised by the Principal when the child is involved in activities organised by the school or in which the school is involved". The school principal cannot authorise a child's absence for holidays during school time. However, it is essential that parents inform the school of such arrangements.

Reasons for pupils' absences must be communicated in writing, by parents/guardians to the school and will be retained by the school. To facilitate this, such communications should not be in the homework diary, but on a separate page or sheet of paper. If a child is absent, when the child returns to school s/he should give/send a written note to the class teacher which contains the child's name, the dates of absence and the reason for absence. These notes will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school. The school will contact parents when a written explanation for the child's absence is not received by the school.

### Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by:

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.
- Notifying the school if their children cannot attend for any reason.
- Working with the school and education welfare service to resolve any attendance problems.
- Making sure their children understand that parents support and approve of school attendance.
- Discussing planned absences with the school.
- Refraining, if at all possible, from taking holidays during school time.
- Showing an interest in their children's school day and their children's homework.
- Encouraging them to participate in school activities.
- Praising and encouraging their children's achievements.
- Instilling in their children, a positive self-concept and a positive sense of self-worth.
- Informing the school in writing of the reasons for absence from school.
- Ensuring, insofar as is possible, that children's appointments (with dentists etc.) are arranged for times outside of school hours.
- Contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters.
- Notifying, in writing, the school if their child/children, particularly children in junior classes, are to be collected by someone not known to the teacher.

### Pupils

- Pupils have the clear responsibility to attend school regularly and punctually.
- Pupils should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence.
- Pupils are responsible for promptly passing on absence notes from parents to their class teacher.
- Pupils are responsible for passing school correspondence to their parents, on the specified day.

### A strategy for promoting good school attendance

The Board of Management is committed to providing a positive school atmosphere which is conducive to promoting good school attendance. In this regard:

- The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, is flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
- The school will promote development of good self-concept and self-worth in the children.
- Support for pupils, who have special education needs, are in place in accordance with Department of Education and Science guidelines.
- Internal communication procedures are in place to inform teachers of the special needs of pupils.
- A special reward system will be introduced for promoting good attendance at school.
- The assistance of the Education Welfare Officer will be utilised.
- The attendance rates of pupils will be monitored by the class teacher in the first instance, and the class teacher will notify the Principal of any concerns regarding the attendance of any child.
- Pupils with a poor attendance record will, insofar as is practicable, be supported in an effort to improve their attendance.

### School Principal

The School Principal will:

- Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations.
- Inform the Education Welfare Officer:



- If a pupil is not attending school regularly.
- When a pupil has been absent for 20 or more days during the course of a school year.
- If a pupil has been suspended for a period of six or more days.
- When a pupils' name is removed from the school register.
- Inform parents of a decision to contact the Education Welfare Officer of concerns regarding a pupil.
- Insofar as is practicable, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff.

### **Class Teacher**

The class teacher will:

- Maintain the school roll-book in accordance with procedure.
- Keep a record of explained and unexplained absences.
- Contact parents in instances where absences are not explained in writing.
- Promote a reward system for pupils with exceptional attendance.
- Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- Inform the Principal of concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.

### **Record/Communication**

Subject to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer to another primary school will be passed to the Principal of the school, by post, as soon as we receive written notification of transfer.

Attendance, behaviour and academic records of pupils transferring to a second level school will be sent to the school, if requested, once enrolment has been confirmed.

## Audio Visual Equipment

- The purchase, maintenance and distribution of audio-visual equipment is the responsibility of the principal.
- Every classroom is equipped with a TV, video, DVD player and CD player.
- Video tapes are stored in the store room. A catalogue of all school video tapes is available.
- There is a data projector available for general use.
- It is school policy not to show video material that is deemed by the licensing authority to be unsuitable for the age of the children in the school.

## Behaviour

The aims of the Code of Behaviour of St. Mura's are:

- To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
- To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
- To develop pupils' self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.

## Implementation

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Rules will be kept to a minimum, emphasise positive behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

### General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour

1. Pupils are expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable.
2. Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
3. Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.
4. Pupils are expected to obey a teacher's instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
5. Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing, stating the reason for absence.

## Bullying

Bullying is repeated verbal, psychological or physical aggression by an individual or group against others. The most common forms of bullying are aggressive physical contact, name-calling, intimidation, extortion, isolation and taunting. Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to cooperate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

### Affirming Positive Behaviour

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions. The Discipline for learning model is used throughout the school.

### Strategies/Incentives

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment on a child's exercise book.
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group.

- Individual class merit awards, points awards or award stamps.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Written or verbal communication with parent.

### **Discouraging Misbehaviour**

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development. These may include:

- Reasoning with pupil.
- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class.
- Prescribing extra work.
- Loss of privileges.
- Detention during break.
- Communication with parents.
- Referral to Principal.
- Principal communicating with parents.
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health/safety.

### **Suspension/Expulsion**

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal will review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Expulsions may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

### **Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)**

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupil's or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

### **School Rules**

School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly.

### **Before/After School**

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school do not accept responsibility for pupils before 9.00a.m. or after the official closing time of 2.00p.m. (infants), 3.00p.m. (other classes) except where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management. Pupils involved in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with school behaviour policy during these times.

### **Board of Management's Responsibilities**

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- Ratify the code.

### **Principal's Responsibilities**

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Arrange for review of the Code, as required.

### **Teachers' Responsibilities**

Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.

- Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- Recognise and affirm good work.
- Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

### **Pupils' Responsibilities**

- Attend school regularly and punctually.

- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow school and class rules.

### **Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities**

Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property

- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect their child's progress/behaviour.

## Appendix to Behaviour Policy

### *Sample Rules*

#### *Classroom*

Instructions given by the teacher must be obeyed. (Do what the teacher says.)

Pupils should work to the best of their ability and present exercises neatly. (Work hard.)

Pupils must stay seated in their places unless told otherwise. This is particularly important when teacher is called from the room. (Sit in your place.)

Pupils should keep unhelpful hands, feet, objects and comments to themselves. (Don't interrupt the teacher or interfere with other pupils or their property.)

#### *Rules around the School (Samples)*

Pupils must walk quietly in corridors, going to and from the yard, church, library, etc.

Pupils must follow the "two bell" instructions, stay in designated area, and may leave the yard only with a teacher's permission.

Pupils must play safely at all times. Anti-social, dangerous or hurtful behaviour is forbidden, (e.g. wrestling, headlocks, jockey backs, bullying intimidation, teasing, jeering, fighting, spitting, kicking, charging in groups, bad language, exclusion).

Pupils should walk quietly to gates at going home time.

## Board of Management

The Board of Management is appointed for a period of four years.

Structure of the Board.

A 'Core Board' consisting of:

- two nominees of the patron
- two parents elected from parents of students attending the school
- one staff member elected by the school staff
- the school Principal, appointed *ex officio*.

Core Board must then unanimously appoint:

- two members from the wider community.

The current Board of Management, appointed in 2007 is as follows:

Canon Judi McGaffin

John McCarter

Kelly Gallagher

Debbie Lamberton

Gary McLaughlin

Emma Morrow

Carole McAuley



## Book Fair

- A School book fair is held once a year, usually in the month of March.
- Purchase of books is optional
- The purposes of the book fair are:
  - to generate enthusiasm, provoke discussion and foster a love of reading within the school and home environment.
  - to provide a wide variety of up to date reading material for purchase or browsing by parents/guardians and children.
  - to continue the process of restocking classroom libraries for use by children and staff.
- Books from Scholastic are displayed in the school. Each class gets an opportunity to visit the fair on a rota basis and parents are invited to come along and help their children choose a book if they so wish.
- Alternatively, parents and children can browse through the books during the open afternoon and open night which is held on one of the days during the week of the book fair.
- The school receives 60% of purchases at the fair as book commission from Scholastic.
- All arrangements for, and organisation of the book fair are co-ordinated by the principal.

## **Bullying**

This policy is based on the DES guidelines “Countering Bullying Behaviour”. It aims to produce a safe and caring environment in which all children can develop to their full potential.

The school does not tolerate or condone bullying of any form or at any level of the school community. The Board of Management is committed to ensuring that all members of the school community – pupils, staff and parents are enabled to act effectively to deal with bullying. This policy guides action and organisation within the school for preventing and responding to bullying.

### **Definition of Bullying**

Bullying may be defined as repeated acts of aggression; which may be verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others.

Bullying may take many different forms such as physical aggression, damage to property, theft of property, extortion, intimidation, abusive telephone calls, isolation, name calling, writing notes, emailing or texting. As a form of aggressive behaviour it is usually hurtful and deliberate. It is persistent over time and makes it difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

It is important not to confuse bullying with isolated incidents of aggressive or antisocial behaviour, which must not be condoned. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing it becomes bullying.

All members of the school community have a role to play in the prevention of bullying.

### **Board of Management**

The Board of Management is responsible for ensuring that all members of the school community are enabled to deal effectively with bullying. The Board is committed to providing time and resources for the implementation of the policy. The Board will ensure that proper supervisory and monitoring measures are in place to prevent bullying and to deal with incidents appropriately as they arise.

### **School Staff**

The school staff will foster an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance. Children’s self-esteem will be developed through celebrating individual differences, achievements, acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and manners and providing opportunities for success throughout the curriculum and school. Teachers will help pupils to develop empathy by discussing feelings and trying to put themselves in the place of others. Relationships with pupils will be based on mutual respect and trust so that pupils will have confidence in the school staff. Teachers will be vigilant, respond sensitively and caringly to pupils who disclose incidence of bullying and investigate all disclosed incidents of bullying.

Teachers will discuss the school’s anti-bullying policy with the pupils and use behavioural management strategies which focus on problem solving and enable pupils to take an active role in finding a solution to problems.

The formal curriculum of the school will also be used to educate all pupils against bullying behaviour. Anti-bullying issues may be raised through the school religion programme, the Social Personal and Health Education programme, the Stay Safe Programme, the Arts and/or circle time.

## **Pupils**

Pupils are expected to be tolerant and to have mutual respect for each other. Pupils should report incidents of bullying to their parents and teachers.

