

Code of Behaviour 2026

**Kilbonane National School
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Introductory Statement

Our Code of Behaviour is a set of practices, procedures, expectations, rules, and programmes that together form Kilbonane National School's plan for helping students to behave well, learn effectively, and cultivate wellness in line with the Bí Cineálta (Wellness) curriculum. This policy was formulated by the staff and Board of Management of Kilbonane National School, in consultation with parents, pupils, and the NCSE (for Sonas, our Special Class for Autism).

This policy complies with:

The Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 23

The Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018

Circular 0039/2025 (for special classes and inclusion)

NCCA's Wellbeing Guidelines and Bí Cineálta framework

NCSE guidelines for schools with an Autism Class

TUSLA/Department of Education standards for suspension and expulsion

Rationale

- It is a requirement under The Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 23, that the Board of Management prepares and makes available a Code of Behaviour for the students registered in the school.
- Section 23(2) states that the Code of Behaviour shall specify:
 - The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school.
 - The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards.
 - The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school.
 - The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student.
 - The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.
- This Code of Behaviour is rooted in the principles of Bí Cineálta, promoting kindness, empathy, resilience, and well-being as part of the school's ethos.

Relationship to characteristic Spirit of the School

This Code of Behaviour is in accordance with the School's Ethos and Vision, which is deeply aligned with the Bí Cineálta (Wellness) curriculum and NCSE guidelines for inclusion.

The ethos of Kilbonane National School aims to maintain a happy, kind, and inclusive atmosphere built on good spirit on the part of pupils, staff, parents, and the Board of Management. We seek to create, develop, foster, and maintain an environment that is:

- **Safe**
- **Happy**
- **Welcoming**
- **Inclusive**
- **Supportive of Wellbeing (Bí Cineálta)**

Within this environment, we desire a sense of good order, effective teaching, and an agreed approach to discipline, grounded in respect, fairness, courtesy, tolerance, compassion, and kindness. Our Code of Behaviour is based on the principles of Bí Cineálta, ensuring that wellness and positive relationships are at the heart of all interactions.

We will use this policy as an aid to meeting the various needs of each pupil—intellectual, social, emotional, physical, spiritual, and wellness-related—in line with the Bí Cineálta framework and NCSE guidelines. The overall success of our Code of Behaviour will depend on the cooperation, attitude, and support of home and school, as we work together to foster a culture of kindness and well-being.

The Aims of Our Code of Behaviour

The school hopes to achieve the following by introducing this policy:

- To ensure the safe, effective, and efficient operation of the school.
- To ensure that Kilbonane National School functions in an orderly, kind, and inclusive way, where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- To ensure the safety, well-being, and emotional resilience of all members of the school community throughout each school day.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance, consideration, and kindness for others.
- To promote positive behaviour, self-discipline, and emotional well-being, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, restorative practices, and individualised supports are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.
- To develop respect for school property, school buildings, and the entire school environment, in line with the Bí Cineálta principle of caring for our shared spaces.

The Objectives of Our Code of Behaviour

To help our pupils develop positive mental attitudes and well-being, whereby each child:

- Feels secure, valued, and kind in his/her environment.
- Learns to distinguish between right and wrong and to act with empathy and integrity.
- Respects all others, both younger and older, in line with the Bí Cineálta principle of kindness.

- Accepts differences and individuality of others, fostering an inclusive and tolerant school community.
- Learns to work, play, and share with others in a cooperative and kind manner.
- Develops self-esteem, resilience, and emotional well-being, and is happy at school.

Policy Content

The policy is addressed under the following headings:

1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school
2. Whole-school approach to promoting positive behaviour
3. Roles and responsibilities:
4. Pupils
5. Staff
6. Parent(s) / Guardian(s)
7. Positive strategies for managing behaviour
8. General School Rules/Expectations
9. Rewards
10. Sanctions
11. Ladder of Intervention
12. Suspension and Expulsion
13. Appeals
14. Record Keeping
15. Procedure for notification of a pupil's absence from school
16. Reference to other policies

1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school

It is our belief in Kilbonane National School that pupils will benefit from their education and be happy in a well-structured, caring, and kind environment where high standards of behaviour are expected and adhered to. These high standards will create a positive environment, conducive to teaching, learning, and well-being.

