



Dear Parents,

This general information booklet has been produced to familiarise parents with school procedures. It is divided into sections, Mission Statement, Starting out, General Information, Routines and Policies, Individualised Education Plans, Curriculum and Behaviour Support. It is important that you are familiar with the content and, consequently, the booklet should be retained for the duration of your child's enrolment at the school. Additions and revisions are issued from time to time.

The content of this booklet has been formulated, taking into account:

- i. Guidelines issued by the Department of Education & Skills.
- ii. Input based on the professional expertise of the Principal and staff and on their experience of the day to day organisation of the school.
- iii. Input by the Board of Management includes two members elected by the parents of students attending the school.
- iv. The various opinions and attitudes towards procedures expressed by parents over the period of the school's existence.

In order to ensure the efficient and orderly operation of the school, we ask parents to abide by the School's Policies and Procedures. The aims and ethos of the school are outlined in this booklet and in our Policy Statements on Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying, Child Safeguarding Statement and Social, Personal and Health Education Curriculum (S.P.H.E.). The Board of Management, Principal and Teachers are always aware of the importance of positive parental attitudes towards the work of the school. We have, in common with parents, the same aim – the well-being of all the children in our care.

Yours Sincerely,

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Laura Kelly

Principal

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John Dennehy

Chairperson Board of Management

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### **Mission Statement**

Our mission is to create opportunities through education, in an environment that is caring, supportive and joyful, improving the lives of children and young adults with autism and the lives of their families. To this end we value:

- ❖ Student centred education that celebrates each child's uniqueness
- ❖ Early intervention and assessment
- ❖ Individualised, evidenced based education
- ❖ Partnership with families and participation in society

### **Starting out**

Starting a new school is a huge milestone in the life of every child or young person. As well as being very exciting it can often be a time of anxiety. To ensure your child transitions at ease, our Behaviour Analyst, Trish Carolan, will schedule a home visit and/or visit to the child's previous educational setting. This visit will help ensure that the school can adequately meet the needs of your child and will inform a transition plan for your child into the school.

A transition plan will typically include:

- ❖ Details of assessments and reports
- ❖ Medical information
- ❖ Dietary requirements
- ❖ Child's likes/dislikes
- ❖ Child's strengths and areas of need
- ❖ Proposed time frame for transition

### **General Information and Routines**

School begins at 9.00 a.m. Early intervention students start at 9.10 a.m. and go home at 1.50 p.m. All other students go home at 2.40 p.m. The Board of Management, Principal, and Staff, do not accept any responsibility for your children before 9.00 a.m. or after the students have been dismissed at the above times.



### Collection of Students

If your child does not avail of school transport, we ask you to please collect your child promptly at the designated times as unnecessary anxiety can be caused by failure to do so. Late collection is also disruptive of teacher preparation time and planning.

### Security

This school has always striven to operate an open and welcoming policy, changing situations in society dictate that schools need to review security policies. The main outside door is fitted with an electronic fob system. This will be in operation between 9.10 a.m. and 3.10 p.m. daily. All visitors must report to the Secretary's office, identify themselves and state the purpose of their visit.

If your child arrives to school late, please **report to the school office** and the Secretary will inform your child's class teacher that your child has arrived to school. This minimises disruption to class instruction time.

### Dismissal of Children

- i. Children will be escorted to their bus by their teacher/SNA. For those students who are collected by their parents/guardian, the child's teacher/SNA will bring them to the main door of the school to meet you. **When parents/guardians fail to collect children at the appropriate time children are brought to the foyer area by their teacher where supervision is provided.**
- ii. When it is necessary to collect a student during school hours, the parent/guardian should call personally to the Secretary's office. Each child must be signed out by the person collecting them and signed back in if returning to school. Any person collecting a child, on behalf of the parent/guardian, must present written authorisation with telephone contact number. Without this permission, children will not be released.
- iii. Where legal situations with regard to custody, access rights etc. exist, clear and unambiguous instructions should be presented in writing at the school office and parents should advise the Principal immediately on enrolment. It is necessary for a copy of the relevant legal documentation to be provided.

### Emergency Contact

It is very important that the school have on file: **the name, address and telephone number of a person or persons who may be contacted**, should the parents be unavailable, to take responsibility for your child in the event of an emergency closing, sickness, accident etc. Should



this emergency contact change at any time, **it is essential** that you notify the school immediately in writing.

