

KILDANGAN NS CODE OF DISCIPLINE POLICY

(Córas Smachta)

Aims:

- a) In devising the code, consideration has to be given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. The aim is to create an ordered and orderly environment in which pupils can, through developing self-discipline, feel secure and make progress in all aspects of their development.
- b) Every effort will be made by members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school.

Principles:

- a) The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to tolerate these differences.
- b) It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, parents and pupils.
- c) Every effort will be made to ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner.
- d) A Code of Behaviour ensures that the rights of pupils and staff are upheld.

School Rules:

1. Safety: For my own safety and that of others:

- a) I should be careful coming and going from school
- b) I should always walk while in the school building
- c) I should remain seated at all times and while eating lunch
- d) I should be careful when running in the school yard
- e) I should never leave the school grounds without permission

2. Caring for myself:

- a) I should respect myself and my property, always keeping my school bag, books and copies in good order.
- b) I should always be in school before the bell rings at 8.50am
- c) I should show respect for my school and be proud to wear the complete school uniform every day
- d) I should always be aware of my personal hygiene
- e) I should always bring a sensible, nutritional lunch to school. Crisps, minerals, sweets or chewing gum are not permitted

- f) I should always do my best in school by listening carefully, working as hard as I can, taking responsibility for my work and by completing my homework to the best of my ability.

3. Caring for others:

- a) I should be kind and respectful to teachers, staff members and fellow pupils by being mannerly and polite, by following instructions, taking turns and by remaining silent and orderly in my class line.
- b) I should behave well in class so that my fellow pupils and I myself can learn.
- c) I should always keep my school clean by bringing unfinished food and drinks, cartons, wrappers, etc home. I should show respect for the property of my fellow pupils, the school building and grounds.
- d) I should be truthful and honest at all times.
- e) I should try and resolve conflict in a respectful way.
- f) I should never **bully** others, I should never allow others to **bully** me and if it happens I should tell my parents and my teacher.

Bullying (*please see Kildangan NS Policy on Bullying)

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.

Clár ama na Scoile

- School begins: 8.50am
- School closes: 1.35pm (Infants), 2.35pm (1st-6th)

Homework

It is the policy of this school to assign homework on a regular basis. Parents are strongly advised to take an active interest in their child’s homework and to sign their homework journal nightly. (Please see Kildangan NS Homework Policy)

Strategies - Promoting Positive Behaviour

1. Class Rules

At the start of each school year, the class teacher and the class will draw up a list of class rules. This agreed list of rules will have regard for the health, safety and welfare of all

members of the school community. Class rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of pupils and individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted by the class teacher at an early stage.

2. Incentives/Reward System

Kildangan NS wishes 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 and may be given by means of any one of the following:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal
- A class system of merit marks (stars/points etc)
- 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.

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.

The Use of 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.

Examples of minor misbehaviour:

- Interrupting class work
- Not following instructions
- Being discourteous/unmannerly
- Running in school building
- Talking in class line
- Leaving seat without permission (when staying in on wet days)
- Littering the school grounds
- Not wearing the correct uniform
- Not completing homework without good reason
- Endangering self/fellow pupils in the school yard at break time
- Bringing electronic equipment or mobile-phones to school
- Bringing in chewing-gum

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with regular occurrences of minor misbehaviour:

Phase 1

- Verbal reprimand/reasoning with pupil
- Noting instance of misbehaviour in yard book
- Note in homework journal to be signed by parent
- Temporary separation from peers
- Sending to another teacher
- Loss of privileges
- Denial of participation in some class activity
- Write story of what happened/copy school rules or relevant rule to upper limit of 20 times – all to be signed by parent

Phase 2

- Send to the Principal
- Class teacher meets parent(s)
- Principal/D-Principal meets parents
- Formulation of classroom behaviour plan (using the Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (A Continuum of Support) Guidelines for Teachers.

- The school may also need to consider the need for referral for psychological assessment, with consent from parent, in order to assess the child's social and emotional needs and to determine how these can be met.
- The school may also consider the need for referral to CAHMS, with consent of parent/guardian.

Examples of serious misbehaviour:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Constantly disruptive in class affecting teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Telling lies
- Damage to property
- Stealing
- Back answering a teacher
- Bringing dangerous equipment to school
- Leaving school/school activities without permission
- Frequenting school premises after school hours without appropriate permission
- Not working to full potential
- Using unacceptable language

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with serious misbehaviour:

- Send to Principal
- Principal contacts parent/guardian
- Principals meets parent/guardian
- Chairperson of BOM is informed and parents are requested to meet with both the Principal and Chairperson of the Board.
- In the case of serious misbehaviour rather than suspension, the school may ask parents to collect the child early (if there the presence of the child has become a health and safety issue) or to come in and assist in the supervision of their child.

Examples of gross misbehaviour:

- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher, staff member or pupil
- Serious Theft
- Serious Damage to property
- Serious bullying
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with gross misbehaviour:

- Chairperson/Principal to sanction immediate suspension pending discussion with parents, as per the procedures set out in the NEWB Guidelines 2008.
- Expulsion will be considered in extreme cases in accordance with Rule 130 (6) of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. Sanctions

Suspension and 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, other staff member 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 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.

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 comprehensive behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

Children with Special Needs

All children enrolled in Kildangan NS are required to comply with the school's code of behaviour. However the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules and may need to be taught how to relate cause and effects of behaviour in more tangible ways. Specialised behaviour plans may need to be put in place in consultation with parents, the class teacher, learning support/ resource teacher, the principal and other support agencies. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from specialised support agencies, SESS, NEPS and the school's designated SENO will also 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.

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
- Newsletters/school web-site/e-mails
- School text service.

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Indications of Bullying:

- a) Anxiety about travelling to/from school
- b) Unwillingness to go to school
- c) Deterioration in educational performance
- d) Pattern of physical illnesses
- e) Unexplained changes in mood/behaviour
- f) Visible signs of anxiety/distress
- g) Possessions missing
- h) Increased requests for money
- i) Unexplained bruising
- j) Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her

Procedures for noting and reporting incidents:

- a) All reports of bullying should be noted, investigated and dealt with by the class teacher so that pupils will gain confidence in telling.
- b) Serious cases should be referred immediately to the Principal
- c) Parents should be informed as soon as possible
- d) Parents must be informed of the appropriate person to whom they can make their enquiries regarding bullying
- e) Pupils must understand that reporting is not ‘telling tales’
- f) Individual teachers should record and take appropriate measures in accordance with policy
- g) Non-teaching staff should be encouraged to report incidents. Discretion is important

Procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying:

- a) Calm, unemotional problem-solving approach
- b) Incidents best investigated outside the classroom situation
- c) Teacher should speak separately to the pupils involved
- d) Answers should be sought to questions of what/where/when/who/why
- e) Members of a gang should be met individually and as a group

f) Meet parents of parties involved

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.