



KILBRIDE NATIONAL SCHOOL

Ní neart go cur le Chéile

Communication with Parents/Guardians Policy

Introductory Statement

Kilbride National School recognises the vital role of clear and effective communication with parents and guardians and is committed to maintaining an open, accessible, and collaborative environment. We value strong partnerships between parents and staff, working together in the best interests of each child's education and well-being.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures and guidelines for communication between parents/guardians and the school, particularly in relation to Parent/Teacher Meetings and ongoing interactions. The school acknowledges the central role of the home in a child's development and aims to foster a supportive relationship between home and school to enhance each pupil's educational experience.

This policy sets out the key methods the school uses to ensure consistent, meaningful, and effective communication with families.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Strengthen communication and consultation between Kilbride National School and parents/guardians.
- Enhance the quality of educational support provided to pupils through effective home-school collaboration.
- Establish clear procedures for ongoing dialogue between the school and parents/guardians.

Communication

Effective communication between Kilbride National School and parents/guardians is essential in supporting each child's learning and development. Communication takes place through a variety of formal and informal channels, as outlined below:

- **Annual Parent/Teacher Meetings:** Parents are invited to attend a scheduled meeting each year to review and discuss their child's progress.
- **Individual Appointments:** Parents are encouraged to contact the school via email or phone to arrange a meeting with the Class Teacher or Special Education Teacher (SET) if they have concerns regarding their child's academic, social, emotional, or behavioural development.
- **Reading and Maths Initiatives:**
 - Parents of Junior and Senior Infants are informed of reading initiatives through newsletters, emails, the school website, parent/teacher meetings, and school support plan meetings.
 - Parents of all pupils are kept informed about both reading and maths initiatives through the same channels.
- **Teacher-Initiated Contact:** Teachers may contact parents by phone or email to arrange meetings as needed when concerns arise.
- **Daily Communication Tools:** The homework diary, homework sheet is used for ongoing communication between home and school.
- **End-of-Year Reports:** Formal feedback on each child's progress is provided through an annual written report issued at the end of the school year.
- **Event Information:** Details about school events are shared with parents/guardians in hard copy and/or via electronic platforms such as the school website, email, text messages, and the school's Facebook page.

School Newsletter

The school newsletter is a key communication tool and serves several important functions:

1. Alerting parents/guardians to upcoming events and important dates.
2. Celebrating school achievements and milestones.
3. Seeking feedback and input from parents.
4. Sharing the outcomes of parental consultations.

All newsletters, updates on school events, and key information are published on the school's Facebook page and website. Parents may also contact the school with queries about events by phone or email.

Responding to Parents

To ensure clear, consistent, and manageable communication, the Board of Management has established the following guidelines regarding how the school responds to parental communication:

- **Email Communication:** All emails from parents/guardians must be directed to the official school email address: officekilbridenstrim@gmail.com.
Emails sent to this address will be acknowledged and responded to within five school days, where appropriate.
- **Term-Time Only:** Emails will only be monitored and responded to during term time. Emails received during school holidays or closures or after school will be addressed after the school reopens.
- **Teacher Email Access:** In line with the school's communication policy, parents/guardians are not permitted access to teachers' personal or work email addresses and should not attempt to contact teachers directly via email.
- **Respectful communication:** All communication with the school must be respectful and courteous. Emails that are aggressive, disrespectful, or inappropriate in tone will not receive a response and will be escalated to the Board of Management if necessary.
- **Written communication requests:** Requests from parents/guardians to have all communication put in writing will not be accepted. In the spirit of good working relations, teachers will engage directly and personally with parents through meetings, phone calls, or other appropriate communication methods.
- **Meeting requests:** Parents/guardians requesting a meeting with school staff are required to provide a brief outline of the matter to be discussed when making the request. The school reserves the right to determine the appropriate personnel to attend and to schedule meetings once sufficient information has been provided. The Principal has full discretion to attend any meeting with a parent/guardian where she considers it appropriate. Parents/guardians may not require or instruct the Principal not to attend a meeting, nor may they refuse to engage with the Principal where her attendance is deemed necessary by the school.

These measures are in place to protect the professional boundaries of staff and to ensure that all communication is managed in a structured and respectful manner.

Contact with Special Needs Assistants (SNAs)

Parents/guardians are not permitted to contact Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) directly by text, email, or phone regarding their child's progress or to request information about how their child is getting on in school.

SNAs play a vital support role within the school, working under the direction of the class teacher and school management. They are not responsible for reporting on a child's academic, social, or emotional progress. All queries or concerns relating to a child's progress must follow the established communication procedures. Parents/guardians should contact the school office to make an appointment with the class teacher, who is the appropriate point of contact.

Consultation

Questionnaires are distributed to parents on a variety of topics through multiple channels, including hard copies, online forms, electronic surveys, and email. These questionnaires address key service areas such as the Bí Cineálta policy and the Homework policy.

We aim to communicate with parents through the following methods:

- Electronically via our school website
- Through the Aladdin School email system
- Newsletters
- Informal meetings with the class teacher and/or Principal
- Formal meetings during Parent/Teacher conferences or School Support Plan meetings
- Text messages
- Telephone calls, when relevant to your child

Procedures

Electronic Communication

The email address for Kilbride National School is readily available for use by parents.

Reasons to email:

1. Absence notes
2. To arrange an appointment

3. Minor queries or clarifications (more serious issues should not be discussed via email; please make an appointment through the Secretary if needed)
4. To bring minor issues to the teacher's attention

The school email address and website are displayed on all headed notepaper. On our website, you will find:

- The latest newsletter
- Information about the Board of Management
- Organisational policies
- Links to official documents
- Links to educational websites
- A class section
- The school calendar

Written Communication From School

- A comprehensive letter is sent home during the first week of each term. If your child is absent, the letter will be given to them upon their return to school. Parents are asked to keep this information in a place where it is easily accessible for future reference. These letters are also sent via email.
- Newsletters are sent home regularly via email.
- Letters and consent forms for trips are sent home in advance.
- Individual letters may be sent when the school needs to address matters related to the Code of Behaviour Policy, Attendance Policy, Healthy Eating Policy, or other relevant policies.