### Information/Communication

All information/communication forwarded to the school should be in an envelope showing the student's name, teacher and room number with some reference on enclosed material. **All** communication with your child's class teacher should be through email. If you wish to discuss a matter with your child's class teacher, a note requesting a discussion time should be sent to the teacher in advance. The class teacher will then set up an appointment time that will aim to suit both parents and teachers alike.

If, in exceptional circumstances, it is necessary to seek a discussion during class time, we ask that the interruption would be kept to the minimum time required to discuss the matter.

Formal Parent – Teacher meetings are held in November and May unless otherwise notified. Full details are issued directly from the class teacher prior to the meetings.

### Appointments with Principal

In general, all communications should be in the first instance with the class teacher. It is necessary to **make an appointment** with the Principal through the school secretary.

### Staff Meetings

Staff meetings and Continual Professional Development will be held outside school hours. Professional Development provided by the Department of Education & Skills may necessitate full or half day closures. Advance notice will be given in these instances.

### Immunisation/Infectious Diseases

An effective immunisation programme can greatly reduce time lost through absences and we suggest that you consult your doctor concerning protection against the more common childhood diseases. If your child contracts an infection or disease, you should have the condition treated immediately and exclude the child from school as advised by your G.P. In the case of highly infectious diseases, a phone call to the school office would be appreciated to enable us to inform parents of other children in your child's class.

Gastroenteritis is highly infectious and can spread rapidly across the school. We ask that children are kept at home until **48 hours** after the last episode of vomiting/diarrhoea.



### Medical Conditions/Allergies

If your child has or develops a serious medical condition or allergy, please inform the school secretary, where details of the condition will be recorded and necessary personnel will be informed. Practices and procedures will then be put in place in the best interest of your child.

### Prescribed Medication

A *Medication Request Form* must be completed prior to the administration of any prescribed medication. This form must be accompanied by a signed medical instruction form from your child's GP/Psychiatrist. Medication cannot be administered to any child without the appropriate documentation available. The Principal has the right to refuse to administer any medication if s/he has concerns and will seek advice from medical professionals.

### Head Lice

We would ask you to be vigilant in checking your child's hair regularly for outbreaks of head lice. This is a common problem among children and can be caught by anyone where people work and play together. If your child has head lice take immediate action to treat infestation. The child should be excluded from school for the duration of the period recommended for treatment. Please inform the school office if your child has been infected by head lice.

### HSE Forms – Hearing/ Sight/ School Vaccinations Programme.

Every year the school facilitates the HSE by distributing forms for completion. It is important that these forms are completed and sent back to the school immediately. All consent and participation is voluntary.

### School Keep Clear Markings

The road markings outside of the school which consist of yellow zig-zag lines together with the words '**School-Keep Clear**' prohibit by law the stopping or parking of vehicles within the marked zone. The area is monitored by Raheny Gardaí and offences are liable to '**on the spot**' fines.



### Child Safeguarding

It is school policy to report alleged incidents of child neglect or abuse to **Tusla**. Parents may be informed if such a report is being made. The school does not investigate such allegations. Our intention is to provide a safe secure environment for all children in this school. The Board of Management has fully adopted and will implement without modification the Department of Education & Skills *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*. The mandatory **Stay Safe Programme** has also been implemented.

### Anti-Bullying

As per circular 0045/2014 and *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, ABACAS Kilbarrack has developed and formally adopted an Anti-Bullying Policy.

### School Website

Please check the school website, [www.abacaskilbarrack.com](http://www.abacaskilbarrack.com), for regular updates and information and the school calendar.

### Emergency Closures/Information

In the event of school being closed due to emergency situations or unusual event you will receive a text message and email, Up to date information will also be posted on our website [www.abacaskilbarrack.com](http://www.abacaskilbarrack.com). Please make sure we have an up to date contact details.

### Absences

All absences should be explained by a note to the class teacher. For brief absences, students bring a note on return. For anticipated longer absences, please contact the school office.

### Education Welfare Act 2000

Please note that each child is obliged to attend school every day on which the school is in operation, unless there is a valid reason for not doing so. The school is obliged to notify the Attendance Officer:

1. when there is a pattern of irregular attendance,
2. a combined total absence of 20 days.



