

# *Scoil an Chlochair*



*Kilbeggan*



*Issued by the Board of Management*

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## **Scoil an Chlochair**

The Order of the Sisters of Mercy was founded on 12<sup>th</sup> of December 1831 when Catherine McCauley and two other sisters made their profession of vows. In the ten years between the founding of the order and her death on November 11 1841, Catherine founded nine Convents of Mercy. The first was in Tullamore in April 1836.

The Convent of Mercy School in Kilbeggan opened its doors on January 10<sup>th</sup> 1880 and by the end of the month there were 240 pupils on the rolls. On September 15<sup>th</sup> 1955 the late Dr. Kyne, Bishop of Meath blessed and officially opened the modern National School following a decision to renovate the old National school for the Secondary pupils. In September 1997 the Convent of Mercy National School and Kilbeggan Boys National School amalgamated to form Scoil an Chlochair (The school of the convent). In 2003 Bishop Michael Smith of Meath blessed and Mary O'Rourke, leader of Seanad Eireann officially opened the newly renovated and extended Scoil an Chlochair. In January, 2016 four new classrooms and office facilities were opened by Minister for Education and Skills, Jan O Sullivan.

Catherine told her sisters:

"Each day is a step we make towards eternity, and we shall continue thus to step from day to day until we take the last step, which will bring us into the presence of God."

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Scoil an Chlochair is a Catholic school which was established by the Sisters of Mercy and is under the patronage of the Bishop of Meath. Our school is committed to the educational, moral and spiritual development of all of the children in our care. Our mission is to provide the children with a personally challenging and quality education, which is suitable to each pupil's individual abilities. We are committed to collaborating as a staff with each other, with parents and others in order to enhance the educational experience we offer.



## **Information about the School**

**Address:** Scoil an Chlochair,  
Kilbeggan,  
Co. Westmeath

**Telephone:** 057 9332338/ 9333558

**Email:** [office@kilbeggannationalschool.com](mailto:office@kilbeggannationalschool.com)

**Website:** [www.kilbeggannationalschool.com](http://www.kilbeggannationalschool.com)

### **Board of Management**

**Chairperson:** Geraldine Fennell

### **Staff for 2021-2022**

**Principal:** Niall Rabbitt (on Secondment 2021-2022)

**Deputy Principal:** Eileen O'Neill (Acting Principal)

**Assistant Principals:** Caroline Dunne, Pdraig Seery

**Class Teachers:** Jean Wade, Florence Guilfoyle, Aoife Finn,  
Fionnuala Irwin, Derek Davey, Sinead  
McLoughlin, Kate Rushe, Robyn Grimes,  
Pdraig Seery.

### **Special Educational**

**Teachers:** Caroline Dunne, Brenda Watts, Carmel  
Campbell, Katie McDonnell, Aoife Sheridan

**Special Needs  
Assistants:** Noeleen Costello Debbie Coughlan,  
Angela Doonan, Mona Kelly, Irene Hanlon,

**Secretary:** Florrie Gill

**Cleaners:** Geraldine Hctor, Aisling Kilroe

**Caretaker:** Martin Maher

## **School Attendance**

Under the Education Welfare Act (2000) each child is obliged by law to attend school every day on which the school is in operation unless there is a reasonable explanation for not attending. Following any absence parents must inform the school by phone or via Aladdin Connect.

The practice of taking children on holiday during term time is strongly discouraged. Not only will this impact on the child's learning but parents are reminded that under the Section 21 of the Education Welfare Act (2000) the school is obliged to inform the Education Welfare Officer if a child is absent on more than **twenty days** in a school year. Children taking unnecessary extended leave will be removed from the roll and will have to re-apply for a place in the school.

The Attendance Policy may be accessed on the school website [www.kilbeggnationalschool.com](http://www.kilbeggnationalschool.com)



## **Code of Behaviour**

The Code of Behaviour seeks to create a happy atmosphere where Christian virtues of respect, obedience, fairness, forgiveness, trust and truth are practised. The aim of the Code of Behaviour is to achieve and maintain a harmonious teaching and learning environment.

Our approach to discipline is a 'positive' one that concentrates on all aspects of school life including class-work, homework, play, dealing with correction, success and failure. Over a period of time, such an approach enables the children to develop self-discipline that in turn will guide and direct them as they develop into young adults.

Parents, the prime educators of their children, play a key role in helping their child achieve positive attitudes in these areas by taking an active interest in the child's school life and by being fully aware at all times of how their child is coping with the work aspect of school as well as with the social dimensions of the child's life.

