

# Fossa National School

Fossa, Killarney, Co. Kerry.

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[www.fossanationalschool.com](http://www.fossanationalschool.com)



# Fossa National School

## **Introduction**

The aim of Fossa National School, Killarney is to provide a Christian, caring, learning environment, which facilitates the nurturing of each pupil's full educational potential. The achievement of this aim informs all of the planning processes and activities which occur in our school. Teachers and parents are partners in the children's education, with co-operation and communication between home and school being vital ingredients in the educational process. We share the same aim i.e. the well being of the children in our care. This prospectus has been produced with the express purpose of sharing information with parents concerning school policies, rules and routines. Fossa National School operates in accordance with the Education Act 1998 and the Rules for National Schools as determined by the Department of Education and Science. We, the Board of Management of Fossa National School, hope that each child will have a very enjoyable time in this school and that the information provided will prove to be of major benefit.

## **School Charter**

Fossa National School is a Roman Catholic School established with the Minister for Education and aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Catholic School provides Religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Catholic Church and promotes the formation of pupils in the Catholic Faith.



## Fossa School

*Each person through positive learning experiences will be  
Stimulated to achieve his/her full potential, face life confidently, find fulfilment and  
Be respectful in an ever-changing world.*



2013-2014

[www.fossanationalschool.com](http://www.fossanationalschool.com)

Killarney, Co. Kerry.

Chairperson: Kieran Coffey

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Principal: Pat Clifford

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Deputy Principal: Linda O Donoghue

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FOSSA NATIONAL SCHOOL

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A Thuismitheoirí a Chairde,

This booklet gives you easy access to important information about the school. You may download a copy of any/all of the policies from [www.fossanationalschool.com](http://www.fossanationalschool.com). If there is anything else you would like to know, please contact the school on (064) 6634863.

Le gach dea ghuí,  
Pat Clifford and Staff.

## Vision

Each person through positive learning experiences will be stimulated to achieve his/her full potential, face life confidently, find fulfilment and be respectful in an ever-changing world.

## Religious Education

Fossa National School is a Catholic school, under the patronage of the Bishop of Kerry: Bishop Raymond Browne. A Christian ethos permeates the school day and the life of the school. There is a spirit of prayer in the school not just imposed on the children, but it is seen to be a value for the teachers. We enrol pupils of other faiths or no faith in the school and respect their beliefs and practices. Parents are welcome to view the Catholic religion programme taught: at its core is 'Love God and love your neighbour'. The school cannot undertake to educate children of other faiths in their own faith, nor can it provide supervision during the religious education period apart from the class.

## Crest



Our school is situated on the shores of Lough Léin  
(The Lake of Learning) the largest of Killarney's lakes.

The crest was designed by local artist Ronnie Moore. It depicts Óisín and Niamh Cinn Óir skimming the waters of Loch Léin on their way to "Tír na nÓg" the legendary "Land of Youth."

It is presented in the form of an open book, representing "the Annals of Innishfallen", and now preserved in the Bodleian Library in Oxford.

Fosadh, a resting place, is often referred to as "Fosadh na Feinne" and is reminiscent of the Fianna who hunted and rested on the shores of Loch Léin before the dawn of Christianity.

## Mission Statement

Fossa National School promotes Gospel values in a Christian learning community, where children can grow in knowledge and understanding and in the acquisition of skills, attitudes and values. We are fully committed to offering excellence in education by: promoting the highest possible achievement for our pupils; encouraging children to grow within the Catholic faith; establishing the foundations for lifelong learning; welcoming input from parents to complement the skills and experience of our professional teaching staff; ensuring that our school is central to the parish, reaching out to embrace the wider community; uniting all staff, parents and B.O.M. in our aim to be a leading school in the Diocese of Kerry. Our aim is that all children should leave Fossa National School with the basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy, an enthusiasm for learning, a thirst for knowledge, an appreciation of their religion and the world they live and, above all, many happy memories.

