**Killusty National School**

Killusty N.S. Killusty, Fethard, Co. Tipperary

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Discipline Policy

**Killusty N.S.**

**Introduction**

This policy on School Discipline states the manner in which Killusty N.S. addresses positive and negative behaviour in school.

# 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 disciplined by being motivated to keep these rules.

We have many ways of recognizing good behaviour. Consistent positive influences are the key to success in our school.

## Incentives/Reward System

Part of the vision of *Killusty 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 proof of improvement, 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
* A milséan, sticker, prize …

**Restorative Practice**

Restorative Practice in our school 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.

# 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 have your thoughts been since?
2. What did you think when you realised what had happened?
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?

**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.
* helping them and others to keep safe

The use of sanctions or consequences should be characterised by certain features;

* It must be clear why the sanction is being applied
* The consequence must relate as closely as possible to the behaviour
* It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions
* There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences
* It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus

**Ladder of Intervention -** The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The list is by no means exhaustive. 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.

1. Reasoning with pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class
4. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened
5. Loss of privileges
6. Detention during break
7. Communication with parents
8. Referral to Principal
9. Principal communicating with parents
10. 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)

* If there is no improvement following parent/teacher meeting and if misbehaviour continues the class teacher and Principal will meet with parent/guardian to develop a behaviour management plan
* If there is no improvement at this stage the parent/guardian will be called to meet with the Principal and the Chairperson of the Board of Management where the situation will be discussed in detail. Guidelines will be drawn up for future behaviour in the school and playground. Very occasionally, this may include a request from the teacher/principal that the parent/guardian of the child supervise their child in school or during a school outing.
* The school reserves the right to arrange a meeting with the parents/guardians of a child at any time, should the child’s behaviour be deemed to be unacceptable.
* If a parent refuses to meet with a class teacher the matter will be referred to the Principal. Any refusal to meet with the Principal and/or Chairperson will automatically be referred to the Board of Management and regarded as a serious breach of co-operation in our school behaviour policy.

## 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.

**Appeal**

Parents of a pupil who has been suspended for 20 school days or more are entitled under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 to appeal such a suspension

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 TUSLA (Child and Family Agency) 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 behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

## 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, learning support/ resource teacher, and or principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. If necessary, support will be requested from NEPS, with a view to meeting behavioural targets. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times

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

Parents are made aware of their children’s good or bad behaviour. Parents play a crucial role in shaping the attitudes, which produce good behaviour in school. Parents are urged to appreciate the need to provide their children with firm guidance, and to avail of every opportunity of contact with the teaching staff.

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/Folder
* Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
* School newsletters
* TextaParent service.

# Conclusion

The essence of our Discipline Policy is valuing people and encouraging them to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and to develop self discipline.

Associated Policies

1. Anti-Bullying
2. Behaviour
3. Health & Safety Statement
4. Admission and Participation (Enrolment) Policy
5. Child Protection Policy

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

(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

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