### **Principles of the Code**

Our Code of Behaviour:

- Promotes positive behaviour in order to develop self-discipline.
- Acknowledges the profound influence that self-esteem has on learning.
- Recognises the uniqueness and endless potential of each child and attempts to communicate that image to them.
- Embraces failure as well as success as important in the process of learning.
- Sees the support and co-operation of parents as being essential to the effective operation of the 'Code of Behaviour.'
- Imposes sanctions in order to maintain good order and to discourage offenders.

### **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**

- What happened?
- What were you thinking about at the time?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- Who has been affected by what you did?
- In what way have they been affected?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

### **To help those harmed by other actions**

- What did you think when you realised what had happened?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- How has this affected others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

### **Strategies/Incentives to encourage Positive Behaviour**

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment on a child's exercise book.
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group.
- Individual class merit awards, point awards or award stamps.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Written or verbal communication with parent.
- Behaviour management plans in the case of certain pupils
- 

### **Discouraging Misbehaviour**

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development. These may include:

- (a) Reasoning with the pupil
- (b) Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
- (c) Temporary separation from peers, friends or others (within class/ different class)
- (d) Prescribing extra work.
- (e) Loss of privileges – which may include golden time, library, ICT, Trips etc
- (f) Detention during a break or break at a separate time to peers (SNA dependant)
- (g) Prescribing additional work
- (h) Referral to Principal Teacher
- (i) Communication with parents – Note/ phone call Home

## **Implementation of the Code**

Our code acknowledges three broad categories of misbehaviour as

- a) misdemeanour
- b) serious misbehaviour
- c) gross misbehaviour

### **Examples of Misdemeanour**

- Continuous talking in class
- Inattention
- Pushing in the line
- No homework done on a regular basis
- Repeated interruption or shouting out
- Disobedience
- Taking the belongings of others without permission

When misbehaviour occurs, the following is a list of possible sanctions, strategies and procedures that may be used.

### **Misdemeanour**

1. The pupil is made aware that his/her behaviour is unacceptable, receives a verbal reprimand from teacher and is asked to make a conscious effort to improve.
2. A yellow card is issued to the child as a first warning.
3. If the behaviour still continues a red card is issued and the child may be temporarily separated from peers, friends and others within classroom and yard.
4. A note or comment on misbehaviour may be written on Aladdin to be responded to by parents/guardians.
5. A phone call will be made to the parent by the class teacher if there is no improvement.
6. If children continue to disrupt class, the parents/guardians will be asked to meet with the teacher and or Principal to give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future.

### **Examples of serious Misbehaviour**

- All misdemeanours when on a continuous basis
- Rough play leading to a child getting hurt
- Fighting
- Refusal to do work
- Stealing from others
- Ongoing lying, dishonesty
- Showing disrespect for others or for property

- Hitting or aggressive behaviour
- Bad/inappropriate language or gestures
- Racist remarks or name calling
- Biting, spitting or kicking

### **Serious Misbehaviour**

In instances of serious misbehaviour the following stages will be followed:

#### **Stage 1. – Contact is made with parents by phone call**

#### **Stage 2. Detention**

Class /yard teacher recommends detention and this is communicated to parents via Aladdin.

#### **Stage 3.- Detention and Contract**

If a pupil receives two detentions in any four school weeks the class teacher and pupil go to the office and draw up a contract of behaviour. This contract will be signed in the presence of the Principal. A copy of the contract will be sent to parents to be signed and returned.

#### **Stage 4.- Case Conference**

If a pupil receives more than three detentions in any four school weeks, the child's parents will be asked to meet the class teacher and principal. The child will be asked to give a written undertaking that he/she will behave in school. This will be witnessed and signed by Parent/Parents or guardian.

#### **Stage 5.- Internal Suspension**

This is when a pupil is removed from their own base class and is placed in another class for up to three school days. This will be activated when stages 1-4 are exhausted.

#### **Stage 6-Suspension**

This procedure is used in the case of gross misbehaviour and or health & safety grounds:

- a) If stage 4 is exhausted or there is a single incident of gross misbehaviour the Principal requests a meeting with the parents. If considered warranted the Principal reserves the right to suspend the pupil for 3 days initially. This power of suspension is delegated to the principal by the school Board of Management.
- b) In certain circumstances the Principal with the approval of their Chairperson of the BoM may suspend a pupil for 5 school days
- c) A meeting of the BoM may authorise further suspension up to a maximum of 10 days. Suspension will be in accordance with Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

## **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.

## **Stage 7 – Expulsion**

This procedure may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

## **Grounds for Expulsion**

- Behaviour is persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- Continued presence of pupil constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- Pupil responsible for serious damage to property.