## Board of Management

The Board of Management has legal responsibility for the overall running of the school. It serves for a term of four years and a new Board was formed in November 2011. The members of the current board are:

Patrons' Representatives	Fr. Brendan Harrington
Principal and Teachers' Representative	Pat Clifford/Niall Keogh
Parents' Representatives	Jane O'Shaughnessy/Tim Kissane
Community Representatives	Margaret Moriarty/Mary O'Leary
Chairman	Kieran Coffey

## Staff

Principal	Pat Clifford
Deputy Principal	Linda O'Donoghue
	Aoife O'Connor
	Aideen O'Doherty
	Linda O'Donoghue
	Michael Finnegan
	Rosemary Moynihan
	Fiona Hallissey
	Clare Griffin
	Brigid Murphy
	Niall Keogh
	Helen Moynihan
Special Needs Assistant	Nancy Kennedy
Secretary	Norann Moran
Caretaker / Cleaner	Anthony Favier
Cleaner	Brendan Myres

## Basic Information

### School Times:

8.50a.m.	School Grounds open to admit pupils
9.05a.m.	Classes commence
10.50 a.m.	Morning Break
12.30 p.m.	Lunch Break
1.45p.m.	Junior and Senior Infants finish
2.45p.m.	End of school day (1st – 6th classes)

No responsibility is accepted for pupils arriving before 8.50a.m. Parents who wish to have their children escorted home should make their own arrangements to have them met at the school and the person to escort them should be at the school no later than 2.55p.m. The school cannot accept responsibility for looking after children after 2.55p.m., except for those partaking in after school activities organised by the school.

### Safety Rules:

The Board of Management would like to re-state some of the general safety rules around the dropping off of pupils before school and the collection of pupils after school. The Board is not responsible for the health and safety of any child once they leave the school grounds. In a further effort to enhance this safety message we would appreciate if all parents/guardians adhered to the following guidelines in order to minimise the possibility of an accident.

- Please do not park vehicles in the wheelchair designated parking area in the church yard.
- Do not double park or park on the opposite side of the road.
- Pupils should at all times enter the school through the main stiles and walk in an orderly manner.
- If your child/children are being dropped or collected by a child minder or other please inform the school.
- Finally all parents who consent to their children leaving the school grounds as pedestrians or cyclists and walking or cycling home must fill in a consent form which is available from the school.

Please pass on this information to any person who drops or collects children on your behalf.

## **Phone Numbers:**

Please ensure that your child's teacher has an up-to-date address and phone number which can be written in the homework journal. It is the parent's guardian's responsibility to inform the school in writing of any changes in name, address or telephone. Up dated phone numbers are essential if parents wish to be communicated through text messaging. We also need two further contact numbers for emergencies. We will then be able to contact you immediately if your child is sick.

## **Health/Medication:**

Parents are asked to inform the school in writing if their child suffers from any allergies, long term or short term illness and if their child is on medication. No teacher can be required to administer medicine or drugs to a pupil. A teacher who, with the consent of the BOM, does take on the responsibility for administering medicines takes on a heavy duty of care. Parents of pupils who are on medication or inhalers are asked to fill in a form (available from the school office) for school records.

## **Accidents**

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

## **Curriculum**

*The What, Why and How of Children's Learning in Primary School is a DVD for parents about the Primary School Curriculum. Copies are available for all parents from the office or can be accessed at [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie) The DVD provides information for parents about what children learn in school, why they learn with the curriculum and how they learn through different teaching methodologies. In Fossa School efforts are made to ensure children taste success regularly. There is a focus on quality learning for all. High standards are achieved in literacy and numeracy. Emphasis is placed on identifying children with learning difficulties early and putting an effective intervention programme in place, in consultation with parents.*

*Specialist teachers will be timetabled to teach all classes at allotted times from Junior Infants to 6th in the areas of PE, music and dance.*



### **Extra Curricular Activities:**

Fossa National School provides all who enrol with a comprehensive and varied list of extracurricular activities. A Junior Club for infant classes incorporating all strands from the PE curriculum will run from Monday to Friday from 1.45pm to 2.45pm. A senior club based on particular sports will be made available to all classes from 2.50pm to 3.50pm. Further details available on the school web site [www.fossanationalschool.com](http://www.fossanationalschool.com).

### **Facilities:**

Fossa National School has undergone extensive renovations over the last eighteen months. As part of our commitment to developing IT in our school all classrooms from Junior Infants to 6th are equipped with a minimum of 5 new networked computers. Twelve new iPads have also been purchased and are used by all classes on a rotating basis.