Correspondence to Parents

Kilbride National School provides the following correspondence throughout the school year:

- In September, parents are informed that the school operates under the Children First Guidelines and are provided with the names of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP).
- At the start of each school year, parents are emailed key policies, including the Bí Cineálta Policy, Child Safeguarding Policy, Code of Behaviour, Attendance Strategy, Communication Policy, and Parental Complaints Policy.

- Prior to Bí Cineálta Week, parents receive a letter outlining the theme and details of the week.
- Regular circulars are issued to keep parents informed.
- Text messages are used to quickly share important information.
- A newsletter is published highlighting achievements throughout the year.
- Regular updates are posted on the school website.

Parental Support

We ask that parents provide the following support:

- Supply resources and assistance for various topics.
- Ensure their child/children come equipped with appropriate materials, a healthy lunch, and the full school uniform.
- Review their child's/children's books, worksheets, and written work, offering support with organisation and discussing the work.
- Attend Open Days, Grandparents Day, and Science Exhibitions to view their child's work.
- Encourage visits to libraries and museums.

Visits to the School

Kilbride National School values communication, participation, and collaboration built on mutual trust and understanding. Meetings between parents and teachers play a vital role in strengthening relationships that are essential for the well-being of the children. Regular visits in the past have fostered positive connections and enhanced mutual understanding.

Opportunities for Parents and Teachers to Meet

Formal

- Formal Parent-Teacher meetings are held annually before December.
- New Junior Infant children visit the school with their parents to meet the teachers and see the classroom.
- An annual Junior Infant Day is organised for new parents and children to visit the school.
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- Meeting a class teacher at the school gate during dismissal time to discuss a child's progress or concerns is discouraged for several reasons:
 - Teachers cannot adequately supervise dismissal while simultaneously speaking with a parent/guardian.
 - It is difficult to maintain discretion with many children and parents nearby.
 - It may cause embarrassment for the child when their parent is talking to the teacher at the gate.
- Parents wishing to discuss their child are encouraged to arrange a meeting by prior appointment at any time during the year.
- Occasionally, urgent matters require meetings without prior notice. In such cases, the Principal will facilitate the meeting while making every effort to minimise disruption to teaching and learning. This will only happen in exceptional circumstances.
- Our school Open Day is held on a Saturday in October.
- Christmas plays take place in all classes each December.

Parental Expectations

- Parent communications will be responded to within a reasonable time.
- Requests for appointments will be responded to or scheduled within a reasonable time.
- Parents will be notified about any single serious issue or ongoing problem.
- Annual formal parent/teacher meetings will take place, with additional meetings or calls arranged as appropriate.

What parents should not expect:

- Teachers to return calls after work hours.
- Teachers to respond to emails during evenings or weekends.
- Access to teachers' private phone numbers or email addresses.
- Access to Special Needs Assistants personal phone numbers.

When You Should Contact Your Child's Teacher

- Changes in the family situation.
- New or changing medical issues.
- Illness.

- Safety concerns or changes in behaviour at home.
- Family emergencies, sleepless nights, playdates, or appointments.
- Ongoing or significant problems or concerns at school or home.
- If you cannot keep a scheduled appointment.
- When homework is taking much longer than recommended or your child is unable to complete most of it independently.

When You Have Last-Minute Information for the Teacher

- Send a note to the teacher.
- Send an email.
- Call the office and leave a message for the teacher.

Communication that Interferes with Teaching and Learning

- Arriving before school or during the school day without an appointment.
- Discussing issues with the teacher while they are dismissing the class at home time.
- Speaking to the teacher in a disrespectful or aggressive manner. Such behaviour will not be tolerated, and the Board of Management will be notified immediately.
- Gossiping to other parents instead of addressing concerns directly with teachers. Remember, you are a role model for how you want your child to communicate.
- Using WhatsApp class groups, social media, or private messages to spread gossip, make negative or disrespectful comments, or discuss complaints about the Principal, teachers, or school staff is not acceptable. Parents are expected to address concerns respectfully and through the appropriate school channels.

Ways to Make Your Child More Responsible and Independent

- Encourage your child to speak directly to the teacher about homework problems or other school issues. You can also send an email or note to the teacher to keep them informed, then let the teacher handle it from there.
- Make your child responsible for carrying their own bag and belongings to and from school, even from Junior Infants.
- Make your child responsible for minding their own jumper and clothing. It is important for them to take care of their clothes and not lose them.

- Drop your child off at the designated drop-off point and let them walk to their class line independently. This helps build confidence and supports a positive start to the school day.

To increase mutual respect, remember

- Teachers are professionals and teaching is their area of expertise. It is important to listen to what the teacher is saying about your child's strengths and needs. Heed their advice.
- Teachers will make mistakes; they are human, too.
- Teachers have their own families and lives; respect their privacy.
- We are all on the same team - your child's support team.
- Use age-appropriate language around children on the school grounds and at the gate when you collect them at the end of the school day.
- Recognise that we will not always agree, but we promise to listen.
- Speak positively in front of your child.

Homework

Homework is based on what was taught and learned in the classroom.

Implementation and Review

The policy will be referred to regularly to check that it is being consistently implemented. The Principal is responsible for the implementation of this policy and for its review.

Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management was ratified by the Board of Management in January 2025. This policy was reviewed in September 2026 and will be reviewed in September 2027.