## **Parents**

Encourage positive behaviour and discourage negative behaviour both at home and at school. Encourage children to solve difficulties without resorting to aggression. Encourage children to share, to be kind, to be caring and to be understanding towards others. Watch out for signs and symptoms that your child is being bullied or is bullying others. Don't dismiss your instincts as being wrong. Discuss the school's anti-bullying policy with her/him. Support the school in its efforts to prevent and treat bullying.

## **Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Bullying Incidents**

Bullying incidents should be reported to the class teacher and/or the supervising teacher for investigation. This reporting may be done by the pupil, parent or a friend. All reported incidents which are serious or are part of a pattern of behaviour will be noted, investigated and treated as circumstances require. Serious cases of bullying will be reported to the Principal. Reports of bullying behaviour on the way to and from school will be investigated by the Principal.

## **Responding to Bullying**

Support will be provided for anyone who is bullied by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about their experience with their teacher or other teacher, along with continuing support when they feel they may need it. A victim will be assured that the school community will help them and put monitoring procedures in place to safeguard them.

The school will inform parents/guardians of what has happened and of the measures being taken to help them, encourage them to report further incidences if they occur.

Help and support will be sought for a bully. This will include speaking with them to discover why they became involved, informing their parents/guardians and continuing to work with them in order to modify their behaviour. The school code of behaviour applies to bullying. The bully will be helped to see things from the victim's point of view. Bullies may be excluded from the playground at lunch break or subject to special monitoring procedures and, if bullying continues, they may be suspended in accordance with procedure.

Any pupil who is involved in retaliation against a pupil who reports bullying will be subject to the school code of discipline. Incidents of bullying will be used as opportunities for re-enforcing the anti-bullying policy of the school. Follow up meetings may be arranged to assess progress and/or restore relationships.

## Carol Service

- A Christmas Carol Service is organised for all classes in St. Mura's N.S. during the last school week of December.
- The Carol Service takes place in Christ Church, Buncrana.
- Children are encouraged to dress up as relevant characters from the Nativity Story/Bible Story.
- A teacher from each of the class groupings co-ordinates and conducts the Carol Service.
- The Principal may address the congregation.
- Children are taught a set of Christmas carols for the service and all are encouraged to sing.

## Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures

St. Mura's N.S. aims to provide its pupils with the highest standards of care and protection, in order to promote each child's well-being and safeguard him/her from harm. The Board of Management of St. Mura's has adopted the "Children First" Guidelines of the Department of Health & Children 1999 and the "Child Protection" Procedures of the Department of Education & Science 2001.

### Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

The Principal teacher is the DLP. Should circumstances warrant it, the 2<sup>nd</sup> teacher will act as DLP. The DLP has specific responsibility for child protection and will represent the school in all dealings with Health Boards, An Garda Síochána and other parties in connection with allegations of abuse. All matters pertaining to the processing or investigation of child abuse must be processed through the DLP.

### Guidelines for Recognition of Child Abuse

All signs and symptoms must be examined in the total context of the child's situation and family circumstances. There are commonly three stages in the identification of child abuse. These are:

- Considering the possibility
- Looking for signs of abuse
- Recording of information

### Handling Disclosures from Children

When information is offered in confidence, staff will act with sensitivity in responding to the disclosure. The member of staff will need to reassure the child, and retain his/her trust, while explaining the need for action and the possible consequences, which will necessarily involve other adults being informed. It is important to tell the child that everything possible will be done to protect and support him/her but not to make promises that cannot be kept e.g. promising not to tell anyone else. The welfare of the child is regarded as the first and paramount consideration. In so far as is practicable, due consideration will be given, having regard to age and understanding, to the wishes of the child.

The following advice is offered to school personnel to whom a child makes a disclosure of abuse:

- Remain calm.
- Listen to the child with sensitivity and openness.
- Take all disclosures seriously.
- Do not ask leading questions or make suggestions to the child.
- Offer reassurance but do not make promises.
- Do not stop a child recalling significant events.
- Do not over react.
- Explain that further help may have to be sought.
- Record the discussion accurately and retain the record of dates, times, names, locations, context and factual details of conversation.

This information should then be passed onto the DLP and a record will be retained in the school.

If the reporting person or member of the school staff and the DLP is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the suspicion/allegation, the procedures for reporting as laid out in "Children First" – Section 4.4 pg 38 (Appendix 10) will be adhered to.

The Chairman of the Board of Management will be informed before the DLP makes contact with the relevant authorities, unless the situation demands that more immediate action be taken for the safety of the child, in which case the Chairman may be informed after the report has been submitted.

Any professional who suspects child abuse should inform parents/carers if a report is to be submitted to the Health Board or An Garda Síochána unless doing so is likely to endanger the child.

In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk, and a duty social worker is unavailable, An Garda Síochána should be contacted. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending Health Board intervention.

### **Allegations Against School Employees**

The most important consideration for the Chairman, Board of Management or the DLP is the safety and protection of the child. However, employees also have a right to protection against claims which are false or malicious.

As employers, the Board of Management should always seek legal advice as the circumstances can vary from one case to another.

There are two procedures to be followed:

- i. The Reporting Procedure.
- ii. The Procedure for dealing with the Employee.

The DLP has responsibility for reporting the matter to the Health Board. The Chairman, Board of Management, has responsibility, acting in consultation with his Board, for addressing the employment issues. If the allegation is against the DLP, the Chairman of the Board of Management will assume the responsibility for reporting the matter to the Health Board.

### **Reporting**

When an allegation of abuse is made against a school employee, the DLP should immediately act in accordance with the procedures outlined in "Child Protection".

A written statement of the allegation should be sought from the person/agency making the report. The DLP should always inform the Chairman of the Board of Management.

School employees, other than the DLP who receive allegations against another school employee, should immediately report the matter to the DLP. School employees who form suspicions regarding conduct of another school employee should consult with the DLP. The procedures outlined will then be followed.

The chairman of the Board and DLP should make the employee aware privately

- a) That an allegation has been made against him/her
- b) The nature of the allegation
- c) Whether or not the Health Board or Gardaí has been/will be/must be/should be informed.

The employee should be given a copy of the written allegation and any other relevant documentation. The employee should be requested to respond to the allegation in writing to the Board of Management within a specified period and told that this may be passed to the Gardaí, Health Board and legal advisers.

The priority in all cases is that no child be exposed to unnecessary risk. Therefore, as a matter of urgency, the Chairman should take any necessary protective measures. These measures should be proportionate

to the level of risk and should not unreasonably penalise the employee in any way unless to protect the child.

If the nature of the allegations warrant immediate action in the Chairman's opinion, the Board of Management should be convened to consider the matter. The Board will consider feedback if any has been received from the Health Board, Gardaí or relevant source. This may result in the Board of Management directing that the employee absent him/herself from the school forthwith while the matter is being investigated (Administrative Leave). When the Board of Management is unsure as to whether this should occur, advice should be sought from the Gardaí and/or Child Care Manager of the Health Board and the legal advisers to the Board of Management.

### **Administrative Leave**

Should the Board of Management direct that the employee absent him/herself as above, such absence of the employee would be regarded as administrative leave of absence with pay and not suspension and would not imply any degree of guilt. The DES should be immediately informed.

### **Board of Management**

The Chairman should inform the Board of Management of all the details and remind the members of their serious responsibility to maintain strict confidentiality on all matters relating to the issue and the principles of due process and natural justice.

A copy of *Children First*, the Department of Health & Children's national guidelines for the protection and welfare of children and *Child Protection Guidelines for Primary Schools* which issued from the Department of Education and Science can be found in the Principal's Office.

See also Circular 46/07.

## **Class Allocation**

Class allocation is the responsibility of the Principal teacher. The allocation of teaching duties within the schools is a matter for the principal. Circular 16/73 states that the principal teacher “should arrange a fair distribution of teaching duties among the staff, taking into account the needs of the pupils and the abilities, experience, personality and preference of each teacher. S/he should utilise the services of staff with special qualifications or aptitudes in an organising or advisory capacity”.

## **Class Size**

Teachers are appointed to St. Mura’s N.S. in accordance with the DES staffing schedule in place at the time. The most recent circular states that the staffing schedule is structured to ensure that all primary schools will operate to an average mainstream class size of 28 pupils

It is the policy in St. Mura’s N.S., in accordance with the terms of circulars from the D.E.S., to ensure that the number of pupils in any class is kept as low as possible, taking all relevant contextual factors into account (e.g. classroom accommodation, fluctuating enrolment). In particular, the Principal will try to ensure that there is an equitable distribution of pupils in mainstream classes and that the differential between the largest and smallest classes is kept to a minimum.

## **Classroom Organisation**

Each teacher is responsible for the organisation of his/her classroom.



## Communication

### a) In-School

The following tools of communication are in place in St. Mura's N.S.

- Staff meetings
- Notes/memo distributed with roll book
- Announcements/discussion in staff room at break times
- Staff Room notice board
- School related events

### b) Home-School

The following measures endeavour to ensure co-operation between school and home

- School newsletters
- Homework notebook and notes to parents on specific issues
- Parent-Teacher Meetings
- End of year reports
- Appointment procedure for meeting parents where necessary
- Phone calls where necessary
- Religious ceremonies
- School concerts, socials, prizegivings etc.
- Sports Day
- Book Fair
- Informal meetings with parents before/after school.

## Complaints

The Board of Management of St. Mura's N.S. has adopted the INTO/CPSMA Complaints Procedure which provide a mechanism for dealing fairly with parental complaints against a teacher.

### Introduction

Only those complaints about teachers which are written and signed by parents/guardians of pupils may be investigated formally by the Board of Management, except where those complaints are deemed by the Board to be:

- i. on matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education;
- ii. frivolous or vexatious complaints and complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in a school;
- iii. complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure.

Unwritten complaints not in the above categories may be processed informally as set out in Stage 1 of this procedure.