A significant investment has been made to develop the PE and recreational facilities in our school. The construction of a 60m x 40m astro turf surface and a fully equipped playground has been completed at the rear of the school. This will provide all enrolled children with the opportunity to engage in a wide variety of sports both during and after school such as Gaelic Football, soccer, hurling, rounders, athletics, spikeball and much more. The investment in this amenity underlines the school's commitment to promoting sport and a healthy lifestyle for all our pupils.

Two Special Needs classrooms have also been built together with two withdrawal rooms and a para-educational room. These classrooms will specifically cater for children who suffer from mild spectrum autism with a view to integrating these children into mainstream education if practicable.

### **Subjects taught in all classes Junior Infants – 6<sup>th</sup> Class:**

Drama

Languages (English, Irish, Spanish 5th/6th) Geography

History

Mathematics

Music

Physical Education Religion

Science

Social Personal and Health Education Visual Arts

Information Technology

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

### 1. Introduction

The Board of Management of Fossa National School value and encourage the participation of pupils in all activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development. The school recognises the dignity and rights of all pupils and is committed to ensuring their protection and support. Management, staff and volunteers accept and recognise our responsibilities both to develop awareness of the practices which cause children harm and to create an environment that safeguards the well-being of all the children that attend the school.

The Child Protection Policy of Fossa National School has been developed in accordance with:

- Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, Department of Education & Science, 2001.
- Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Department of Health & Children, 1999.

Queries about Child Protection Procedures in our school should be directed to:

Mr. Pat Clifford (School Principal)

Allegations or suspicions of child abuse should be brought to the attention Pat Clifford (DLP), Linda O Donoghue (DDL), the local HSE Office and the local Garda Station.

### Use of Images of Children

- The school undertakes to seek parents' or guardians' permission for the use of photographs of pupils for any publicity purposes.
- At school ceremonies and other public events, the school will publicly announce the use of photographic and audio visual equipment so that anyone who would rather not be photographed or videoed can remove themselves.
- Only images of pupils in appropriate dress will be used.
- Inappropriate use of images of pupils will be brought to the attention of the DLP.
- No images of any pupil may be taken by an external agency or person without receiving the prior authorisation of the school principal.

*Photography Consent Form available from the school office.*

## Homework Policy

Parents are encouraged to establish a set routine and time for the child to do his/her homework, in a quiet place free from distractions. Parents are asked to supervise children's homework, checking and signing the homework journal on completion. Help and encourage the child but do not do the homework for him/her. Please forward a note to the teacher or place a note in your child's homework journal if homework has not been completed due to unforeseen circumstances.

Allotted time that teachers expect the average child in each class to spend at homework is as follows:

Junior Infants	10 – 15 minutes
Senior Infants	15 – 25 minutes
First and Second	No more than 30 minutes
Third and Fourth	30 – 45 minutes
Fifth Class	45 minutes – 1 hour
Sixth Class	1 hour – 1 hour 30 minutes (max.)

*If your child is spending more time than they should at homework and he/she is doing their work in a quiet place free from distractions please contact the class teacher at the earliest opportunity.*

Homework is given Monday to Thursday. Normally there is no homework at weekends; however, children in middle and senior classes may sometimes be required to work independently on projects at weekends.

## Attendance

The Education Welfare Act requires children to be in school every day unless there is a reasonable explanation for not attending. Where a child is absent from the school, the parent is required under the Act to notify the Principal of the school of the reason for the child's absence. Please sign the Homework Journal if your child is absent. The Act states that the relevant authorities will be informed of pupils who have been absent for twenty school days or more (this includes illness, holidays outside school holidays etc.). A pupil who shows signs of illness should be kept at home. Requests from parents to allow their child to stay inside during break times cannot be accepted. A child who is too sick to play with his peers or go outside during break times should not be in school. The school is unable to provide adequate supervision both inside and outside the school, during break times. However, arrangements will be made in exceptional circumstances, when a child needs to stay inside.