## **Automatic Expulsion**

BoM may sanction automatic expulsion for certain prescribed behaviours:

1. Sexual Assault
2. Possession of illegal drugs
3. Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
4. Actual violence or physical assault
5. Serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff.

## **Procedures in Respect to Expulsion**

1. Detail investigation by school principal
2. Recommendation by principal to BoM
3. BoM considers Principals recommendation and holds hearing
4. BoM decision, is expulsion appropriate? If BoM recommends expulsion, the BoM will propose a date which will allow a 20-day cooling off period
5. Education Welfare Officer is informed of proposal to expel pupil and effective date of that proposal
6. Parents of the pupil are informed of rights to invoke a Section 29 appeal under the Education Act 1998
7. Education Welfare Officer arranges consultations
8. Confirmation of decision.

### **Examples of Gross Misbehaviour**

- All serious misbehaviour when on a continuous basis
- Blatant disobedience or disrespect
- Insults to staff
- Damage to property
- Bullying
- Threats
- Any behaviour which has a detrimental effect on the Education or safety of others
- Assault on staff
- Sexual assault

### **Gross Misbehaviour**

In instances of gross misbehaviour:

- a) the pupil will be sent immediately to the Principal's office
- b) parents/guardians will be contacted and requested to meet with the Principal as soon as possible.
- c) warned that should there be another incidence of serious misbehaviour the Board of Management, may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension or expulsion in accordance with the provisions of the Educational Welfare Act 2000.

### **Damage, Loss or Theft of School Property**

- a) Recompense is expected to be made by pupil/parents/guardians for damage to, loss or theft of property.
- b) Appropriate sanctions and procedures to be followed, depending on which category of misbehaviour – serious or gross – the offence applies to.

*The code of behaviour was ratified by the B.O.M ON 30-09-21*

  
Geraldine Fennell Chairperson Board of Management

## **Religious Formation**

Father Brendan Corrigan P.P. is our school chaplain and visits the school on a regular basis.



The pupils receive Sacraments of First Penance and First Holy Communion when they are in Second Class. Sixth Class children receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Parents are asked to follow the Religious Programme from the child's book, and help with the Religion work when it is sent home.

During the school year, the children will have the opportunity to participate in the sacrament of reconciliation. Also prayer services and school Masses are held on a regular basis.

### ***Morning Prayer***

*Father in heaven, you love me,  
You're with me night and day.*

*I want to love you always  
In all I do and say.*

*I'll try to please you, Father.*

*Bless me through the day.*

*Amen*

### ***Night Prayer***

*God, our Father, I come to say*

*Thank you for your love today*

*Thank you for my family,*

*And all the friends you give to me.*

*Guard me in the dark of night,*

*And in the morning send your light.*



## **Health, Safety and Hygiene**

- Children who are ill should not be asked to go to school.
- Parents are asked that teachers be made aware of any physical disability, allergy, etc. that their child may have.
- Children are not allowed to remain unsupervised in class during school break times.
- Chewing gum is not allowed in school.
- Aerosols and talcum powder cans are strictly forbidden in kit or gear bags for PE, swimming or any school organised outdoor activity.
- Teachers are not insured to administer medication to children. If vital medication is needed, throughout the school day, this must be brought to the attention of the Principal so that administration arrangements can be discussed.
- Please ensure that the school has at least 3 contact numbers of parent/guardian/minder.
- A parent/guardian who wishes to collect a child early during the school day must sign out the child at the school office. They must also indicate the reason for the early withdrawal of the child.
- **Please notify the school of any change of address or phone number.**

### **Accident Procedures**

Accidents occur despite supervision. Minor accidents are treated at school. In the event of a more serious accident/child becoming ill, every possible effort will be made to contact the pupil's parents/guardians or the persons delegated to take responsibility for the pupil.

In extreme situations, where parents/guardians cannot be contacted, it may be necessary to take a child to the doctor/hospital. Therefore, as part of the school enrolment form we ask parents to sign to give permission to the school to bring their child straight to the doctor/hospital should the need arise. We don't expect to have to use such measures very often, but nevertheless in the light of our experience we feel it safer to have made provision for such an emergency.

### **Personal Hygiene**

Hygiene is an extremely important aspect of the development of your children and we encourage parents to help develop a sense of personal hygiene in their children from a very young age. We encourage the children to wash their hands after each visit to the toilet and ask that this is reinforced at home.

**Special attention should be paid to cleanliness of hair.**

Your child is sharing a room with a large number of children and close contact is unavoidable and so,

1. You should check your child's hair regularly for head lice.
2. Long hair should be tied back at all times.
3. If your child has head lice inform the teacher who will then send a discreet note to all other parents advising them to check heads and follow the correct procedures which include the use of a special shampoo (available at chemists only) along with fine-combing the child's hair.
4. If this problem persists, Parents/Guardians may be asked to keep their child at home to avoid any further spreading of the infection.