### Stage 1

- 1.1 A parent/guardian who wishes to make a complaint should, unless there are local arrangements to the contrary, approach the class teacher with a view to resolving the complaint.
- 1.2 Where the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher she/he should approach the principal teacher with a view to resolving it.
- 1.3 If the complaint is still unresolved the parent/guardian should raise the matter with the chairman of the Board of Management with a view to resolving it.

### Stage 2

- 2.1 If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent/guardian wishes to pursue the matter further she/he should lodge the complaint in writing with the chairman of the Board of Management.
- 2.2 The chairman should bring the precise nature of the written complaint to the notice of the teacher and seek to resolve the matter between the parties within 5 days of receipt of the written complaint.

### Stage 3

3.1 If the complaint is not resolved informally, the chairman should, subject to the general authorisation of the Board and except in those cases where the chairman deems the particular authorisation of the Board to be required:

- a) supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint; *and*
- b) arrange a meeting with the teacher and, where applicable, the principal teacher with a view to resolving the complaint.

Such a meeting should take place within 10 days of receipt of the written complaint.

### Stage 4

- 4.1 If the complaint is still not resolved the chairman should make a formal report to the board within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.2(b)
- 4.2 If the board considers that the complaint is not substantiated the teacher and the complainant should be so informed within 3 days of the board meeting.

4.3 If the board considers that the complaint is substantiated or that it warrants further investigation it should proceed as follows:

- a) The teacher should be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage;
- b) The teacher should be supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint;
- c) The teacher should be requested to supply a written statement to the board in response to the complaint;
- d) The teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of case to the board. The teacher would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting;
- e) The meeting of the Board of Management referred to in (d) and (e) will take place within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.1 (b).

#### Stage 5

5.1 When the board has completed its investigation, the chairman should convey the decision of the board in writing to the teacher and the complainant within 5 days of the meeting of the board.

5.2 The decision of the board shall be final.

In this policy 'days' means school days.

Important note: Revised procedures for processing complaints by Parents will be prescribed for all schools under Section 28 of the Education Act 1998. At present these have not been prescribed and therefore these procedures are the only agreed procedures.

## Course Days

When a teacher has, during the school year, attended a course approved by DES, personal leave may be taken subject to Board of Management approval, on the basis of three days for attendance at a five day course.

The following points outline school policy on the arrangements for course days:

- Maximum of 1 teacher on course day on any one day, except in exceptional circumstances.
- Make official application to Principal for course day. Fill in 'Course Day Planner' chart on wall of Staff Room. This is for staff information purposes only.
- Aim for one course day per term.
- Take one course day at a time, except in exceptional circumstances.
- Avoid taking course days in June, except where necessary.
- Where possible, give one week's notice of intention to take a course day.
- If cancelling a course day, inform Principal and make relevant changes on 'Course Day Planner' chart in Staff Room. Give one week's notice where possible.
- Inform the children the day before taking a Course Day.
- When leaving work for your class, use text books, parallel readers, workbooks, copies etc. Avoid photocopying where possible. Children should be familiar with all work.

## **Department of Education & Science**

All DES publications including circulars are filed in the Principal's Office and are available to staff for examination.

All Department of Education Circulars are available on the INTO website [www.into.ie](http://www.into.ie) or on the Department of Education And Science website [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie).

## **Education Act 1998**

A copy of the Education Act is available in the Principal's Office for inspection by all interested parties.

The full text of the Education Act 1998 is available on [www.into.ie](http://www.into.ie) or on <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1998/en/act/pub/0051/index.html>

A Question and Answer Guide to the Education Act, prepared by the INTO is available in the Principal's Office.

## **Education Welfare Act 2000**

The Education Welfare Act came into operation in July 2002.

The Education Welfare Act is about promoting school attendance and also focuses on the issue of participation in school, specifically in terms of matters such as suspension and expulsion.

A national statutory board, the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) is responsible for implementing the various provisions of the Act.

The Act places an obligation on the school to notify the Education Welfare Office of absences of children exceeding 20 school days or more.

A copy of the Education Welfare Act 2000 is available in the Principal's Office for inspection by all interested parties.

## **Emergency Telephone Numbers**

Parents/guardians are required to supply the school with relevant home phone numbers and an emergency telephone contact number. These numbers are recorded on the child's registration form/school data base.

Emergency telephone numbers/registration forms are kept at the front of classroom roll books.

Parents will be reminded regularly to supply details of any changes to these numbers at the earliest possible opportunity.

## Enrolment

Application for enrolment to Junior Infant classes usually takes place in the month of March with parents/guardians making application for their children in the school.

## Enrolment Policy

### General Introduction

The enrolment policy of St. Mura's N.S. is set out in accordance with the provision of the Education Act (1998). The Board of Management trusts that by so doing parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. The Chairman of the Board of Management, Canon Sam Barton, The Rectory, Buncrana and the School Principal, Rosemary Dunne, St. Mura's N.S., 074 9362309, will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from this policy.

St. Mura's N.S. is a Church of Ireland National School for boys and girls under the patronage of the Bishop of Derry & Raphoe, and is situated in Buncrana. The school aims to promote the full and harmonious development of all pupils: cognitive, intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and other people and promotes a Christian philosophy of life.

There are 2 mainstream class teachers which includes a teaching principal and also a shared part-time learning support teacher. The school caters for pupils from approximately age 4 years to 12 years in classes from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

The school depends on grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education & Science. The enrolment policy will have regard to available funding and resources.

The school is subject to The Education Act (1998), The Education Welfare Act (2000), The Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (2004) and all relevant equality legislation. St. Mura's N.S. follows the curricular programmes laid down by the Department of Education and Science which may be amended from time to time in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998).

Within the context and parameters of Department of Education and Science regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act (1998) and the funding resources available the enrolment policy of St. Mura's N.S. supports the principles of:

- *inclusiveness*, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational need;
- *equality* of access and participation in the school;
- *parental choice* in relation to enrolment and
- *respect for the diversity* of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

Therefore, no child will be refused access to St. Mura's N.S. for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, accent, language, traveller status, asylum seeker/refugee status, religious or political beliefs or values, family or social circumstances.

## **Procedures**

As a general principle and in so far as practicable having regard to the enrolment policy of St. Mura's N.S. children will be enrolled on application provided there is space available.

Pupils will, as a rule, only be admitted to Junior Infant Classes during the month of September. Children may be admitted to a Junior Infant Class during the school year provided they are transferring from another school.

## **Application Procedure**

The Board of Management has determined that the school principal will accept written applications for enrolment in Junior Infants up to 31<sup>st</sup> March of the school year prior to enrolment. Each January and February the school principal will communicate generally to the school community through school newsletters, local newspapers and any other appropriate media that applications are being accepted up to 31<sup>st</sup> March.

## **Provision of Key Information by Parents**

Applications will only be accepted on the basis of a fully completed School Enrolment Form. This form must be accompanied by a copy of Birth Certificate/Baptismal Certificate if appropriate. Evidence of residency may be requested in the form of a household bill etc.

## **Decision Making**

The Board of Management makes decisions relating to enrolment in accordance with school policy. In the event that applications exceed/is expected to exceed the number of spaces available the Board of Management has determined that priority in the allocation of places will be given to the following groups of children:

- Church of Ireland/Presbyterian children of the parish
- Brothers and sisters of children already enrolled in the school
- Church of Ireland/Presbyterian children who live outside the parish but who do not have a Church of Ireland school in their parish
- Non-Church of Ireland/Presbyterian children who live within the parish
- Church of Ireland/Presbyterian children who live outside the parish but who have a Church of Ireland/Presbyterian school in their parish
- Non-Church of Ireland/Presbyterian children who are not residents of the parish with priority given to children whose home address is closest to the school (as measured by a straight line on an O.S. map)

Places will be allocated thereafter according to the priorities above and confirmed by the Board of Management at its next meeting. If necessary, the additional criteria of the age of the pupils may be taken into account and priority given to older children. In the event of a child not obtaining a place on the grounds of age priority will be given in the subsequent school year.

In the application of these criteria the Board of Management reserves the right to make exceptions to provide for the enrolment of children of staff members, children of ethnic minorities, traveller children, children of refugees, asylum seekers, etc.

Parents will be notified of the decision of the Board of Management within 21 days of its meeting at which enrolment decisions are made.



In determining enrolment the Board of Management shall take into account Department of Education & Science regulations regarding staffing provisions, maximum class size and maximum class average and any other relevant requirements concerning accommodation such as physical space, the educational needs and rights of children already enrolled, multi-grade classes and the presence of children with special educational/behavioural needs.

The Board of Management shall at all times have regard for the Health, Safety and Welfare of pupils, and teachers and others who work in the school.

The Board of Management is bound by the Department of Education and Science's Rules for National Schools which provides that pupils only be enrolled from the ages of 4 years of age upwards although compulsory attendance does not apply until the age of 6 years.

### **Appeals Procedure**

Parents, who are dissatisfied with an enrolment decision, may appeal to the Board of Management. It must be addressed, in writing, to the Chairman of the Board, stating the grounds for the appeal, and lodged within ten days of receiving the refusal. Parents, if unhappy with the result of this appeal, may appeal to the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 of the Education Act on the official form provided by the Department. This appeal must be lodged within 42 days of the refusal from the school to enrol.

### **Enrolment of pupils with special needs**

In relation to applications for the enrolment of children with special needs the Board of Management may request a copy of any relevant medical or psychological reports as are available. If such a report is not available it is open to the Board to request that the child be assessed prior to enrolment. The purpose of the assessment is to establish the educational needs of the child relevant to his disability/special needs and to profile the support services required.

Following receipt of such a report the Board of Management shall assess how St. Mura's N.S. can meet the needs specified in the report. If further resources are required the Board of Management will, prior to enrolment, request the Department of Education and Science to provide the required resources. These may include any combination of the following: visiting teacher service, resource teacher for special needs, special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport or other services.

The school principal will meet with the parents/guardians of the child to discuss the child's needs and the suitability and capability of St. Mura's N.S. to meet those needs. If necessary, a full case conference may be called which may include parents, principal, class teacher, learning support teacher, psychologist, medical personnel.

### **Transfer of Pupils**

Pupils may transfer to the school at any time subject to school policy, available space, the provisions of the Education Welfare Act (2000) and in some cases the approval of the Department of Education and Science.