Situations do arise when a child appears well in the morning and then gets sick during the day. On such occasions every effort will be made to make the child comfortable. Parents/guardians

will be contacted. If the school is unable to make contact with parents/guardians a decision will be made as to whether the child needs medical assistance. If deemed necessary the child's family doctor will be contacted. If not the child will be made as comfortable as possible until a parent/guardian is contacted.

The school needs to be notified in writing, if a child needs to leave school early. No child may leave school without a parent or guardian during school times. If someone other than a parent or guardian is collecting a child, please notify the school in writing. A child who has to leave early **should be collected from the classroom.**

It is very important that your child is in school on time as lateness is unsettling for everyone.

### **Parent/Teacher Communication**

Arranging parent/teacher meetings within the school day while children are in school is difficult. However, parents are welcome to speak to the principal at any time. In case of prior appointments it would be wise to ring the school in advance (064 6634863). However, meetings with class teacher at class doors to discuss a child's concern/ progress is discouraged on a number of grounds:

1. A teacher cannot adequately supervise his/ her class while at the same time speaking to a parent
2. It is difficult to be discrete when so many children are standing close by.
3. It can be embarrassing for a child when his/her parent is talking to the teacher at a classroom door.

Formal Parent/Teacher meetings take place in October to discuss your child/children's progress.

Occasions occur where a parent needs to speak to a teacher urgently. Sometimes these meetings need to take place without prior notice. The principal will facilitate such meetings making every effort to ensure that the children in the class do not lose out on any of the teaching/learning time they are entitled to. When possible the principal will teach the class until the class teacher returns.

If parents wish to drop in lunch boxes, sports gear etc. this can be done through the secretary's office as it is important to keep class interruptions down to a minimum.

## **Access to Records**

Parents are entitled to an account of their child's progress in school. Junior Infants to 6th classes participate in a National Standardised Assessment (in English and Maths) every year during the 3rd and 4th week of May and 1st week of June. Standardised Tests are also administered to pupils from 1st to 6th class in the areas of Gaelic and Spelling. Parents are informed by the class teacher of results of all tests at the annual Parent/Teacher meetings and through our end of year Report Cards for every pupil enrolled. Parents who wish to access their child's school records must do so in writing to the Principal Teacher. The Principal teacher will then collate all available records and an appointment time will be confirmed with the parents. Records provided include Attendance, Standardised Tests, Diagnostic tests (if applicable), Discipline, Medical/Psychological (if applicable) and End of Year Reports. Fossa School retains all school records in a safe place for nine year after the child leaves 6th class.

## **Healthy Lunch Policy**

This policy was drafted following consultation and discussion with members of the Parents Association. The aim of the policy is to ensure children eat a healthy, well-balanced lunch, thus promoting a healthy lifestyle. By encouraging healthy eating patterns we educate children for later life. The 4 Cs are not allowed: Chewing Gum, Crisps, Chocolate bars, Candy. A Healthy Eating/Get Active week will be held in the school once a year for one week. A full copy of the Healthy Lunch policy is available for parents from the secretary. As the school is endeavouring to achieve Green School status children are encouraged to reduce reuse and recycle by bringing home paper wrappers and cartons. Staff and pupils are constantly advised to remain vigilant regarding the improper use of water and electricity.

## **Custody/Separation Policy**

The BOM and staff of the school encourage parents experiencing separation to come and speak confidentially to the teachers and/or principal. It is our aim to handle such matters with sensitivity and compassion, and ultimately our primary concern is for the well-being and overall development of the child. When the child spends time in two homes it is requested that the school be provided with both sets of emergency/contact numbers. Regarding the collection of children from school, it is requested that the school be informed of any changes in the collection arrangements by note. It is school policy to offer the option of separate parent/teacher meetings, if so desired. It is assumed that when we wish to communicate with parents regarding their child,

the parent contacted (i.e. the parent with whom the child principally resides) will inform the other parent of meetings, arrangements etc. Special arrangements for separate communication can be accommodated. In the absence of a custody arrangement, both parents will be treated as equal partners in terms of parenting rights and responsibilities. The school cannot be asked to withhold a child from either parent, in the absence of a custody arrangement or court order. The BOM and staff of Fossa National will endeavour at all times to deal sensitively and caringly with children experiencing separation.