*If such a case should arise please be extra diligent in your efforts to eradicate this problem.*



## **Homework**

Through the active involvement and interest of parents/guardians in their children's homework on a daily basis, consistent and steady progress is made by the child over a period of time. Therefore, **we strongly encourage you to take an active interest in your child's homework and to ensure that the allocated homework is done each evening.** Homework consists of **oral** work (e.g. reading, spellings, tables, prayers, poems and place names) and **written** work.

- Homework will be given up to four nights a week for pupils from all classes (Junior Infants will be given homework commencing after Halloween) and will be communicated through **Aladdin Connect**
- If for some reason all the homework is not done, **a note on Aladdin Connect** should be sent by the parent/guardian to the class teacher.

Studies done on getting the most value from 'Homework' shows that **'Same time, Same place'** works best. This may not always be possible, nevertheless, every effort should be made to establish the pattern of consistency and regularity that is implicit in 'Same time, Same place.'

- Homework should be distraction free – no television, games, etc. – as far as possible.
- Homework should be done earlier rather than later each evening.
- Homework is all about concentration, organisation and reinforcement of schoolwork. It is vitally important to stress that homework that takes all night to do is generally not effective.
- Concentration within a given time limit is essential to maximise effectiveness and will set up good habits and study skills for the future.
- Please draw your child's attention to his/her hand-writing and the general presentation of his/her work. Children who work neatly are generally very proud of their work and interested in achieving.
- Class homework may be tailored to the special educational needs of some pupils.

The following are recommended as the **maximum** times that should be spent at homework by the children:

Infants	15 minutes.
First Class	25 minutes.
Second Class	30 minutes.
Third Class	40 minutes.
Fourth Class	50 minutes.
Fifth Class	60 minutes.
Sixth Class	60 minutes.



### **Routines and Regulations**

The following routines and regulations apply to every child attending Scoil an Chlochair. They are designed to ensure a safe and secure environment to work and play in and to guarantee the smooth and effective running of our school.

#### **Arrival at school in the morning**

School starts at 8:50am each morning. Pupils should arrive on time for class. The school gates will open at 8.40am. Once a child enters school he or she may not leave without permission.

#### **Collection of Children at 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm**

Junior and Senior Infants go home at 1.30pm.

Parents and guardians should arrive for collection of pupils close to finish time. The Board of Management asks that parents and guardians of all children wait in the Church car park and do not enter the school yard without a prior appointment.

## **Lunchtime Procedures**

- There are short morning breaks at 10.35am (Junior Classes) 10.50am (Senior Classes) lasting 10 minutes. The lunch breaks are at 11.55am (Junior Classes) and 12.30pm (Senior Classes) and are of 30 minutes' duration.
- At break times children must ask the teacher on duty for permission to be re-admitted to the school building.
- All pupils will have lunch in their classrooms.
- All pupils must go to the playground during the mid-morning break and after their lunch except on wet days when they remain inside (either in classrooms or in the G.P. Room).

**Unless Board of Management sanction is sought and granted, the school grounds are out of bounds to all after school hours due to Insurance Regulations.**

## **Safety Guidelines: Entering and Leaving the School**

All pupils must enter and leave the school grounds only through the back gates from church car park gate.

For safety reasons pupils are not allowed to leave the school grounds during the school day without permission.

## **Parental Involvement**

As a Catholic school, we believe that the school is not an isolated unit but a union of many people who come together to give it life and meaning.

We aim to establish this relationship through:

- encouraging a shared commitment to the success of each individual child;
- encouraging an ethos of understanding and openness in home-school-parish relationships;
- helping parents to develop a positive role in complementing and supporting the work of the school in educating their children.

Parental involvement in the life of the school is encouraged in many ways:

- through parent membership of the Board of Management and Parent Association;
- involvement in celebrations, concerts and school plays;
- involvement in school masses and in Sacramental preparation;
- help with school sports and other activities.

### **Home – School Cooperation**

Parents are the primary educators of their children and the influences and values of the home cannot be overstressed. Parents and teachers work together to help the child reach his/her full potential. The support and co-operation of parents and guardians is essential to the effective operation of the school.



### **Keeping Informed of Your Child's Progress**

#### **Aladdin Connect**

Staff will communicate regularly with parents and pupils via Aladdin Connect, our online communication platform. All families are asked to download the Aladdin Connect App and to check it daily for updates and important information. Teachers will post work for pupils each week (Sunday) on the app

#### **Parent-Teacher Meetings**

Formal Parent/Teacher meetings will be held once during the school year, usually in February. It is important to attend this meeting to be kept informed of your child's progress and it is also important that your child sees that you are interested in his/her school work.