### **Code of Behaviour**

Children enrolled in St. Mura's N.S. are required to co-operate with the school's Code of Behaviour and other policies on curriculum, organisation and management. Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring that their children co-operate with these policies in an age appropriate way.

This policy was approved by the Board of Management at its meeting of \_\_\_\_\_ and shall be reviewed at least annually by the Board of Management and changed where deemed necessary and appropriate.

**ST. MURA'S N.S.**  
**ENROLMENT FORM**

NAME OF CHILD \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_ PPSN No \_\_\_\_\_

FATHER'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

MOTHER'S NAME AND MAIDEN SURNAME \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS AND DISTANCE FROM SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

TEL. NO HOME \_\_\_\_\_ WORK \_\_\_\_\_ MOBILE \_\_\_\_\_

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION \_\_\_\_\_

DATE & PLACE OF BAPTISM \_\_\_\_\_

PARENTS' OCCUPATIONS \_\_\_\_\_

ANY PREVIOUS SCHOOL ATTENDED \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS \_\_\_\_\_

ARRANGEMENTS TO BE MADE IF THE CHILD IS ILL IN SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF FAMILY DOCTOR \_\_\_\_\_

DO YOU GIVE PERMISSION TO TAKE THE CHILD STRAIGHT TO HOSPITAL/DOCTOR IN CASE OF SERIOUS ILLNESS OR ACCIDENT \_\_\_\_\_

HAS YOUR CHILD ATTENDED A SPEECH THERAPIST \_\_\_\_\_

DOES ANY LEGAL ORDER UNDER FAMILY LAW EXIST THAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

\_\_\_\_\_

MEDICAL CARD NO \_\_\_\_\_ OR S.W. ENTITLEMENT \_\_\_\_\_

HAVE YOU ATTACHED (A) BIRTH CERT \_\_\_\_\_ (B) BAPTISMAL CERT \_\_\_\_\_

List any problems the child may have in relation to health (allergies, epilepsy, asthma, sight, hearing, speech, fainting etc.) toilet training, inability to copy with buttons, laces, etc. The school should be made aware of any court order which affects the child's welfare and also the name of any person into whose custody the child should not be given

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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The school is asked to provide name, address, date of birth details to the HSE for health screening (eye tests, hearing tests, etc.) Do you agree to the school passing on these details? Yes/No

\_\_\_\_\_

We have received and read a copy of the School Handbook with Rules and Procedures. We will co-operate with the staff and support the ethos of the school.

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian

## **Equality, Access and Participation**

St. Mura's N.S. seeks to promote the principles of justice and equality for all members of the school community.

The enrolment criteria of St. Mura's N.S. will not differentiate between pupils from different social strata. There is an equal right of access under the school's Enrolment Policy.

It is school policy to provide a gender balanced range of resources in curricular areas – textbooks, ancillary materials, software, sports equipment etc.

Every opportunity will be taken to promote gender equality through the discreet and hidden curriculum.

Teachers will ensure that the language used in the school to mediate the curriculum is gender balanced and will avail of opportunities to raise pupils' awareness of unconsciously held attitudes.

There will be no differentiation between the sexes in the allocation of classes.

Where multi-classes have to be created this shall be done solely on the basis of seniority except in very special circumstances.

As agreed with the B.O.M. and parents all pupils in St. Mura's N.S. will wear a school uniform.

Nothing may appear in an advertisement which would indicate a preference for one gender over another.

No questions will be asked at interview which could be interpreted as discrimination on gender grounds.

This school is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

## **Ethos of St. Mura's N.S.**

The 'ethos' of St. Mura's N.S. encompasses collective attitudes, beliefs, core values, traditions, aspirations and goals. These are reflected in the actual practices which are carried out in the school on a daily, weekly and yearly basis. While it is impossible to outline all aspects of the school 'ethos', the following characteristics are experienced and promoted as essential elements in the establishment of a supportive and positive 'ethos'.

- In St. Mura's N.S., where the ethos is that of a Christian, Church of Ireland school, religious instruction, in accordance with the doctrine and tradition of the Church of Ireland, is part of the education given to children who belong to that church.
- Prayer is a feature of the school day.
- The school aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the pupil, including his/her relationship with God, with other people and with the environment.
- The Principal and the teaching staff aim at maintaining high professional standards and creating a safe and happy environment.
- A spirit of mutual respect is promoted within the school community. Pupils are drawn by example and teaching to appreciate and respect people of different religious affiliations and of different nationalities.
- Close contact is maintained between school and home. Parents/guardians and teachers support one another and collaborate with one another in leading the children to the fullness of their potential at the different stages.

Ancillary staff in the school are highly esteemed and respected. It is recognised that their work makes a valued contribution to the process of education.

## Exemption from the Study of Irish

- Department of Education Circular 12/96 outlines the details and procedures to be followed in the event of a child seeking exemption from the study of Irish. A copy of the Circular is available on [www.into.ie](http://www.into.ie) or [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie).
- Parents/guardians are required to make a written application to the principal of the school which specifies the grounds on which the exemption is being sought.
- If the exemption is being sought due to a specific learning disability, intellectual or sensory impairment, the parent/guardian is required to furnish reports from a qualified psychologist and/or appropriate medical specialist.
- Should the school authorities decide to grant the exemption, this is conveyed to the parent/guardian by way of a written certificate signed by the Principal.
- A copy of this exemption certificate is then forwarded to the Department of Education and Science within one week of the granting of the exemption.
- The child may be requested to participate in oral Irish language activities.

## Fieldtrips

Fieldtrips, or out of school excursions, which relate to a particular curricular area are encouraged.

These trips can range from simple walks around the school to organised trips to relevant places of interest.

The Principal must be informed in advance if it is proposed that a class leave the school grounds.

Teachers are encouraged to plan and prepare children in advance of the trip and to carry out some follow up work in the classroom following the fieldtrip.

Teachers should ensure adequate supervision at all times. Where necessary, an extra teacher or parent/guardian should accompany the class on the trip.

Children should be appropriately dressed for the fieldtrip e.g. raingear, suitable footwear etc.

No child is to be refused participation in any proposed activity because of family inability to pay.

*See also First Aid.*

## Fire Safety

All teachers are responsible for making children in their class aware of procedure in the event of a fire.

A school fire officer, appointed by the staff, co-ordinates school policy and procedures with regard to fire safety. The school fire officer is Roberta Morrow.

Three practice fire drills take place each year, one in each term.

Evacuation procedure is as follows:

- a) On hearing alarm, each teacher collects his/her roll books and takes their class to the designated exit and assembly point outside. Toilets must be checked before leaving room and door closed.
- b) Children attending Learning Support exit with the teacher they are working with but re-join their class at assembly point outside for roll call.
- c) When the class teacher calls the roll, he/she then makes a report to the principal.



## **First Aid**

A fully equipped First Aid Box is available in the staffroom.

A First Aid box is available for taking on sports activities, fieldtrips, etc. Teacher must ensure they have First Aid requirements on all school tours or outings. In the case of an injury/accident which requires further attention, the parent/guardian is informed. If they cannot be contacted, the child is taken for medical attention where necessary.

The details of all accidents are recorded in the Accident Report Book.

## Gender Equality

- One of the basic tenets of primary education is that equal opportunities should be provided for all children in the delivery of all aspects of the primary school curriculum.
- St. Mura's N.S. is a co-educational equal opportunities school, where all pupils are helped to achieve their potential regardless of their gender.
- All members of the teaching staff of St. Mura's N.S. are urged to provide equal opportunities in the curriculum for boys and girls, e.g. organising games, playing games, selecting songs, organising art and craft activities, choosing computer tasks, etc.
- Children's class texts and teaching materials are examined in advance to ensure an equal educational experience for both boys and girls.
- Teachers endeavour at all times to ensure that their classroom interaction practices are balanced and inclusive for both girls and boys.
- Assessment and evaluation practices are inclusive of all children regardless of gender.
- Allocation of jobs in the classroom and around the school includes both boys and girls.
- The language of the school, both spoken and written, is bias-free and gender fair.

## Head Lice

Where head lice are detected in any classroom, a standard note is circulated to parents/guardians of all children in the class informing them of the problem.

The note outlines procedures to be followed in an effort to prevent the spread of the head lice and ultimately to eradicate the problem.

## Home-School Links

### General

The following measures endeavour to develop and ensure dynamic and supportive links between school and home:

- a) Regular newsletters
- b) Homework notebook and notes to parents
- c) Parent-Teacher meetings
- d) End of Year reports
- e) Appointment procedure for meeting parents where necessary
- f) Phoned calls where necessary
- g) Religious ceremonies
- h) Meetings involving parents
- i) School concerts, socials, prizegivings, etc.
- j) Sports day
- k) Book Fair
- l) Parents' Association activities

### Policy

It is recognised that good home-school links contribute greatly to the quality of education received by children. To establish these links an open, cordial relationships exists between parents and teachers which recognises and values the respective roles of each.

### Aims

1. To facilitate a communicative relationship between teachers and parents to the benefit of our pupils.
2. To establish procedure for the sharing of information in relation to pupils' progress.
3. To create a school environment where parents and guardians feel welcome and free to discuss their child's progress with the teachers.
4. To encourage all parents to become involved with the Parents' Association.

### Communication

Formal Parent-Teacher meetings will be held every year where each parent may have a private meeting with their child's teacher(s). The meetings will be held during the hours laid down by the DES. Where parents are unable to attend at this time, they are encouraged to make an alternative appointment with the teacher at a mutually suitable time.

The school also encourages periodical informal meetings between teachers and parents which may be initiated by either party as they see fit.

Parents will be encouraged to be familiar with the work being done by their child in school and to be aware of what homework is being done. A formal school report will be issued at the end of each school year.

Information on school activities will be communicated to parents through periodic letters and bulletins during the year.

In accordance with the Educational Welfare Act (2000), explanatory notes on pupil absences must be sent to the class teacher after each absence.