### **Procedures for Reporting allegations of Child Abuse**

The Board of Management of Fossa School follows the procedures as outlined in the Children's First Guidelines 1999 as issued by the Department of Health and the guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Science. These procedures are listed in our School Plan. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) appointed by the BOM is Mr. Pat Clifford. The deputy DLP is Mrs. Linda O Donoghue. If any parent is concerned about a pupil in the school they should in the first instance contact the DLP.

### **Relationship and Sexuality Education**

In circular 2/95 issued by the Department of Education and Science the minister requested all schools to introduce Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) as part of the curriculum. In the 1999 curriculum RSE was included in Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE). The content of the schools SPHE programme includes a wide range of topics such as healthy eating, alcohol, drugs, environmental issues, safety and social responsibility as well as RSE. RSE will be taught in accordance with the Department's directives and within the Philosophy framework of the school. The teaching methods used in the school are child centred and reflect the age and stage development of each child. If parents are concerned about the more sensitive aspects of the programme, they are welcome to visit the school to examine the content of the programme and discuss their concerns with the principal. Following this meeting if parents wish to have their child/ren withdrawn when sensitive issues are being taught, they are requested to submit this in writing to the Principal. Efforts will be made by the school, using the resources it has, to accommodate these children by providing supervision within another classroom.

## Invitations/ Cards

It is school policy that invitations to birthday parties, Christmas cards etc. are not distributed in the school premises, out of consideration for non-receivers.

## Care of Hair

Parents are asked check their child's hair regularly for outbreaks of head lice. If there is an outbreak of head lice in a class, all parents of pupils in that class are informed by note and asked to take immediate action to treat infestation. Girls with long hair should have it tied up or back.

## Parents' Association

A vibrant Parents' Association/ Council is in existence in Fossa School for many years.. Membership is open to all parents/ guardians of all pupils enrolled. It promotes the interests of the pupils in co-operation with the BOM, Principal and staff. Parents as a group have a wide range of talents, abilities and skills that have the potential to enrich and extend the educational opportunities provided for pupils.

## School Uniform

The school uniform is very important for the image of the school as it enforces your child's association with the school. We ask you to adhere strictly to the colour scheme of the uniform.

All pupils enrolled in Fossa National School should be dressed in full school uniform/ school tracksuit from the commencement of the school year. Junior Infants are given a choice of wearing school uniform or tracksuit. All children enrolled in other classes must dress in full school uniform every day with the exception of time tabled PE days or specific days where they are engaged in after school activities.

Boys and girls must wear flat **dark coloured** shoes. Boots are not permitted. Girls may wear a cream coloured shirt, school tie, grey skirt or pinafore accompanied by a **crested** maroon coloured v- neck jumper or cardigan. Boys may wear grey trousers with a cream coloured shirt, maroon school tie and a V-neck maroon **crested** jumper.

These uniforms and tracksuits are available from Lyne's or Pat Quill's Clothes shop Killarney. Parents who wish to buy their uniforms in other retail outlets must ensure that the colour matches the official uniform. Please note that all uniforms must have a School Crest.

Blanche O'Brien (087) 2401375 is available to provide a service of sewing on the Fossa School Crest at a cost of €6.00

**PLEASE LABEL ALL ITEMS:**

To avoid loss of personal property - jumpers, cpats, tracksuit tops, lunch boxes etc. should be marked. Coats and jackets should have loops for hanging up. [www.nametags.ie](http://www.nametags.ie)

Item	Available From
Maroon v-neck jumper/cardigan with compulsory School Crest. Grey skirt or pinafore School Tie (Maroon with Grey & Cream stripes)	Crested jumper available from Lyne's Clothes Shop, Killarney (064) 6631146 or Pat Quill's, The Workshop, Killarney. (064) 6635532 Grey skirt/pinafore and school tie available from Lynes or Quills. Blanche O Brien 087 2401375
Cream Shirt Grey Trousers Grey Socks/Tights Dark coloured, flat, sensible shoes	These items are widely available.
<b>School Tracksuit</b> Pupils may alternatively wear on PE days or other activity days specified by the class teacher: Maroon panelled tracksuit top with <i>compulsory School Crest.</i>	Tracksuit top available from Lyne's Clothes Shop (064) 6631146 or Pat Quill's, The Workshop.(064) 6635532
Maroon, tracksuit bottoms. Grey collared Polo T-shirt Dark Runners	Stripes or writing down side of tracksuit bottoms are not permitted. This is to avoid pressure on children to have labelled tracksuit bottoms such as Canterbury.