### School services

The school services fee is 200e per child. This amount covers items being supplied to your child; photocopying, stationary, arts & crafts, curriculum resources, school books and school insurance. We ask parents to pay this before the end of September.

### School Uniform

ABACAS Kilbarrack does not enforce a school uniform policy. However, if parents choose to avail of the school uniform children are required to wear a blue polo-shirt, navy jumper with the ABACAS school crest and navy trousers/tracksuit bottoms. The school crest can be purchased from the school office.

### Homework

ABACAS Kilbarrack does not enforce a homework policy. Individual homework arrangements may be put in place where necessary and appropriate.

### Lunch Breaks

Lunch break is from 12.15 to 12.45 p.m. Snack time is from 10.30 a.m. to 10.45 a.m. We ask parents to encourage your child to eat a variety of healthy snacks. Please note that if your child requires a hot meal, food must be cooked at home as the school can only facilitate heating lunches.

### **Individualised Education Plans and Curriculum**

The provision of education plans for individual students is mandated by the **EPSEN Act**, 2004. The purpose of this Act is to:

- i. provide that the education of people with special educational needs shall, wherever possible, take place in an inclusive environment with those who do not have such needs;
- ii. provide that people with special needs shall have the same right to avail of and benefit from appropriate education as do their peers who do not have such needs;
- iii. assist children with special needs to leave school with the skills necessary to participate to the level of their capacity in an inclusive way in the social and economic activities of society and to live independent and fulfilled lives;
- iv. and provide for the greater involvement of parents of children with special educational needs in the education of their children.

The strategy set out in the Act to achieve these objectives includes provision for the assessment of children who it is considered may have special needs and drawing up of an education plan for

each student who is assessed as having such needs. These plans are referred to in these guidelines as Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

The Individual Education Plan is developed through a collaborative process involving the school, parents, the student (where appropriate) and other relevant personnel or agencies.

An IEP should be:

- ❖ a detailed plan of action
- ❖ a tool for communication and collaboration
- ❖ a record of progress
- ❖ a framework for decision making

An IEP should:

- ❖ have a learning element
- ❖ be built on the curriculum the pupil is following
- ❖ make use of programmes, activities and materials which are available
- ❖ be implemented as far as possible in the normal classroom setting

An IEP should set out:

- ❖ the nature of the pupil's learning difficulty
- ❖ the special needs provision required such as;
  - staff involved, including the frequency of support
  - external specialists involved, including frequency and timing
  - help from parents at home
  - specific programmes, activities, materials and equipment
- ❖ targets to be achieved in a given time
- ❖ monitoring and assessment arrangements
- ❖ review arrangements and date

Students in ABACAS Kilbarrack benefit from multiple curricular programmes including The Primary School Curriculum, Aistear, Early Start Denver Model, ASDAN and Junior Cycle.

### **Community Inclusion**

ABACAS Kilbarrack values community inclusion and recognises the importance for our students to have opportunities to actively participate in the local community. Each student's IEP





will have appropriate community inclusion goals for their particular needs and stage of development.

### **Behaviour Support**

ABACAS Kilbarrack has a progressive and proactive approach to supporting students who may exhibit behaviour that challenges. The school employs a full time board certified Behaviour Analyst who oversees all work pertaining to behaviour support planning. The approach of school staff in ABACAS is to decrease challenging behaviour by teaching and reinforcing appropriate replacement behaviours that serve the same function (e.g. teaching the student an appropriate means of asking for a break from a demanding task without resorting to challenging behaviour). Any student who requires one, will have a multi-element behavior support plan based on functional assessment findings. Data is recorded daily and all behavior plans are continuously reviewed and updated. More information on the school's approach to behavior support can be found in the Code of Behaviour Policy.

### **Policies**

The following is a list of School Policies which have been ratified by the Board of Management. A copy may be obtained from the school on request.

- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Admissions Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Critical Incident
- Physical Intervention Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Toileting Policy
- Integration & Inclusion Policy
- Career Break Policy
- Job-Sharing Policy
- Administration of Medication Policy
- Custody and Separation Policy
- Use of de-escalation rooms Policy
- Data Protection Policy

*This policy will be reviewed as and when necessary*

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

John Dennehy, Chairperson

Board of Management, ABACAS Kilbarrack Special School

**Ratified by the Board of Management on:** \_\_\_\_\_