At the teacher's discretion, and subject to the principal's approval, parents may be invited to use their expertise in a particular area to assist the teacher in some classroom-based or extra-curricular activities.

### **Parents' Association**

The school recognises the benefits of an active parents' association. The association may communicate with the school through meetings between the chairperson/secretary and the principal, particularly after a Parents' Association general or committee meeting. Parents' Association support in the provision of resources, financial support and assistance in extra-curricular areas is welcome and appreciated.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

It is important that all partners in the school community be aware of the parameters of their own and others' respective roles and responsibilities. The school ethos must be upheld at all times. The ethos is defined by the patron. The school is Christian, child-centred, non-discriminatory and democratic. Consequently, respect for the partners – children, parents, staff and management – must be shown at all times.

## Homework

Homework is given on Monday, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays but not on Fridays with certain exceptions:

- If homework has been neglected during the week.
- In senior classes some project work is undertaken at weekends.

Occasionally, at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given 'homework off' as a treat or as acknowledgement of some special occasion.

- Parents/guardians of children from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> are required to sign homework notebook each night.
- Parents/guardians are requested to inform the teacher if for any reason a child cannot complete their homework.
- Guideline target times for homework are as follows:
  - Junior/Senior Infants: No written homework. Children are required to read and do some word recognition work.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Classes: 20-30 minutes
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Classes: 30-45 minutes
  - 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Classes: 45-60 minutes

Homework fosters independence, self-reliance, self-esteem, co-operation and responsibility and lifelong learning. It is an essential part of primary education as it re-enforces what children learn in school. It provides a link between teacher and parent and encourages parental involvement in their child's education.

In general, homework is meant to be achievable by a child working on their own to the best of their ability. It is normally prepared by the teacher in class. It can be used to practise what is done in school or can be designed to challenge children's ability and provide opportunities for creativity.

### Homework Content

Usually, homework contains a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and written tasks. This balance is not always possible and can vary considerably from day to day. However, it should be noted that homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work.

Homework will regularly contain reading, spellings, tables, written work, pieces to be 'learned by heart', drawing/colouring, collecting information/items and finishing work started in class. Children often feel that reading and 'learning by heart' is not real homework. Parents can play an important role in listening to reading and items to be learned, ensuring this work is done well.

### Pupils should:

- Enter homework accurately in homework diary.
- Ensure they take home relevant books and copies.
- Complete homework assignments to the best of their ability.
- Present written work neatly.

### Parents/Guardians should:

- Encourage a positive attitude towards homework in all subjects from an early age.
- Encourage children to work independently as far as possible. Resist over-helping.
- Encourage children to organise themselves for homework. Have all books and materials to hand. The pupil should have the Homework Journal open to tick off work as it is completed.

- Agree a suitable time for doing homework, taking into account age, the need for playtime, relaxation and family time.
- Provide a quiet place, suitable work surface, free from distractions, interruptions and T. V.
- Encourage good presentation and neatness within a reasonable time.
- Sign the homework diary (1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Classes) checking that all homework is complete.
- Check that the child has all necessary books, homework journal, copies, pencils, mathematical equipment, dictionary, P.E. clothes, if needed for the next school day.
- Communicate difficulties to the teacher using the homework journal.

#### **Teachers should:**

- Set homework, review assignments and provide feedback to students.
- Monitor homework to help identify pupils with special difficulties.

#### **How often do teachers monitor homework?**

Ideally, teachers check homework on a daily basis. However, with large class numbers, it is not always possible to check each child's homework journal every day. As children get older and learn to work independently, some items of homework are checked less often, e.g. every second day or once a week. Some items of homework (and class work) may be checked by children themselves, under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children as it promotes responsibility and self-esteem.

#### **What happens when Homework is not done?**

When homework is not done regularly the teacher contacts the parents with a view to resolving the situation. If the situation continues, then the matter is brought to the attention of the Principal who will contact the parent(s) and arrange a meeting to discuss how the matter can be resolved.

## Information and Communication Technology

- Each teacher has their own laptop.
- Broadband is available in both classrooms and the learning support room.
- A data projector is available for use.
- Use of internet is encouraged but monitored closely by teachers. Children are only allowed access to sites previously designated by the teacher.
- Each classroom is equipped with two classroom computers and a laptop.
- Junior Infants usually start their computer education after Halloween.
- A scheme of work in computer education is in operation for all classes. The work is integrated, as far as possible, with other areas of the curriculum, with a focus on the development of computer skills.



## APPENDIX 1

### INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

#### **Introduction**

The internet is a valuable teaching and learning tool. It provides information and allows people to communicate with others and share information. It can develop children's independent research skills and promote life-long learning. However, some material available on the Internet is unsuitable for children and therefore these guidelines will be followed when using the Internet.

#### **Pupils use of the Internet**

Pupils are responsible for good behaviour on the internet. Access to the internet may be withdrawn from pupils who fail to maintain acceptable standards of use. Internet access in the school includes a filtering service. However, no filtering service is completely foolproof and therefore pupils will be supervised during the use of the internet.

Staff will ensure to the maximum extent possible, that pupils know and understand that no internet user is permitted to:

- Use the internet for any illegal activity including accessing other computers.
- Retrieve, send, copy or display offensive messages or pictures.
- Use obscene or offensive language.
- Cause damage to computers, computer systems or networks.
- Violate copyright laws.
- Use another user's password.
- Trespass in another user's folders, work or files.
- Cause any form of vandalism to the machine or the work of others including the up loading or creation of viruses.

#### **Organisation and Management of Internet Use**

Staff will select sites which will support pupils' learning. Pupils may be given details of suitable sites to extend their learning at home as and when appropriate.

#### **Promoting Safe and Independent Use of the Internet**

Internet access will be supervised. Teachers will ensure that pupils understand appropriate use of the internet and are aware of the rules. Pupils will be encouraged to tell a teacher immediately if they encounter any material that makes them feel uncomfortable.

## Children's Use of Email

Children in school must only use email for educational purposes and e-mails will be checked before being sent. Pupils will not be allowed to send personal emails from the school system without permission.

Dear Parents,

As part of the school's ICT programme, we will be offering pupils supervised access to the Internet. As you are probably aware, the Internet contains a vast amount of information but unfortunately not all of this is suitable for children and so we have produced an Acceptable Use Policy specifying our guidelines.

Before being allowed to use the Internet, all pupils must obtain parental permission. We therefore ask that both you and your child sign the enclosed form as evidence of your approval and acceptance of the school rules on this matter. A copy of our Acceptable Use Policy is attached.

Please read the AU Policy carefully.

**Name of Pupil** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class** \_\_\_\_\_

**I allow my child (Name)** \_\_\_\_\_ **to use the Internet in school and accept school rules on this matter.**

**Signature of Parent** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Pupil** \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 2

### Advice for Parents on ICT in the Home

During school hours, teachers will guide pupils towards appropriate materials on the internet. Outside school, parents or guardians should bear the same responsibility for such guidance as they normally would with other information sources, such as television, magazines etc.

Parents or guardians should be aware that the internet service provider at home may not be filtered.

It is therefore important that these guidelines are followed:

- Discuss rules for using the internet with your children and decide together when, how long and what comprises appropriate use.
- Be aware of the sites your children are visiting and discuss with them what they are learning.
- Ensure that children do not give out personal identifying information on the internet such as a picture, address, phone number, school name or financial information such as credit card or bank details.
- Encourage your children not to respond to any unwelcome, unpleasant or abusive messages and to inform you if they receive any such messages or images.
- Appropriate home use of the internet can be educationally beneficial and can make a useful contribution to home and school work. It should, however, be supervised and parents should be aware that they are responsible for their children's use of the internet resources at home.

## In school Management

In St. Mura's N.S. it is expected that post of responsibility holders will:

- have a commitment to the aims and objectives of the school.
- encourage a collaborative approach to planning, shared decision making and team work in the school.
- assist in identifying aspects relating to school that can assist the development of the school for the benefit of the pupils.
- collectively review current practices and policies and propose changes of practice as deemed necessary.
- support the organisation and running of various school related activities relating to areas of responsibility.
- assist in the monitoring and delivery of particular areas of the curriculum to all pupils of the school.
- portray leadership in initiating and maintaining improvement.
- submit annual report on duties performed to the Board of Management.

## Inspectorate

- The Inspectorate of the DES has the main responsibility for quality assurance in the primary and second-level sectors.
- This is carried out through Whole School Evaluation (WSE) conducted on a regular, cyclical basis.
- Each school is inspected and reported upon as a unit. The emphasis is on evaluation of the school as a whole and not on appraisal of individual teachers.
- Inspections focus on the development of staff, the quality of school buildings, and on the provision for meeting individual student needs. The manner in which all the resources of the school, human, physical and financial are being used is also examined as part of the WSE.

## Insurance

- Parents/guardians are offered the option of purchasing personal accident cover for their children.
- This insurance is provided by Allianz and is devised primarily to allow parents to recover out of pocket medical expenses arising from accidental injury, irrespective of liability and without recourse to law.

## **Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO)**

- At present all of the teaching staff in St. Mura's N.S. are members of the INTO.
- The INTO staff representative reports to staff on INTO issues which may arise from time to time.

## Learning Support/Special Education Teaching

The following procedure operates with regard to Learning Support teaching:

- Children are assessed by teachers in Senior Infants for signs of difficulty in the areas of literacy and maths.
- Results of standardised tests, teacher observations and parental knowledge are used to detect children displaying learning difficulties.
- These children are then selected for diagnostic assessment by the Learning Support teacher. Consent of parents/guardians is sought for this assessment.
- Based on the results of this assessment, the nature of the intervention to be provided for the pupil is determined e.g. additional support from the class teacher and/or supplementary teaching from the Learning Support teacher.
- The Learning Support teacher, in consultation with the pupil's class teacher and parents/guardians, identifies learning targets for each child.
- Children are taught in groups of 2/3.
- The time per class is normally 30 minutes.
- Learning support and classroom teacher communicate orally in relation to planning and progress of children in their charge.
- Learning Support teachers conduct classes either in the staff room or in a small section of the classroom.