In Kilbonane National School, we ask and expect that each pupil:

Is well-behaved and shows consideration and kindness for other children and adults.

Shows respect for his/her own belongings, the property of others, and for the property of the school.

Shows kindness and a willingness to help others.

Shows courtesy and good manners.

Shows fairness in work and play with others.

Shows a readiness to resolve conflicts and to forgive and forget.

Attends school on a regular basis and is punctual.

Tries his/her best to do their schoolwork and homework.

These high standards demand commitment. In Kilbonane National School, we expect that our pupils commit to:

Attending school regularly.

Doing one's best.

Taking responsibility for one's work.

Keeping the rules.

Respecting other pupils and staff members.

Participating in school activities.

Helping to make Kilbonane National School a safe, inclusive, and kind place for all.

In Kilbonane NS, we do not tolerate Unacceptable Behaviour, including:

Behaviour that is hurtful—bullying, harassment, discrimination, victimisation.

Behaviour that interferes with or prevents teaching and learning.

Behaviour that physically hurts another person.

Behaviour that threatens another person.

Behaviour that physically damages the property of another.

Behaviour that physically damages school property.

Verbal abuse of another person, including derogatory name-calling.

Theft.

Graffiti.

A Whole-School Approach to Promoting Positive Behaviour

In Kilbonane National School, we believe that our pupils' behaviour is influenced by our school's **climate, ethos, values, policies, practices, and relationships**, all of which are grounded in the **Bí Cineálta (Wellness) framework**. We believe that **staff, management, pupils, and parents** should work as a team to create a **positive, safe, happy, kind, and inclusive school atmosphere** that supports and promotes **well-being and good behaviour**.

In Kilbonane National School, we believe that **classroom management and teaching methods** have a strong influence on pupil behaviour. Each classroom environment gives pupils **clear, consistent, and kind messages** about each teacher's expectations and creates **supportive boundaries**. It is our belief that the **skilful and empathetic management** of routine interactions with pupils by the teacher is the most critical factor in preventing problems.

Restorative Practices: The school incorporates **restorative practices** as a core element of our **Bí Cineálta approach** to foster a **positive and inclusive school culture**. These practices encourage pupils to:

- **Reflect on their actions** and their impact on others.
- **Take responsibility** for repairing harm.
- **Develop empathy and kindness**, in line with the **Bí Cineálta principles**.

Inclusivity for Pupils with Autism: Kilbonane National School is committed to fostering an **inclusive environment** for all pupils, including those in our **Special Class for Autism**. In line with **NCSE guidelines** and the **Bí Cineálta framework**, we ensure that:

- **Individualised behaviour plans** are developed for pupils with autism, where necessary, to support their **unique needs and well-being**.
- **Visual supports, social stories, and structured routines** are used to help pupils with autism **understand expectations** and navigate the school environment with **confidence and kindness**.
- **Sensory needs** are considered in all aspects of school life, including behaviour management, to create a **calm, predictable, and supportive environment**.

- **Collaboration with the NCSE** ensures that our approaches are **evidence-based, kind, and tailored** to the needs of pupils with autism.
- **Staff receive training** in **autism-specific strategies** and the **Bí Cineálta framework** to support **inclusive and empathetic** behaviour management.

