

Kiltiernan N.S. Policy on Communication with Parents

Kiltiernan N.S. values the interest, support and involvement of parents in the work of educating and developing children.

We believe that communication with all partners in the nurturing of each child's education is vital.

We recommend that every parent reads our school policies and codes of conduct to become familiar with what is expected of each child while in our care at school.

We have carefully developed these policies and codes to try and ensure that all our pupils can learn and interact socially in a stimulating, safe environment.

In order to achieve this, we need to work in close partnership with you, as parents, to ensure that your child has a happy and successful experience at school.

Communication between home and school is the foundation of this partnership.

There are a number of ways in which the home and school maintain good communication:

- General Introductory Meeting with Parents of Junior Infants

In June, parents of our incoming Junior Infant class meet with the whole staff. This provides both the parents and children to see our facilities, meet our staff and gain an overview of our policies in curricular and organisational areas. Parents are given a copy of our Parents' Handbook which contains the most relevant policies and curricular information. It also includes forms that need to be filled, signed and returned to the school upon registration.

- Newsletters

Regular newsletters are drafted by the principal to keep parents up-to-date on school activities, celebrations and achievements, staff in-service (as soon as we are notified) and forthcoming events. Newsletters at the beginning of each term

usually include calendars which outline school closures, trips and other special events to facilitate planning by parents.

These newsletters are given to the oldest child of each family. In the case of children whose parents do not share the same address, a decision should be taken by the parents to whom school communications are sent.

· School Website

Our newly created website (<http://kiltiernanschool.ie>) provides operational and curricular information for parents and prospective parents. It includes a gallery of our special days and events in Kiltiernan, a blog of monthly events in each of our three classrooms and information on staffing and school management and our school history. We encourage parents and pupils to check our website regularly and gain an insight into their children's life at school.

· Text-A-Parent

Our text-a-parent facility is designed for use only when we need to send parents an urgent reminder or information e.g. school closure in the event of severe weather/ flooding or an update on the arrival times to school of a tour bus.

· Homework Journal

The main purpose of the Journal is for recording homework but it should also be used as a means of communicating between home and school regarding practical issues and changes in routine. Issues like illness, special requests

regarding early collection from school for dental/ medical appointments,

informing the class teacher of difficulties with homework, can be recorded too.

If your child has been unwell, overtired or experienced conflict at school with a peer or teacher you will be informed. Parents and guardians are also informed of minor accidents, indiscipline at school, failure to do homework, reminders, etc. If your child needs extra support in an area of homework advice or suggestions may be offered. If your child has been outstanding or especially helpful/kind this

will also be recorded. It is important to look at your child's journal every day. Parents are requested to sign your child's journal each night to verify the child's attempts at homework. If a child is absent there are explanation notes at the back of the Journal which should be filled in. We need these for our records as part of our obligations in managing absences with the National Education Welfare Board. If a parent would like to meet your child's teacher we advise you make an appointment in writing in the Journal or by phoning us at the school so that time can be set aside and supervision of the class can be organised.

- Informal Meetings with Teachers

If your child is in Infants you will have many opportunities to meet your child's teacher informally at collection time, especially in the first weeks. Take these opportunities to get to know your child's teacher as this will help settle your child and also allay any anxieties you may have about your child's transition to school from home/ playschool.

- Parent/ Teacher Meetings

Formal Parent-Teacher Meetings are usually held before the Halloween Break. These meetings are designed to be a forum where your child's teacher can give you observations on your child's progress, offer suggestions in supporting your child in key areas of the curriculum and to seek your observations and opinions regarding your child's progress.

- General Parent-Teacher Conferences

There are occasions when it is necessary to have whole school meetings to discuss issues of major concern re. new curricular approaches and methodologies, school building and related matters and broader issues like fundraising. We have also invited outside speakers to address the whole school

e.g. education experts, representatives of Galway County Council.

- End-of-Year Reports

End of Year Reports are compiled on every pupil and posted to each home in July. Your child's performance in academic, social and behavioural areas is assessed, based on observation, class tests and Standardised Tests i.e. MIST (Senior Infants, administered in the Spring Term), Drumcondra Reading and Maths Tests for 1st-6th Classes administered in the final term.

- Supplementary Teaching in Literacy and Numeracy

If your child requires supplementary teaching in Maths or English (Learning Support) or requires support from the Resource Teacher your child's teacher will inform you of the availability of these supports for your child at a meeting. Your consent is required so that your child can avail of these services. These supports are limited and can only be offered to those children deemed to be of greatest need, based on assessments and observation by the teacher. It is in your child's best interest to avail of these if offered the opportunity, especially at the early stages. Your concerns and observations are vital in making this decision.

- Progression Of Children

As far as is possible, children will be encouraged to progress with the group of children with whom they started school. If either you as parent or the teacher has concerns regarding a child's ability to cope educationally with progressing to the next class level, then the possibility of repeating the class can be discussed. Many factors will influence this decision: academic performance, child's general confidence, social development, extra learning supports available and the child's age.

In accordance with Rule 64 of Rules for National Schools, pupils will not be retained in Infants Class beyond June 30th next, following the date on which (a) he/she was enrolled in the school for one and a half years or (b) having reached

the age of 6.5 years, whichever is earlier.

Insofar as possible retention will only take place in the middle classes.

- Letters on Behalf of Outside Agencies

All letters from the Health Board are sent home and collected by schools on their behalf. These letters are usually in regard to Vision/Hearing Screening, Dental Checks and Immunisations which are conducted on site. Primary school children can avail of these services free, with parental consent. Parish and community organisations sometimes ask us to distribute information and we also willingly oblige them.

- Election of Board of Management/ Parents' Council members

Information, nomination and organisation of elections to our B.O.M. and Parents' Council are conducted through the school by letter, sent to each household.

In summary, good communication between home and school supports your child's progress academically and socially. It enables us to work with you and your child more effectively and harmoniously. Your child will benefit from seeing his/her teacher working in partnership with you to achieve what is best for him/her. Please inform us if your child experiences any difficulty academically or socially, at school or if you have any concerns or questions. It is in your child's best interest. If your child is experiencing any difficulty at home that might affect his/her ability to participate in school please tell us. Bereavement, illnesses or anxieties suffered by your child are relevant to our work and will be handled with sensitivity and in the strictest confidence.