## Leave of Absence

Teachers may apply to the Board of Management for the following types of Leave of Absence:

Career Breaks	Circular 10/03	Job Sharing	Circular 11/03
Teacher Exchange	Circular 12/03	Carer's Leave	Circular 05/03
Secondment	Circular 11/02	Study Leave	Rule 116
Exam leave/Study Leave	Circular 18/00	Maternity Leave	Circular 14/05
E. P. V. Leave	Circular 37/97	Adoptive Leave	Circular 14/05
Parental Leave	Circular 23/03	Paternity Leave	Circular
01/01.Brief Absences	Circular M18/00	Force Majeure Leave	Circular M18/00

The text of circulars etc. outlining terms and conditions of Leave of Absence are available on the Department of Education website [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie) and on the INTO website [www.into.ie](http://www.into.ie).

SNA's may apply to the Board of Management for the following types of leave of absence:

Maternity/Paternity Leave, Parental/Adoptive Leave, Carer's Leave, Force Majeure Leave and Brief Absences (Pay SNA 18/04)

School Secretaries/Caretakers may apply to the Board of Management for the following types of leave of absence:

Maternity/Paternity Leave, Adoptive Leave, Parental Leave, Carer's Leave, Force Majeure Leave and Brief Absences.

Applications for leave that require the approval of the BOM will be considered on receipt of appropriate documentation in accordance with the following criteria:

1. Number of teachers on leave or seeking leave.
2. Availability of qualified suitable substitute/temporary teachers.
3. Length of Service in the school.
4. The suitability of the partner in the case of job sharing/teacher exchange for the class concerned.

**Brief Absences** may be approved at the discretion of the Chairperson including short term unpaid personal leave with suitable substitution being a critical factor.

**EPV Leave** – Notification to be given at the beginning of the school year by all staff who are entitled to such leave. Generally, only one teacher will be entitled to EPV leave on any one day and priority will be given to the first request for such leave.

Members of Staff applying for leave of absence must:

1. Apply in writing in time to the Chairperson where applicable.
2. Comply with terms laid down by the DES, BOM and relevant legislation.
3. Applicants may be asked to attend a BOM meeting to further inform the Board if necessary.

**The Board of Management will:**

- Process each application for leave of absence as quickly as possible and comply with the terms of reference laid down by the DES, this policy statement and the law.
- In considering applications the BOM of St. Mura's N.S. have formulated the following policy:
  - a) The welfare and educational needs of the pupils should take precedence over all other considerations.
  - b) The number of teachers on leave of absence in any given academic year should not exceed 50% of the total teaching staff.
  - c) Where applications exceed 50% of the staff, circumstances such as compassionate leave, medical issues and seniority shall be taken into consideration.
- Inform the application of the Board's decision, within one week of its decision.
- Respect the confidentiality of all applicants' requests for leave.
- Facilitate the granting of leave in all circumstances that, in the opinion of the Board, do not adversely affect the process of education in the school.

## Library

- Each classroom is equipped with its own library.
- Books are maintained and repaired regularly. Extra books are provided after the annual Book Fair.
- Children are encouraged to read on an on-going basis.
- The co-ordination, maintenance, distribution and upgrading of class libraries is the responsibility of the Special Duties Teacher.
- Children from both classrooms visit the public library on a regular basis.

## Litter

It is school policy to educate children on the hazards of litter and, as part of our environmental awareness campaign, to discourage the children from bringing wrappers, papers, etc. to the yard.

## Lunch Policy

We encourage children to eat a nutritious lunch. Chewing gum and glass bottles are not allowed.

“Junk Food” has an adverse effect on a pupil’s behaviour/concentration span and ability to learn and is therefore discouraged. A treat for lunch may be included with Friday lunch.

Suggestions for lunches – sandwiches, juice, yoghurts, fruit, plain biscuits, e.g. digestives, plain popcorn.

## Lone Parent Families

The separation of parents following marital or non-marital difficulties is extremely traumatic for all parties involved and this is particularly true where children are concerned. The issue of marital and non-marital separation will be approached with sensitivity and with a clear focus on the well-being of children when in the care of St. Mura's N.S.

In a marital relationship both parents are joint guardians. In a non-marital relationship the mother is automatically the guardian of any children. It is open to the natural father to be appointed a guardian through the courts.

Parental separation can occur in a number of ways, for example:

'de facto' separation: no formal/legal arrangement in place for custody/access to children;

Custody and access of children set out in a mediation agreement (no formal legal standing);

Separation Agreement/Deed of Separation (negotiated between both parties solicitors);

District Court Orders for Custody and Access;

Decree of Judicial Separation (Circuit and High Court) may deal with custody/access;

Foreign Divorce/Decree;

Irish Decree of divorce.

It is important to note that the issue of schooling may not be explicitly dealt with in every case whether in the Separation Agreement or in the Court Order. In many cases the issue of custody is agreed between the parties without the necessity for court orders and expert reports.

### Once a parent always a parent

Parents, although separated following marriage breakdown, remain legal guardians of their children. In cases of marital breakdown the issues of custody and access arise. This may be resolved with both parents sharing joint custody, or with one parent having or being awarded custody and the other parent having access.

Irrespective of the issue of custody in marriage breakdown, parents remain as joint guardians of their children and their legal obligations and rights as guardians remain unaltered.

Custody may be defined as the daily care and control of the child. The right of custody is only one of the rights that arise from the guardianship relationship between parent and child.

Guardianship gives both parents a say in all matters affecting the welfare of their child/children whether physical, religious, moral, social, educational – irrespective of the issue of custody. As guardians, parents continue to have rights in relation to the upbringing of their child. Essentially the issue of guardianship supersedes that of custody.

### Implications for St. Mura's N.S.

- a) In cases of separation, Separation Agreements and Court Orders, details relating to custody of children, access, etc. are generally considered private to the parties involved and are not copied to school authorities. The guardianship relationship remains unaltered.

- b) Because of the guardianship relationship and the way it gives both parents in matters affecting the welfare of their children, both parents, unless precluded by Court order, continue to have a right to:
- a. consult with class teachers;
  - b. attend parent/teacher meetings;
  - c. have access to the normal end of year school reports;
  - d. be notified of meetings of parents, etc.

The normal practice is to invite parents to a parent teacher meeting by sending a note home via the child, when requested the school will send two such notes, one to each parent, provided both addresses are supplied.

- c) Where custody and/or the collection/delivery of children to/from school are in dispute and brought to their attention teachers should:
- a. seek direction from the Board of Management on how to handle this situation; endeavour to comply with request of the parent who has to all intents and purposes 'de facto' control of the children;
  - b. refrain from giving guarantees to either parent regarding handing over of children at the end of the school day etc.
  - c. avoid becoming embroiled in the marital dispute and place the onus on the custodial parent to collect the children at the end of the school day.
- d) During school hours, children are under the control of the principal and teachers who are in 'loco parentis'. Where a parent seeks to use the school as a venue for informal access to his/her children, the principal and teacher should decline the occurrence of this. If in doubt, advice should be sought from the Board of Management.
- e) Appropriate information, relevant to the child, regarding family structure etc., may be passed on from teacher to teacher within the school as part of normal professional communications.
- f) Increasingly teachers are requested by a range of professionals (social workers, psychologist, probation officers etc.) to provide written reports on pupils. Likewise, in custody/access cases solicitors acting for one parent may seek a written report from a teacher. Accordingly, the Board of Management advises that:
- a. any reports provided should relate to the type of information a teacher is professionally capable of giving and be within the teacher's area of expertise.
  - b. The report should be similar in content to the normal end of year school report and supported by verifiable data (attendance, test results etc.) where required.
  - c. the terms of the report should be discussed with other colleagues who have a responsibility for the child (learning support teacher etc.) and with the principal teacher.

Generally, the prior written consent of parents should be sought where outside agencies are seeking a report on a child. There may be circumstances where it may not be appropriate to obtain the prior written consent of the parents (e.g.) cases involving alleged child abuse. In such cases the terms of "Children First" will be followed.

## Medication, Administration of

No teacher can be required to administer medicine or drugs to a pupil. While the Board of Management has a duty to safeguard the health and safety of pupils when they are engaged in authorised school activities, this does not imply a duty upon teachers to personally undertake the administration of medicine.

Any teacher who is willing to administer medicines will only do so under strictly controlled guidelines, fully confident that the administration will be safe. In general, this will be limited to emergency situations only.

A teacher who does take responsibility for administering medicines takes on a heavy legal duty of care to discharge the responsibility correctly and so every reasonable precaution must be taken.

Clear instructions about the administration of the medicine will be obtained and strictly followed.

A parent requesting the administration of medicine must write to the Board of Management requesting the Board of Management to authorise a member of the teaching staff to administer the medication. The request must contain written instructions of the procedure to be followed in administering the medication and details of storage of medicine.

The Board of Management, having considered the matter, may authorise a teacher to administer medication to a pupil. If the teacher is so authorised he/she will be properly trained by the Board of Management.

No teacher will administer medication without the specific authorisation of the Board.

In administering medication to pupils, teachers will exercise the standard of care of a reasonable and prudent parent.

The Board of Management will inform the school's insurers accordingly and will seek an indemnity from the parent(s) in respect of any liability that may arise regarding the administration of the medication.

Arrangements will be made by the Board of Management for the safe storage of medication and procedures for the administration of medication in the event of the authorised teacher's absence.

It is the parent's responsibility to check each morning whether or not the authorised teacher is in school unless an alternative arrangement is made locally.

In emergencies teachers will do no more than is obviously necessary and appropriate to relieve extreme distress or prevent further and otherwise irreparable harm. Qualified medical treatment will be secured in emergencies at the earliest opportunity.

Where possible the school will request that medical practitioners will arrange times for medication so that these don't coincide with school time.

In general terms, the Board of Management will request parents to ensure that teachers are made aware in writing of any medical condition suffered by any children in their class. An opportunity to do this is



provided on the school registration form but parents must notify teacher/school of relevant information that subsequently comes to light.

Parents will be asked to identify symptoms in order that treatment can be given by an appropriate person if necessary.