Together, the school community of Kilbonane National School identifies the following vital aspects of school life that impact pupil behaviour:

- **Kind and respectful relationships** among teachers and pupils.
- Pupils' **sense of belonging** to the school.
- **Supportive and inclusive** school and classroom environments.
- **Relevance of the curriculum** to pupils' lives, including **Bí Cineálta and well-being**.
- **Flexible ability grouping and timetabling** to accommodate all learners.
- **Attentive break-time supervision** to ensure safety and kindness.
- Emphasis on **extra-curricular and co-curricular activities** that promote **well-being and inclusion**.
- Emphasis on **restorative practices** (e.g., reflective discussions) to help pupils understand the impact of their actions.
- Emphasis on **rewards and kindness** rather than sanctions.
- **Active parental involvement** in promoting **well-being and positive behaviour**.
- Meeting the **needs of pupils with special educational needs**, in line with **NCSE and Bí Cineálta guidelines**.
- **Valuing difference and diversity** and preventing discrimination.
- Children are aware that they are **responsible for their own actions** (their actions can **hurt or help others**).

Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Pupils

Pupils can expect to:

- Be treated fairly, consistently, and with kindness.
- Learn in a calm, supportive, and inclusive environment.
- Be safe from bullying and abuse, in line with our Bí Cineálta and Anti-Bullying policies.
- Have their individual differences recognised and catered for, so far as is reasonable.
- Be listened to with empathy, and to question at appropriate times.
- Have positive behaviour affirmed and celebrated.
- Have misbehaviour dealt with restoratively and kindly, with consideration for their individual needs, including those with autism.

Pupils are expected to:

- Adhere to the requirements of this Code of Behaviour and Bí Cineálta principles.
- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Behave in a responsible, kind, and respectful manner, both to others and to themselves.
- Treat others as they would like to be treated themselves, with kindness and empathy.
- Wear the full school uniform with pride.
- Work quietly, safely, and cooperatively to the best of their ability at all times.
- Listen to their teachers and act on their instructions with respect.
- Listen to other pupils and await their turn to speak.
- Respect the right of other pupils to learn in a supportive environment.
- Show respect and kindness for all members of the school community.
- Have respect for their own belongings and have the same clearly labelled.
- Respect school property and the property of others, in line with Bí Cineálta principles of caring for our environment.
- Keep the school clean and tidy.
- Have the correct books and materials in school.
- Follow class rules and routines with kindness and cooperation.
- Move quietly and safely around the school.
- Line up in an orderly and respectful manner before and after break.
- Stay on the school premises and within designated areas during school times.
- Do their homework to the best of their ability.
- Include other children in their games and activities, fostering kindness and inclusion.
- Use digital devices responsibly and in line with the school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) for ICT.

Positive Strategies for Managing Behaviour

Our strategies for managing behaviour are rooted in kindness, empathy, and restorative practices, in line with Bí Cineálta.

In the Classroom

- Ground rules – Few in number, clear, negotiated with pupils, and positively phrased (e.g., “We will be kind...” or “We will try to listen...”).
- Emphasis on praise for good/positive behaviour and kindness.
- Good news shared with other classes, teachers, and the Principal to celebrate kindness and well-being.
- Principal praises good/positive behaviour at assembly and in the classroom, reinforcing Bí Cineálta values.
- Good classroom management techniques through foresight and planning, which ensure a variety of activities, rewards, and methodologies to sustain pupil motivation, kindness, and well-being.
- Use of visual supports and social stories to assist pupils with autism in understanding expectations and promoting kindness.

In the Yard

- Emphasis on safety, care, and kindness at all times.
- Emphasis on what activities are allowed and not allowed, with clear explanations.
- Emphasis on the areas for senior and junior classes, ensuring fairness and inclusion.
- Emphasis on regulations for leaving the playground in a safe and orderly manner.
- Emphasis on routines at the beginning of break/end of break – lining up, “Freeze and Walk” – to promote order and kindness.
- Reminders of teachers and SNAs on duty – “tell teacher” if there are issues, fostering a culture of care.
- Frequent praise for remembering and following the rules, reinforcing positive behaviour and kindness.
- Structured and predictable routines to support pupils with autism and promote a calm environment.

Rewards

The main goals of our Code of Behaviour are to promote good behaviour, kindness, and well-being, and to prevent inappropriate behaviour. We believe that the day-to-day excellence of both school and classroom management will assist the vast majority of pupils to behave in a manner that supports their own learning, development, and well-being.