## Code of Behaviour

Be Gentle	Don't hurt anyone
Be kind and helpful	Don't hurt people's feelings
Be honest	Don't cover up the truth
Work hard	Don't waste time
Look after property	Don't waste or damage things or take things that don't belong to you.
Listen to people	Don't interrupt



The code aims at creating a caring, ordered environment based on respect and tolerance where each child can feel secure and confident. We work hard to ensure that Fossa School is a happy place for both children and staff. We aim to ‘catch children being good’ and reinforce positive behaviour.

### **Strategies to promote Positive Behaviour:**

- Ensuring that pupils are treated fairly, equally and firmly
- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- Matching work with pupil’s abilities. A prize/reward carefully noted by the teacher to ensure that all children at regular stages during the school year are rewarded for effort/behaviour/skill etc. Teachers creating moments of success and then acknowledging them.
- A comment in a pupil’s exercise book
- A visit to another member of staff or the Principal for commendation
- Successes and achievements are acknowledged at our morning assembly
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Delegating some responsibility or privilege
- A mention to a parent – written or verbal
- Teacher records improvement in the behaviour of a disruptive pupil
- Implementation of Programmes such as Circle Time to promote positive behaviour

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

## **School Rules**

### **School Rules:**

School rules are devised with regard to the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. It is imperative that adults ‘practise what they preach’ in their interaction with children every day. The School Rules listed below provide clear guidelines for all members of the school community.

- Pupils enter and leave the school building at all times in an orderly fashion.  
In the interest of safety pupils must walk within the school building and enter and exit the building quietly.

- Pupils are expected to treat all staff members, themselves and each other with due respect and courtesy.
- Bullying is never allowed. Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to be safe is unacceptable.
- Bad, inappropriate language is unacceptable.
- Pupils are expected to wear their full school uniform/tracksuit
- Chewing gum, glass bottles, correction fluids, other solvents, matches, cigarettes, alcohol or drugs are not allowed.
- Jewellery is not allowed.
- Make-up is not worn during school times
- Cycling in school grounds is forbidden
- We encourage children to bring healthy lunches (see Healthy Lunch Policy)
- Children are not allowed Mobile phones in class or on the school yard. If a child is found with a mobile phone it will be confiscated. In exceptional circumstances arrangements may be made between the principal and parents of the child to hold a mobile phone for a child in the office for use after school hours.
- Hairstyles are expected to be kept neat and conventional – with hair in its natural colour. For hygiene purposes hair must be tied back.
- Pupils must respect the school building and property. If any deliberate damage is caused, the parent/guardian will be responsible for the cost of repair/replacement.
- Fighting, rough play or any physical force is never allowed or tolerated.
- In the interests of safety, climbing on the school railings is strictly forbidden.
- In the interest of safety when the bell rings during playtimes the children stop playing, stand in their places and move to their class lines only when directed. Children do not enter the school building without getting permission from teachers.

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

The school believes that its pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, although not condoned, cannot be described as bullying. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing it is bullying.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those children who watch and less aggressive pupils can be drawn in by the group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up and it rarely sorts itself out.

## **Combating Bullying and the Action towards Prevention:**

### **Role of Staff**

- The principal and staff exercise constant vigilance in the matter of misbehaviour. Our aim is to prevent misbehaviour rather than control. Positive behaviour is always recognised, affirmed and sought.
- Any complaints of bullying are dealt with quickly, firmly and fairly.
- The principal is informed of any instance of bullying.
- Awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour is addressed in the classroom, at school assemblies, through the school policy on pastoral care and other informal occasions when the opportunity arises.
- Pupils are taught skills and encouraged to report any incident of bullying.

### **Advice for Pupils**

- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is **WRONG**.
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive – shout **NO**. Walk away confidently. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- Fighting back makes things worse– So don't fight back. **REPORT** to a teacher or parent(s)/guardians instead. If you need support find a friend and both of you speak to the teacher.
- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support. The teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

### **If You Know Someone is Being Bullied**

- **TAKE ACTION** – Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.

- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

### **Advice for Parents**

- Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard, ask for money or begin stealing money.
- Always take an active role in your child's education by enquiring how they are getting on.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- It is important to advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.
- Tell your child there is nothing wrong with him/her. It is not her fault that they are being bullied.
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the School Policy concerning Bullying, and that they will not be afraid to ask for help;

**Fossa National School, Killarney does not welcome bullies**

### **Procedure for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying:**

Incidents will be investigated outside the classroom situation to avoid the public humiliation of the victim or the pupil engaged in bullying behaviour. In any incident of bullying, the teacher will speak separately to the pupils involved, in an attempt to get both sides of the story. All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned.

Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide useful information in this way:

1. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the teacher will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
1. If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually and then the individuals are met as a group. Each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone is clear about what everyone also has said.
2. If it is concluded that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the Code of Behaviour and Discipline and try to get him/her to see the situation from the victim's point of view.

4. In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, a meeting or discussion will take place with the parents or guardians of the two parties involved as appropriate to:
- explain the actions being taken and the reasons for them, referring them to the school policy
  - discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions taken by the school.

## Sanctions

Sanctions are used in a corrective way and are intended to help the child to change and improve his or her behavioural patterns. The nature of the misbehaviour and the age of the child will determine the strategy to be employed.

### **Disciplinary Actions and Sanctions to deal with Misdemeanours:**

The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross, will be judged by the teachers and/or Principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours.

### **Examples of Minor Misdemeanours:**

- Interrupting class work/ arriving late for school/ running in school building/not listening and speaking out of turn/leaving seat without permission at break or lunch time/ placing unfinished food in bins/ leaving litter around school/ not wearing correct uniform/ being discourteous or unmannerly/ not completing homework without good reason/ bringing sweets and bars to school/ wearing jewellery ( Jewellery is not allowed except for one small stud earring in the bottom of each ear and a watch)/ wearing make-up / belongings not named/unsuitable hairstyles, hair not tied back / not bringing explanation notes for absences and homework/ wearing unsuitable shoes/ cycling in school grounds

### **Examples of steps to be taken by teachers when dealing with Minor Misdemeanours**

- The class teacher will normally deal with classroom misdemeanours.
- Verbal reprimand and reasoning with the pupil, including advice on how to improve, setting realistic targets.
- Time out from friends and others (to reflect on the misbehaviour).
- Loss of privileges such as 'Golden Time', Game time, extra recreation time etc.
- Noting incidence of yard misbehaviour in yard book
- Note in homework journal or other to parents.

### **Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with REGULAR occurrences of Minor Misdemeanours:**

- A record is kept of regular instances of misdemeanour.
- Following five instances of misdemeanour the pupil is sent to Principal/Deputy Principal.
- The child writes an account of what they have done.
- The child will receive detention (supervised) with written work.
- Class teacher meets with parent(s)/guardian. Details of all misbehaviour will be given to parents.

### **Examples of Serious Misdemeanours:**

Bullying/ Constantly disruptive in class/ telling lies/stealing/damaging or interfering with another person's property/back answering a teacher/leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission/ using or writing unacceptable language/ bringing chewing gum, glass bottles, correction fluids or other solvents to school/ deliberately injuring a fellow pupil or partaking in any activity which would put themselves or others in danger/ deliberately leaving taps on/ misuse of fire equipment/ bringing in mobile phones without permission

### **Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with Serious Misdemeanours:**

- Pupil is sent to Principal/Deputy Principal
- Principal/Deputy Principal contacts parent/guardian immediately
- Pupils may be removed from activity if endangering self or others
- The child will write an account of what they have done. They may receive detention (supervised) with written work. Temporary separation from peers, friends and others may also occur.
- A record is kept of all serious misdemeanours.

### **Examples of Gross Misdemeanours:**

Deliberately vandalizing school property/ aggressive, insulting, threatening or violent behaviour towards any person. Bringing alcohol, drugs, cigarettes or matches to school.