**Medication in this policy refers to medicines, tablets and sprays administered by mouth only.**

**ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINES IN SCHOOLS INDEMNITY**

THIS INDEMNITY made the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_ BETWEEN

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_(father/mother/guardian) of

\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

(hereinafter called 'the parents') of the one part and \_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson for and behalf of the Board of Management of St. Mura's N.S., St. Mary's Rd., in the County of Donegal (hereinafter called 'The Board') of the other part.

**WHEREAS:**

1. The parents/guardians are respectively the lawful father/mother/guardians of a pupil of the above school.
2. The pupil suffers on an on-going basis from the condition known as \_\_\_\_\_
3. The pupil may, while attending school, require, in emergency circumstances, the administration of medication, viz:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. The parents have agreed that the said medication may, in emergency circumstances, be administered by the pupils' classroom teacher and/or such other member of staff of the school as may be designated from time to time by the Board.

IT IS HEREBY AGREED by and between the parties hereto as follows:

- a) In consideration of the Board entering into the within Agreement, the parents, as the lawful father/mother/guardians respectively of the said pupil HEREBY AGREE to indemnify and keep indemnified the Board, its servants and agents including without prejudice to the generality the said pupil's class teacher and/or the Principal of the said school from and against all claims.

IN WITNESS whereof the parties hereto have hereunto set their hands and affixed their seals the day and year first herein WRITTEN.

SIGNED AND SEALED by the parents in the presence of:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

SIGNED AND SEALED by the Chairperson in the presence of:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

## Summary

The parent/guardian should write to the Board of Management requesting the Board to authorise a staff member to administer the medication or to monitor self-administration of the medication.

Parents are required to provide written instructions of the procedure to be followed in the administration and storing of the medication.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that the medication is delivered to the school and handed over to a responsible adult and for ensuring that an adequate supply is available.

Parents are further required to indemnify the Board and authorised members of staff in respect of any liability that may arise regarding the administration of prescribed medicines in school. The Board will inform the school's insurers accordingly.

Changes in prescribed medication (or dosage) should be notified immediately to the school with clear written instructions of the procedure to be followed in storing and administering the new medication.

Where children are suffering from life threatening conditions, parents should outline clearly in writing, what should and what should not be done in a particular emergency situation, with particular reference to what may be a risk to the child.

Parents are required to provide a telephone number where they may be contacted in the event of an emergency arising.

## Board of Management

The Board, having considered the matter, may authorise a staff member to administer medication to a pupil or to monitor the self-administration by a pupil.

The Board will ensure that the authorised person is properly instructed in how to administer the medicine.

The Board shall seek an indemnity from parents in respect of liability that may arise regarding the administration of the medicine.

The Board shall inform the school insurers accordingly.

The Board shall make arrangements for the safe storage of medication and procedures for the administration of medication in the event of the authorised staff member's absence.

## Staff Members

No staff member can be required to administer medication to a pupil.

Any staff member who is willing to administer medicines will do so under strictly controlled guidelines in the belief that the administration is safe.

Medication will not be administered without the specific authorisation of the Board of Management.

In administering medication to pupils, staff members will exercise the standard of care of a reasonable and prudent parent.

A written record of the date and time of administration will be kept.

In emergency situations, staff will do no more than is obviously necessary and appropriate to relieve extreme distress or prevent further and otherwise irreparable harm. Qualified medical treatment should be secured in emergencies at the earliest opportunity.

Parents should be contacted should any questions or emergencies arise.

## **Meetings**

This policy outlines current practice in relation to meetings. It aims to ensure that meetings are effective and use time well, that procedures are widely known and that meetings ultimately improve teaching and learning.

### **Preparing Agendas**

The Principal is responsible for organising and convening staff meetings. A draft agenda circulated by the Principal, submissions invited and final agenda circulated. Attendance at meetings is recorded. Outside speakers may be invited to address meetings.

### **Who attends Meetings?**

Permanent teachers, temporary teachers and long-term substitute teachers are entitled to attend. In shared situations, when meetings clash, teacher(s) involved generally attend meetings with base school. All Special Needs Assistants attend for relevant issues.

### **Conducting Meetings**

Circulate staff at the beginning of the school year to ascertain how many teachers would be interested in chairing meetings and keeping minutes. Minute all meetings. Meetings should start and finish on time. Mobile phones should be switched off.

### **Frequency of Meetings**

At least once a term or as deemed necessary. In line with DES Circular 14/04, at least one staff meeting per term will have equal time inside and outside of school hours. The school will liaise with local schools prior to setting the dates of meetings.

### **School Development Planning**

Attended by all teaching staff, permanent, temporary and long-term substitutes.

- SNAs attend where relevant topics are to be discussed.
- Particular areas chaired by Curriculum Co-ordinators.
- Secretary rotates as per staff meetings.
- Frequency as per DES guidelines.

### **Subcommittee meetings**

Attended by members of teaching staff, permanent, temporary and long-term substitutes and SNAs.

- Convened and chaired by co-ordinators.
- Secretary rotates at each meeting.
- It is school policy that all staff are included in at least one subcommittee.
- These meetings occur as and where necessary between planning days at times agreed by all.

### **Meetings of Ancillary Staff**

Co-ordinated on group/individual basis by Principal

- Principal chairs and records.
- Meetings occur at least once per term or as deemed necessary.

### Meetings of SEN Teams

Co-ordinated by Principal

- Frequency at least once per term at a time agreed by all.

### Informal

We operate from a base of consultation and teamwork. Atmosphere of mutual respect, courtesy and approachability is encouraged.

To avoid disruption to teaching and learning, meetings should be by appointment so that arrangements can be made.

Meetings can be one-on-one or team based.

### Other Home School Links

We utilise the following to allow maximum feedback from home to school and vice versa.

- Introductory evening for parents/guardians of incoming pupils
- Regular newsletters.
- School magazine/school website/homework journals.
- Evening meetings e.g. Parent Council, Shared Reading Programme, Information meetings.
- Parents/guardians are invited to attend ceremonies and celebrations throughout the year.

### Outside Agencies

By appointment. All relevant staff attend.

### Roles/responsibilities

All members of the school community have a right and a responsibility to use the communication systems in place.

## Mobile Phones

### Policy A

Where a pupil brings a mobile phone to school, the phone must be left in the office, switched off during the school day and may not be used, for any purpose, on school premises, grounds or during off-site school activities (such as school swimming or sports activities). The only exception to this is in an emergency or with the approval of a teacher.

Pupils who ignore this policy and use a mobile on school premises without permission will be required to hand over their phone to a member of staff and parents will be asked to collect it from the school office.

If a teacher has any suspicion that a mobile phone has unsuitable material stored on it, pupils will be required to hand over the phone to a teacher and parents will be asked to collect it from the school. Where there is a suspicion that the material on the mobile may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the phone will be handed over to the gardaí for further investigation. Parents will be informed in such circumstances.

The school will incorporate this policy in the school's discipline policy and will treat breaches as they would treat any other breach of school discipline.

The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones. The safety and security of mobile phones is wholly a matter for pupils/parents.

The school accepts no responsibility for pupils who lose or have their mobile phones stolen while travelling to and from school.

***Pupils should mark their mobile phone clearly with their name.***

Mobile phones which are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to a member of staff.

It is strongly advised that pupils use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (e.g. by other pupils, or if stolen). Pupils must keep their password/pin numbers confidential. Mobile phone and/or passwords should not be shared.

Pupils using mobile phones to bully other pupils or send offensive messages/calls will face disciplinary actions as per the School Code of Behaviour.

It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, if action as sanctioned by the School in this regard is deemed ineffective, as with all such incidents, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the gardaí.

### **Policy B**

Pupils must not bring mobile phones to school or to school related off-site activities. The only exception to this is in an emergency or with the prior approval of the Principal.

Pupils who ignore this policy and bring a mobile to school, whether they use it or not, will be required to hand over their phone to a member of staff and parents will be asked to collect it from the school office.



## **Newsletters**

School newsletters are issued to parents/guardians on a regular basis to keep them informed of school procedures, events, closings, extra-curricular activities and other relevant information.

## Parents

- The Constitution acknowledges that the primary and natural educator of the child is the family. Parents' role confers on them the right to active participation in the child's education. This includes their right as individuals to be consulted and informed on all aspects of their child's education at school level, and their right as a group to actively participate in the education at school level, and their right as a group to actively participate in the education system at school, regional and national levels.
- St. Mura's N.S. welcomes the co-operation and involvement of parents/guardians in many ways and at many levels.
- Parents/guardians are invited to become involved in various aspects of school life, e.g. serving on school bodies, fundraising, policy making, organising or assisting at school events.

## Parents' Association

The school has an active Parents' Association which promotes the well being of the school. The activities of the Parents' Association provide an organised forum through which parents can make a positive contribution to their children's education.

The Parents' Association plays an important part in the life of the school and supports the school in every way. All parents are encouraged to become involved in the Parents' Association and to support the activities and projects that are a feature of our school.

The new committee of the Parents' Association is elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Parents' Association which is held in the 1<sup>st</sup> term.

- The Parents' Association holds regular meetings in the school.
- The Principal and/or teachers' representative may attend the meeting.
- The Parents' Association, in consultation with the Principal, organise various fundraising activities throughout the year.

## Parent –Teacher Meetings

- Annual Parent-Teacher meetings are held each year towards the end of October in accordance with Circular 14/04.
- Parents/guardians are informed of their appointment time for each child a week in advance.
- A school family register which is updated each year allows for the efficient allocation of times to families with more than one child in the school.
- Where necessary, teachers are available to meet parents by appointment during the school year.

## Photocopying

The Board of Management of St. Mura's N.S. has a 3 year photocopying licence which allows for the copying of limited extracts from copyright literary works without seeking permission from the copyright holder.

This licence permits photocopying of single or multiple copies of extracts from literary works solely for educational purposes. The number of copies permitted is limited to the number of pupils in a class plus two copies for each teacher. No copy will exceed one chapter or 5% of the work, whichever is greater. However, in the case of a short story or a poem of not more than 10 pages, the whole work may be copied.