A reward system will be part of the overall school and individual class strategy to reward positive behaviour and kindness. A reward system may also form part of a planned intervention to help an individual pupil manage their own behaviour, in line with Bí Cineálta principles.

Rewards are tailored to meet the individual needs of pupils, including those with autism or other special educational needs, to ensure inclusivity, fairness, and kindness.

Our rewards for Junior classes may include:

- Teacher praise (orally), celebrating kindness and effort.
- Teacher writes positive comments in copybooks, reinforcing Bí Cineálta values.
- Stickers/stamps on good work or on school jumpers, celebrating achievements and kindness.
- Praise by support teacher/other class level teacher.
- Praise by Principal in the classroom/at assembly, highlighting kindness and positive behaviour.
- Principal's Award for demonstrating Bí Cineálta values.
- Gaeilgeoir na Seachtaine.
- Treats on special occasions (be aware of children with allergies).
- Homework off as a reward for consistent kindness and effort.
- Golden Time – extra playtime, extra P.E., DVD, extra computer time, indoor games, extra art time, extra Library Reading time, etc.
- Table of the Week for demonstrating teamwork and kindness.
- Star Charts/Merit Chart to track positive behaviour and well-being.
- Showing work to other classes/teachers, celebrating achievements and kindness.
- Showing work on School Website/Facebook page to celebrate kindness and effort.
- Assigned jobs in the classroom to promote responsibility and kindness.
- Inform parents of good news/behaviour/work, reinforcing positive values at home.

Our rewards for Senior classes may include:

- Teacher praise (orally) or written in homework diary/copy, celebrating kindness and effort.
- Delegating responsibility or privilege to promote leadership and kindness.
- Praise by Support Teacher/other class level teacher.
- Praise by Principal – in classroom, at assembly, or in private, as appropriate, highlighting Bí Cineálta values.
- Principal's Award for demonstrating kindness, resilience, or empathy.
- Gaeilgeoir na Seachtaine.
- Treats after games/events, or on special other occasions, celebrating teamwork and effort.

- Homework off as a reward for consistent kindness and effort.
- Golden Time – extra playtime, extra P.E., DVD, extra computer/laptop time, indoor games, quizzes, extra Library Reading time, etc.
- Star Charts to track positive behaviour and well-being.
- Inform parents of good news/behaviour/work, reinforcing positive values at home.

The above list is not comprehensive and consists of examples only.

Sanctions

Despite the best efforts of schools, inappropriate behaviour happens. Even minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour can be disruptive, particularly if they are persistent. Serious misbehaviour can have a damaging and long-lasting effect, including disruption of learning, distress, anxiety, and fear, which are counter to the Bí Cineálta principles of well-being and kindness.

Where a student's behaviour disrupts the teaching, learning, or well-being of other students, we in Kilbonane National School will deal with each case by applying our professional judgement, kindness, and restorative practices, drawing on factual and objective information. The nature of the misbehaviour, the age of the child, and their individual needs (including those with autism) will determine the strategy to be employed. Our overall strategy will be to intervene early, positively, and restoratively when student behaviour does not meet the standards expected by the school.

Restorative Practices: We use restorative conversations to help pupils:

- Reflect on their behaviour and its impact on others.
- Understand the harm caused and take steps to repair it.
- Develop empathy, kindness, and resilience, in line with Bí Cineálta principles.
- For pupils with autism, individualised restorative approaches are used, such as visual prompts, social stories, or structured reflection time, to ensure they can fully participate in the process.

The Purpose of Sanctions:

- To help pupils learn that their behaviour is unacceptable and unkind.
- To help pupils recognise the effect of their actions on others, fostering empathy and kindness.
- To help pupils (in ways appropriate to their age, development, and individual needs) understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences.
- To help pupils learn to take responsibility for their behaviour, in line with Bí Cineálta principles.
- To reinforce boundaries as set out in our Code of Behaviour and Bí Cineálta framework.
- To signal to other pupils and staff that their well-being is being protected.
- **In cases of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:**

- o (i) Prevent serious disruption of teaching, learning, or well-being.
- o (ii) Keep the pupil, other pupils, or adults safe.