### **Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with Gross Misdemeanours:**

- Principal/Deputy Principal contacts parent/guardian immediately and parents will be called to meet the principal in the school.

# FOSSA NATIONAL SCHOOL

- While waiting for the parents' presence in the school or while the discussion is taking place, the child may be removed from class and placed in another classroom with written work to do. The child writes an account of what happened and how they will behave in the future. The Board of Management has authorised the Chairman or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension following discussion with the parents. If the parents do not attend the meeting, the pupil may be suspended and parents informed by letter.
- A record is kept of the incident.
- When a period of suspension ends, the pupil will be re-admitted formally to class by the Principal/Deputy Principal.
- Where a satisfactory resolution of a problem is achieved, a pupil may be re-admitted to school within a suspension period at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Board and Principal. The BOM will ensure the Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policy is reviewed yearly or more often if the need arises.

We are obliged to inform the Education Welfare Officer when a child has missed 20 cumulative school days.

## School Calendar 2013 - 2014

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR REGULAR UPDATES ON OUR CALENDAR

[www.fossanationalschool.com](http://www.fossanationalschool.com)

August 2013							September 2013							October 2013							November 2013						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	6	7	8	9	10	11	12						1	2
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	27	28	29	30	31	17	18	19	20	21	22	23		
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30													24	25	26	27	28	29	30

  

December 2013							January 2014							February 2014							March 2014						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4							1							1
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	23	24	25	26	27	28	23	24	25	26	27	28	29		
																					30	31					

  

April 2014							May 2014							June 2014							July 2014						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
														1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31		

School Closed/ Holidays	First Communion Date for 2 <sup>nd</sup> Class.	Half Day. 12.00am Closing	First and Last Day of School
St. Patrick's Day [School Closed]	Bank Holidays. [School Closed]		

## Preparation for the First Day in Junior Infants

- Tell him/her about school beforehand, casually, and talk about it as a happy place where there will be a big welcome for him/her and he/she will meet new friends.
- Don't use school or a teacher as a threat "If you behave like that for a teacher she'll murder you" though said light-heartedly can make some children very apprehensive?
- Make sure he/she are equipped with new uniform/tracksuit and his/her new bag. These help him/her identify more readily with the school and other children.
- It would help greatly if your child is able to:
  - \* Button and unbutton his/her coat
  - \* Put on and off his/her own shoes
  - \* Use the toilet without help
  - \* Encourage personal hygiene. Your child should know to flush the toilet and wash his/her hands without having to be told.
  - \* Use a handkerchief when necessary
  - \* Share toys and playthings with others and take turns
  - \* Tidy up and put away his/her play things
  - \* Remain contentedly for a few hours in the home of a relation, friend or neighbour.

## The First Day

Your child will be met by the teacher and the other children and will be shown his/her chair. Hopefully he/she will be absorbed in his new surroundings. So having assured him you will be back to collect him, wish him goodbye and **make your getaway without delay.**

## Handling the Upset Child

In spite of the best efforts of both teacher and parents, a small number of children will still become upset. If your child happens to be one of them don't panic. Patience and perseverance can work wonders.

## A Word of Advice

- **Trust the teacher.** She is experienced and resourceful and is used to coping with all kinds of starting-off problems.



- **Try not to show outward signs of your own distress.** Sometimes the parents are more upset than the child and are the main cause of his/her anxiety.
- When you have reassured your child, leave as fast as possible. The teacher can distract and humour him/her more easily when you are not around.
- **You must be firm from the start.** Even if a child is upset you must insist that he/she stay for a short time– even 10 minutes.

## Final Words

It is our intention that every child attending Fossa National School benefits from the distinctive traditions and ethos of this country school. This ethos is guided by a desire to develop the academic potential and spiritual dimensions of all pupils. It involves the cultivation of artistic capabilities, sporting interests and creativity among the children. We hope that every child enjoys his/her time in Fossa and leaves with happy memories of friendship, personal achievements and an awareness of his/her social responsibilities.

In aspiring to meet these objectives this school will be fulfilling the twin guiding principles of primary education as set out in the Primary School Curriculum (1999);

- (i) Celebrating the uniqueness of the child.
- (ii) Ensuring the development of the child's full potential

Signed:

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On behalf of the Board of Management