## Post Primary Schools

A representative of local post-primary schools in the area visits the school, usually in the first term, to meet with the sixth class children and distribute application forms.

Later in the school year, meetings are held between the sixth class teacher and a teacher from the post-primary schools (usually the Career Guidance teacher/future Year head or Learning Support teacher). The purpose of this meeting is to establish a profile of each pupil.

The results of the standardised tests, administered to 6<sup>th</sup> class, are forwarded to the principals of the post-primary schools by the end of the school year.

## **Progress Reports**

Monthly progress reports are completed by teachers for all subjects.

Reports are collected approximately ten days after the end of the month.

Progress reports are filed for at least the school year which follows in the Principal's office and a copy of each is returned to the teacher who completed it.

## **Religious Education**

In St. Mura's N.S., where the 'ethos' is that of a Church of Ireland school, religious instruction, in accordance with the doctrine and tradition of the Church of Ireland, is part of the education given to children who belong to the Church.



## Reports

- Teachers complete end of year reports for every child in their class during the month of June.
- Grades and comments are based on the year's work and not strictly on results of tests.
- Reports are sent home by post.
- A standard report format is used throughout the school.
- A copy of each report is filed in the school.

## Schemes of Work

- In accordance with the Curriculum for Primary Schools and the School Plan, all teachers are required to prepare a yearly scheme of work and monthly short term plans or notes.
- The school plan suggests topics to be covered month by month in each curricular area.

Ancillary material and relevant worksheets may be included in the schemes.

## **School Closings**

The broad shape of the school year is determined by the Standardised School Year as notified from time to time by DES circular.

In June of the preceding school year the Principal, in consultation with staff, draws up a list of proposed additional closings for the forthcoming year.

A calendar of planned school closing for the forthcoming year is circulated to parents/guardians in late June.

In case of an exceptional closing, parents/guardians are informed in advance if possible, or otherwise a notice is placed at the entrance to the school.

## **School Evaluation**

The Department of Education and Science, through the Inspectorate, is responsible for the evaluation and monitoring of the quality of education in schools.

Inspectors carry out indepth inspections (Whole School Evaluations) on schools on a regular, cyclical basis.

Emphasis during inspection is on the evaluation of the school as a unit and not on appraisal of individual teachers.

The most recent report is available in the Principal's Office.

## Shared Reading

- The practice of Shared Reading, where an adult listens and participate while a child reads aloud, is at present part of the English Curriculum for Senior Infants, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> classes in St. Mura's N.S.
- Parents are invited to attend a showing of a video on the practice of Shared Reading in advance of its commencement in their child's class.

## Sick Leave

(For complete details see Circular 10/05)

Qualified teachers in permanent/temporary posts are entitled to a maximum of three consecutive days sick leave without providing a medical certificate. A substitute can be employed from the first day of absence on uncertified sick leave and every effort will be made to employ a qualified teacher as a substitute.

Where a teacher is absent on sick leave for more than three consecutive days a medical certificate must be provided to the principal for the total period of the absence.

A medical certificate can only cover a maximum period of one month.

Where a teacher wishes to return to school before the date specified on her/his medical certificate, s/he must provide a certificate of fitness. Otherwise, all sick leave as recorded on the initial certificate will be counted towards the length of sick leave absence.

## Sports Day

- As part of the sports curriculum in St. Mura's N.S. a Sports Day is organised for all children in the school in the month of June.
- The emphasis is on participation and not on winning.
- Sports are run separately for the following groups:
  - Junior and Senior Infants
  - 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> classes
  - 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes
- The teacher of the junior classes co-ordinates the programme of events and organisation of the Sports Day.
- In the event of bad weather, the Sports Day is postponed until the next suitable day.
- Prizes and treats for participation as outlined below are presented to the children:
  - All children are awarded with a certificate of participation
  - All classes are provided with refreshments

## Staff Development

The professional development of teachers is essential in the provision of quality education. The following measures endeavour to ensure the on-going and continuous professional development of staff in St. Mura's N.S.

- All teachers are given an opportunity to become involved in the compilation of the agenda for Staff Meetings and encouraged to participate in the meetings. (See Staff Meetings)
- Involvement in decision making at Staff Meetings or other informal meetings, staff surveys and questionnaires throughout the year.
- Teachers are encouraged to take leadership roles in an area of the curriculum which may particularly interest them.
- Any member of staff undertaking a course is encouraged to actively share knowledge, practice and skills gained at the course/seminar.
- Depending on demand and budget, the BOM contribute towards the expenses incurred by members of staff in the pursuit of courses/seminars related to professional development.



## Staff Meetings

- Formal staff meetings take place once per term i.e. 3 meetings per year. One hour is allocated within school time and one hour outside of school time for these meetings.
- All teachers are given an opportunity to suggest items for the meeting in advance.
- The agenda is circulated to all teachers in advance of the meeting along with the minutes of the previous meeting.
- If a member of staff is to make a presentation, that person is consulted beforehand and the time allocation clarified.
- All teachers are encouraged to become involved in the meeting a voice their opinion where they so wish.
- Minutes of the meeting are taken and a record of Minutes is retained in the staff meeting.

Where necessary throughout the year, brief meetings before or after school, are used for informal discussions/points of clarification/information dissemination.

## **Standardised Testing**

In accordance with DES regulations, standardised testing is carried out in St. Mura's N.S. on two occasions. In St. Mura's N.S. these are at the beginning of second class and at the beginning of fifth class.

The following standardised test are administered in St. Mura's N.S.:

### **Drumcondra Reading Test**

### **Drumcondra Mathematics Test**

**In addition the following tests are used:**

### **Quest Maths Test**

The Quest Maths Test is administered to Senior Infants each year.

### **Mist Group Reading Test**

The Mist Group Reading Test is administered to Senior Infants each year.

## Subjects

In line with DES regulations, the following subjects are taught in St. Mura's N.S.

Irish

English

Mathematics

Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (which includes Geography, History and Science)

Social, Personal and Health Education

Arts Education (which includes Visual Arts, Music and Drama)

Physical Education

Religious Education (which is taught everyday in accordance with the ethos of the school)

Information and Communication Technology.

The school also participates in the Modern European Languages Programme and French is taught to pupils in the senior classes.

Curricular programmes prescribed by the DES may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998.

## Substitute and Temporary Teachers

- The Board of Management is responsible for the employment of substitutes during approved absences of teachers in the school.
- In most instances the responsibility for securing a substitute teacher devolves on the Principal.
- Every effort is made to employ a fully qualified substitute teacher.
- The Principal is mainly responsible for the induction of substitute teachers into the school.
- All members of the teaching staff are encouraged to assist with the induction of substitute and temporary teachers where the opportunity arises.
- An information sheet for Substitute teachers is available in the School Office.

### Information for Temporary/Substitute Teachers

Welcome to St. Mura's N.S. The enclosed information is intended to make life a little easier. You should read it together with the class timetable, monthly report and work, if any, that has been prepared.

#### **School Timetable**

9.10	School starts
10.50-11.00	Morning Break
12.30-1.00	Lunch
2.00	Junior and Senior Infants go home
2.50	Classes I to VI go home

#### **Assembly Time**

Children assemble in school yard before school and are collected from there by class teacher. Principal supervises at this time. After break times pupils line up and are brought in by class teacher.

#### **Dismissal Time**

Children are accompanied to the school gate by the teacher. They should walk in an orderly manner at all times.

#### **Lunches**

Children take their lunches before going to the school yard. Children should be given 10 minutes to eat lunch prior going to the yard.

## **Class Divisions**

Junior Infants – 2<sup>nd</sup> Class

3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Classes

Learning Support (Part-time – based in St. Mura's N.S., Tooban)

## **Ancillary Staff**

Secretary

Part-time SNA (in senior classroom)

Cleaner

## **Yard Duty Roster**

Is on the Staffroom Noticeboard. See Code of Behaviour for an indication of what type of behaviour is expected in the school yard. The children are supervised by a teacher during both breaks.

## **Tea/Coffee**

Is in the Staffroom. Help yourself. Water is always on the boil.

## **Toilets**

Teachers' toilet is situated on the corridor (disabled toilet)

## **Bus**

Children are escorted to their buses by teachers.

## **Medical**

Details of particular pupils are enclosed. Please check carefully and ask principal or teacher if in doubt. Do not administer any form of medicine without first checking with principal/teacher.

## **Learning Support**

Timetable enclosed. The Learning Support Room is also the Staff Room.

## **Litter**

Please ensure that classrooms are kept tidy at all times and see that the children do a general tidy up at the end of the school day.

## **Code of Behaviour**

Is enclosed. **Do not under any circumstances use any form of physical punishment or put children standing outside the classroom.** Should you need help, please ask the teacher next door. Please refer to the principal if the matter is serious. Familiarise yourself with the code of behaviour as soon as possible.

**Photocopying**

Available in Staff Room.

**Homework**

See enclosed policy document

**Extra Work**

If you need extra worksheets, etc. please consult teacher next door.

## **Supervision**

The principal is responsible for drawing up and updating the Supervision Rota, which is made known to each person on the rota. In the event of a planned absence the person arranged for the next person on the rota to swap supervision duties. In the event of an unplanned absence the principal arranges for the next person on the rota to supervise.

### **Policy Statement**

During Break Time one teacher supervised the yard. On wet days the supervisor patrols the classrooms. The rules for the yard are revised and reviewed regularly and are well known and repeated often to the children. All classes have copies of the relevant rules. The person on yard duty remains with classes until they have all been picked up by their own teacher.

The school will open to receive pupils at 9.00a.m. No responsibility is accepted for pupils arriving before that time. The bell rings at 9.10a.m. Classes will commence each day at 9.30a.m. Classes will end each day at 2.00p.m. (Infants) and 2.50p.m. (all other classes). Teachers ensure an orderly dismissal and that all classrooms are vacated at this time. Parents who wish to have their children escorted home should make their own arrangements to have them met at the school gate and the person to escort them should be at the school gate not later than 2.00p.m. (Infants) and 2.50p.m. (all other classes), as the school cannot accept responsibility for the supervision of children after that time.