

KILTEALY NATIONAL SCHOOL

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Code of Behaviour

Related Policies available on request:

- Anti-Bullying
- Health & Safety Statement
- Admission Policy
- Child Protection Policy

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1. Introduction

This Code of Behaviour was devised by the staff of Killealy NS in March 2021 and a draft copy made available to parents prior to ratification by the Board of Management.

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school.

In **Killealy National School**, we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school.

The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.

Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school.

2. Aims of the code

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights 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
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the parent's handbook, availability of policies and an ethos of open communication
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy

3. Discipline for Learning (DFL)

In our school, we have a positive approach to teaching and learning. Positive rules for behaviour in class and out of class are learned by pupils at the beginning of their school year. Pupils are motivated to keep these rules.

We have many ways of recognising good behaviour and effect including awards, stamps, positive cards, smiles, positive comments and homework passes. Good behaviour and achievement will be recognised. Consistent positive influences are the key to success in our school.

4. General Guidelines for Behaviour

All pupils are expected to behave in a reasonable manner both to themselves and to others, showing consideration, courtesy and respect for other pupils and adults at all times. Respect must be shown at all times. Respect must be shown for the property of the individual and of the school at all times.

The code of Behaviour covers the following areas:

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- Behaviour in class-Classroom Rules
 - Behaviour in the playground-Playground Rules
 - Behaviour in the school environment and behaviour on school outings/after school and extra-curricular activities.
 - Attendance at school/Education Welfare Act
 - Homework

Behaviour in Class

Courtesy and respect are essential. Disrespectful behaviour towards other pupils or towards a teacher (e.g. defiance, cheek, insolence) are unacceptable. Pupils must respect the right of other pupils to learn. Any behaviour which interferes with the right (e.g. constant disruption of the class/persistent distracting of others) is considered unacceptable behaviour.

In order that pupils benefit from their work in class full co-operation is required at all times. Pupils must co-operate with instructions given by the teacher.

School/Classroom Rules

1. We show respect for self and others
2. We show respect for our own property and the property of others
3. We show respect to other students and their learning
4. We are kind and willing to help others
5. We follow instructions from staff immediately
6. We walk quietly in the school building
7. We show courtesy and good manners
8. We try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
9. We ask permission to leave the classroom/school.
10. We do our best in class
11. We take responsibility for your own work
12. We wear the appropriate uniform.
13. We follow our Healthy Eating Policy.

Behaviour in the Playground

Pupils should treat others as they would like to be treated themselves. Any behaviour which endangers or offends others is not permitted. Rough behaviour e.g. fighting, kicking, spitting, pushing is forbidden. Games or activities considered to be dangerous shall be prohibited.

Any behaviour which interferes with other pupils play is not permitted. Pupils may not leave the playground for any reason during breaks without permission of the supervising teacher/SNA; this includes re-entering the school building.

Playground Rules

1. Stay within the boundaries in yard
2. Play safely and fairly. Treat others fairly, the way you would like yourself to be treated
3. Keep yard and school environment litter free and tidy
4. Respect all school property
5. Line up quickly and quietly and leave and return to your classroom in an orderly fashion.

Behaviour in the School Environment and on School Outings

Respect and courtesy to others is essential. Any kind of verbal or physical abuse of other pupils is unacceptable. Use of foul language among pupils is unacceptable. Bullying or intimidation of other pupils is prohibited and is always regarded as a serious offence. Pupils must show respect for school property at all times. For reasons of safety and to minimise accidents, pupils should move about the school in an orderly manner.

Pupils are encouraged to be respectful of each other on their way to and from school. When on school outings pupils are expected to behave in an orderly manner and show respect for public property. They should always co-operate fully with their teachers and any school staff.

Attendance/Education Welfare Act

Under the Education Welfare Act 2000, absences or lateness must be explained by a brief note written in school journal and signed by parent. Absences of 20 days or more must be referred by the school to Education Welfare Board. Any child wishing to leave school early must have a note signed by their parent. The Education Welfare Officer is available to support parents with attendance issues. Daily attendance and punctuality are required from pupils.

School opens to receive pupils at 9:10am each morning. After a pupil has been absent, a note from the parents must always be brought to the class teacher upon the pupil's return to school. When a pupil has to leave school early (i.e. before 3:00pm) it must be brought to the attention of the teacher by means of a note, phone call to school office or email.

Homework

It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis. The time taken for this will vary from child to child, but should in most cases take up to 20 minutes in the junior end of the school and up to 45 mins in the senior end of the school.

Homework is recorded in the pupil's journal. Parents should sign the homework journal to confirm that the work has been fully attempted.

If for some reason homework (or part of it) cannot be completed, parents are asked to note this in the homework journal.

Generally, homework is not given at weekends. Written work must be done neatly and carefully and may be asked to be redone if not completed to the individual's potential.

Graffiti on school rental books is not permitted. Please refer to the school Homework Policy for further information.

5. Responsibility of Adults

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations.
- Promote positive behaviour, through example, honesty and courtesy.
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment.
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others.
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.
- To discourage physical aggression and encourage '*Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet*'.

A Code of Conduct for staff, pupils and volunteers ensures that the rights of all are upheld.

These can be summed up as **6 Golden Rules**:

1. We listen. We don't interrupt.
2. We are gentle. We don't hurt others.
3. We are honest. We tell the truth.
4. We are kind.
5. We work hard. We don't waste time.
6. We look after property. We don't damage things.

These 6 "Golden Rules" will be the main ones used for all classes. Rules apply during school-time and during all school related activities.

6. Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children, based closely on the "Golden Rules". Class rules will be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Where possible they emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. 'Walk' and not, 'Don't run'). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

7. Incentives/Reward System

Part of the vision of **Kiltealy National School** is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and similarly that children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Our reward system seeks to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication
- 'Bualadh Bos' in class or special mention at assembly.

Field trips, annual school tours and our end of year special event will be reserved for those who have consistently strived to behave well.

Types of Reward Systems

- Each class teacher may conduct a reward system within the classroom for good behaviour.
- Reward systems may be based on individual behaviour, a group effort or whole class effort.
- Reaching a set target results in a reward.(eg. homework pass/golden time on Friday afternoon/extra outdoor time)

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- Individuals/groups/class can gain points/stars/smiley faces (dependant on the system in place) on the rewards system by displaying good behaviour.
 - They may also lose points/stars/smiley faces (dependant on the system in place) on the rewards system by displaying poor behaviour.
 - A child/group/class will usually receive one warning and then will lose his/her point/star/smiley face for any further misbehaviour.
 - Continuous misbehaviour will be dealt with following the steps outlined in **Section 9** below where sanctions are used to bring about a change in behaviour.

Additional reward systems may be in place in specialised area-eg: completion of homework to the best of the individual child's ability

- Teacher gives a stamp for homework that is completed to the child's full potential.
- Stamps are never taken back.
- Once 10 stamps are reached the child receives a homework pass.

This system encourages pupils to do their best work when working independently/with support from parents at home. It gives ownership to the pupil of their personal standards and promotes self-discipline and motivation to work to their full potential when outside the classroom setting.

8. Unacceptable Behaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher, or the supervising teacher at break-times. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour if necessary.

Examples of minor misbehaviour include:

- Bringing electronic equipment or mobile-phones to school
- Not wearing appropriate uniform; bringing in chewing-gum
- Not following instructions.

Examples of serious misbehaviour include:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Bringing dangerous equipment to school
- Leaving school/school activities without permission.

Examples of gross misbehaviour include:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil
- Serious Theft
- Serious Damage to property
- Serious bullying
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes

Bullying is repeated aggression – physical, verbal or emotional - conducted by an individual or group against another or others.

- PHYSICAL: includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping, etc.
- VERBAL: name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates.
- EMOTIONAL: threats or persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Threats to extort money or possessions. “Cyber/text” bullying.

The school takes particular care to intervene early in responding to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.

Issues in relation to Bullying are explored continually during SPHE lessons and using Circle Time, Drama etc.

Should a parent/guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed with a teacher, all staff members are more than willing to facilitate a meeting, made through the proper channels i.e. a phone call to the office, or a note to the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties. The first person to be informed should be the class teacher.

This arrangement ensures that all concerns are dealt with in a dignified, meaningful manner, without infringing on valuable teaching time.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying.

Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same manner as breaches of discipline – already outlined in our Code of Behaviour.

In the case where a parent reports a bullying incident, the school reserves the right to inform the relevant parties of the identity of the person making the complaint, when this is deemed necessary.

9. Sanctions

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour
- signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
- keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the circumstances involved. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupil devise strategies for this. The following steps may be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The list is by no means exhaustive.

1. Reasoning with pupil
 2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
 3. Temporary separation from peers within class/or on yard, and/or temporary removal to another class
 4. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened
 5. Loss of privileges-to reflect on behaviour/complete activities that should have been achieved during class time but suffered as a result of misbehaviour/redo homework to an acceptable standard
 6. Communication with parents
 7. Referral to Principal
 8. Principal communicating with parents
 9. 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)
- Usually sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

10. Restorative Practice

Restorative Practice may be used in resolving issues. It provides a focus on developing positive relationships between all members of the school community. It gives opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and learning. Restorative Practice is a process whereby children are given the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and how they and others have been affected by it so as to help heal broken relationships and prevent reoccurrence. Where suspension occurs, the school will use restorative practice involving all parties affected to help repair the harm done.

Sample Restorative Questions to Respond to Challenging Behaviour

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking about at the time?
3. What have your thoughts been since?
4. Who has been affected by what you did?
5. In what way have they been affected?
6. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

To help those harmed by other actions

1. What did you think when you realised what had happened?
2. What have your thoughts been since?
3. How has this affected others?
4. What has been the hardest thing for you?
5. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

11. Suspension and Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as detention, 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 may 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.

Expulsion 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 Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

12. 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 pupils 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.

13. Children with Special Needs

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, SET's, and or principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

14. Communicating with Parents

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life (in the past or present), which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following methods of communication are to be used within the school:

- Informal/formal parent/teacher
- Through children's homework journal (infants do not have a homework journal, please check bags for notes)
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- School notice board (Can be in school or digital)
- Newsletters/school web-site/e-mails
- TextaParent service.
- Digital Learning Platforms

15. Declaration of Compliance

Parents are directed to the Code of Behaviour when enrolling their child in the school and will sign a declaration confirming that they understand the Code of Behaviour and the expectations of their child in relation to compliance with The Code of Behaviour throughout their time in Kiltealy NS. As part of a yearly consent/checklist they will recommit to compliance with the School Code of Behaviour.

Pupils will sign a Class Code of Behaviour when Golden Rules and Class Rules have been addressed at the beginning of each school year.

This Code of Behaviour was ratified by the Board of Management of Kiltealy NS on 23rd September 2021, reviewed on December 12th, 2023.

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Date: _____