#### **Annual School Reports**

These are issued at the end of the school year.

Outside of these formal meetings, parents are asked to abide by the following arrangements if they wish to meet the Principal, teachers or any staff member

- All visitors to the school (this includes parents and guardians) must report to the school office when visiting the school. If you wish to take your child out of school early you must sign them out in our 'signing out book' located in the school Reception area.
- Messages for children, lunches, books, etc. should be left at the secretary's office for delivery to the classrooms.
- Appointments to meet with Teacher and/or Principal can be made by note/email or phone call either directly with the member of staff concerned or through the school secretary. *Discussions at classroom doors are unsatisfactory for both parents and teachers and therefore should not take place.*

Our school is a busy place with many different events and activities taking place. To accommodate a busy schedule, it is necessary to inform parents/guardians regarding activities, events, school closures etc. on an ongoing basis. It is important to check for notices regularly on **Aladdin Connect** as you may miss out on important information or deadlines.

### **How Parents Can Help**

- Show an interest in, and concern for your child's education.
- Being over ambitious and putting undue pressure on your child is undesirable.
- Avoid comparing your child with other children at home, in class or in your neighbourhood.
- A positive attitude to school and its teachers in the presence of your children is extremely important.
- Something to keep in mind – an over reliance on televisions, play stations and computer games can lead to frustration, passiveness and the exclusion of other healthy pursuits.
- Praise and encouragement form the foundations of successful relations between parents/teacher and children.
- Avoid using the teacher as a threat.

### **Grievance Procedure**

Please contact the school office for information on our grievance procedure. Further information can also be obtained on our website [www.kilbeggannationalschool.com](http://www.kilbeggannationalschool.com)

## **General School Information**

### **Our School Uniform**

The official school uniform is:

- Navy pinafore, skirt or trousers
- Blue blouse/shirt/polo shirt
- Navy jumper/cardigan
- (Navy shorts in warm weather)

**This uniform must be worn each day except on PE day when a plain navy school track suit (i.e. runners, track suit/shorts, blue polo shirt and sweatshirt/jumper) should be worn.**

Children should have their names on their uniforms, coats and other personal belongings.

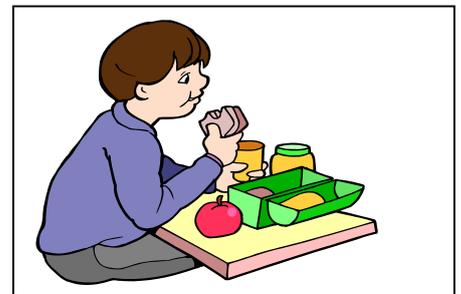
### **Healthy Lunches**

Here in Scoil an Chlochair we encourage healthy eating habits. To this end, we do not allow crisps, sweets, bars, fizzy drinks, peanuts, chocolate products and biscuits in the children's lunch boxes and we encourage you to provide healthy options such as:

- Sandwiches
- Fruit
- Yoghurt
- Small crackers and cheese
- Milk/fruit drinks/milk shakes

The school facilitates the delivery of lunches each day by a company called *The lunchbag*

Parents may order online [www.thelunchbag.ie](http://www.thelunchbag.ie)



**Chewing gum is forbidden** at all times in the school grounds, corridors and classrooms.

### **Nuts and food containing nuts**

As we have several children in the school with severe nut allergies, we have had to implement a ban on children bringing in nuts or any foods containing nuts. We would appreciate your co-operation in this matter.

## **School Books**

Towards the end of the summer term pupils will be given a list of books that they will require for the following September. These books should be purchased over the summer holidays and be brought into school on the first day of the autumn term.



## **Photocopying and Educational Resources**

In order to cover the costs of buying materials for photocopying and educational resources a small fee will be charged per pupil at the beginning of the school year.

## **Mobile Phones**

It is recognised that mobile phones can be intrusive and distracting in situations such as school settings. In addition, there is continued debate about the possible harmful effects on children from frequent use of mobile phones. Therefore, the pupils of Scoil an Chlochair are not permitted to use mobile phones while in school.

## **Stay Safe Programme**

The **Stay Safe Programme** is taught in each class from Junior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> Class. It is a requirement that each school must teach the Stay Safe programme. Consent from parents/guardians is not required but if you wish your child to **not** take part in the programme then you must write to the Chairperson of the BOM stating the reasons for not allowing your child to take part.