Good Practice in the Use of Sanctions:

- Sanctions are part of a plan to change behaviour and foster kindness.
- Sanctions are used consistently and fairly.
- Sanctions are proportionate, appropriate, and kind, displaying a “common-sense” approach.
- Individualised sanctions are considered for pupils with autism or other special educational needs, in line with NCSE and Bí Cineálta guidance.
- Pupils and parents know what sanctions are used in school and understand their restorative purpose.

Ladder of Intervention

An important element of our approach to dealing with students’ inappropriate behaviour is a problem-solving and restorative approach, whereby we will respond through the following steps:

- Gather information – Understand the context, individual needs (including autism), and well-being factors that may be affecting behaviour.
- Generate ideas about possible kind and restorative solutions.
- Decide and agree on specific, individualised strategies that promote well-being and kindness.
- Implement the agreed strategy consistently, with empathy and fairness.
- Review progress, ensuring that well-being and positive behaviour are central to the process.

As part of the whole-school approach, all staff will have an agreed “Ladder of Intervention” in response to inappropriate behaviour. This allows for consistency among staff as well as ensuring that there is a planned, inclusive, and restorative approach to helping students change their own behaviour.

In general terms, we have three levels of intervention:

1. Support for all – Most pupils behave appropriately. Occasional, minor misbehaviour will be attended to kindly and effectively through the skill and expertise of the classroom teachers, in line with Bí Cineálta principles.
2. Additional support for some pupils – Some students need more active intervention, including:
 - o Teacher/parent chat re. the inappropriate behaviour and its impact on well-being.
 - o Referral to Principal to monitor behaviour and well-being.
 - o Individualised behaviour plans for pupils with autism or other special educational needs, developed in collaboration with the NCSE and grounded in Bí Cineálta principles.

3. Specialised support for a small minority of students – A few pupils may show particularly challenging behaviour. They may not respond to low-level interventions. These few will need a sustained, individualised, and restorative response, involving the important adults in their lives. The Principal may seek guidance and support from outside agencies, e.g., NEPS, TUSLA, HSE, NCSE, or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), ensuring that well-being and kindness remain central.

Monitoring and Review

Each staff member is responsible for the implementation of the Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying Policy, and Bí Cineálta framework. Within the classroom, the teacher monitors his/her class, ensuring that well-being, kindness, and positive behaviour are prioritised. Teachers consider themselves responsible for the behaviour and well-being of children within sight or sound of them and respond to any instance of inappropriate behaviour with restorative practices.

The Principal is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the policy at staff level on a regular basis and reports any review the staff deem necessary to the Board of Management.

The Board of Management (BOM) has ultimate responsibility for discipline, well-being, and kindness in the school under its management and a duty to ensure that a fair, inclusive, and restorative Code of Discipline applies therein. The Board of Management will ensure the Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying Policy, and Bí Cineálta framework are reviewed annually, or more often if the need arises, to ensure they remain inclusive, effective, and aligned with well-being principles.

Success Criteria

Some practical indicators of the success of the policy:

- Observation of positive behaviour, kindness, and well-being in classrooms, playground, and school environment.
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers, with a focus on Bí Cineálta principles.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents, and pupils regarding well-being and kindness.
- Emotional well-being, resilience, and inclusivity of pupils, as reflected in the school's Wellbeing Policy and Bí Cineálta framework.
- Inclusivity and support for pupils with autism, as evidenced by their engagement, progress, and well-being in line with NCSE and Bí Cineálta guidelines.

Ratification

This policy was reviewed and ratified at a Board of Management meeting on 22 September 2026.

Chairperson: _____ (Name) Date: _____ Principal:
_____ (Keith Cotter) Date: _____
