

Code of Behaviour



Introductory Statement

As part of a school planning day, June 2nd 2009, a decision was made to review our existing Code of Behaviour in light of the updated NEWB Guidelines, 2008. Consultation with staff guided this review. Input was also received from the Parents Association, Board of Management and pupils.

Rationale

- This policy emerges out of a consideration and review of the present Code of Behaviour which has been in existence in the school for many years now.
- It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) which refers to *the obligation on school to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in Section 23 (2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:*
 1. *The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;*
 2. *The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;*
 3. *The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;*
 4. *The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and*
 5. *The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.*
- To ensure existing policy is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

This is a Catholic Primary School under the trusteeship of the Mercy Sisters. Under the management of the School Board we work in collaboration with Parents and the local community.

We commit ourselves to promoting the well-being of all the pupils in our care by developing the spiritual, emotional and physical potential of each individual.

We strive towards developing excellence in our communication, literacy, numeracy and relevant life skills.

We are concerned with developing a broad vision of the wider world and fostering love and care for our environment.

Our Code of Behaviour will strive to reflect the principles of the school and mission statement above.

Aims

Our Code of Behaviour aims to:

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the difference between children and the need to accommodate the differences
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the Code of Behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school

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Guidelines for behaviour in the school

Our Code of Behaviour reflects our mission statement and ethos.

- Each pupil is expected to be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults
- Each pupil is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own belongings
- Each pupil is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual
- Each pupil is expected to do his/her best both in school and for homework.

The individuality of each child will be respected and considered in relation to the Code of Behaviour.

2. Whole School approach in promoting positive behaviour

The elements of a whole school approach to behaviour include:

- An ethos, policies and practices that are in harmony
- A teamwork approach to behaviour
- A whole-school approach to curriculum and classroom management
- An inclusive and involved school community
- A systematic process for planning and reviewing behaviour policy

Staff

- Affirm positive behaviour and good work in the classroom
- Establish clear classroom based rules for the children in their class
- Maintain record of inappropriate behaviours
- Maintain a consistently fair approach for dealing with behaviour

New staff members will receive a copy of the Code of Behaviour and through dialogue with the school Principal will be made aware of school practice.

The school's SPHE curriculum is used to support the Code. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship.

It is the responsibility of each class teacher to ensure that the SPHE curriculum is taught to children in their class in accordance with the school plan.

Board of Management

The overall responsibility for ensuring that a code of behaviour is prepared rests with the Board of Management. The Board has particular responsibility for the ethos of the school, as well as having overall responsibility for school policies. The Board has made sure that all members of the school community have had the opportunity to be involved in work on this code of behaviour. The Board of Management formally adopted the review of this code on 11/10/2023.

Parents:

- Parents ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually
- Parents encourage their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work
- Parents are expected to be aware of and co-operate with the school's rules and systems of rewards and sanctions and to bring these to the attention of their children
- Parents attend meetings at the school if requested
- Parents help their children with homework and ensure that it is completed
- Parents ensure that their children attend school attired in the correct uniform
- Parents encourage their children to show respect and courtesy for others- students, teachers and members of the whole school community
- Parents are requested to inform the class teacher if a child is sick
- Parents to inform teacher if a child needs to stay indoors at break times

Pupils:

- Pupils are expected to be aware of and comply with the school rules
- Pupils will respect all staff at all times and will do as asked by the principal, class teacher or another member of staff
- Pupils are not allowed to bring fizzy drinks, taytos, glass bottles, lollipops or chewing gum to school
- Children are not allowed to bring nuts or food containing nuts to school.
- Pupils are expected to wear school uniform at all times
- Pupils will follow all school rules during school time and when on related activities such as school tours, educational trips or sporting fixtures

Pupils are encouraged to devise individual classroom rules in conjunction with their class teacher every September. These classroom rules will reflect the whole school approach to behaviour

Pupils are afforded the opportunity to reflect and review school rules on occasion. This is carried out through guided talk and discussion.

3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour

Positive reinforcement of behaviour is an approach that is used to compliment this code of behaviour and lead to better self-discipline within children.

Classroom:

- Classroom rules are devised by pupils and expressed in a positive light
- Teachers ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave
- A quiet word can be used to express approval when merited
- A comment on work completed
- Positive note to the parents, recognising and acknowledging good behaviour achievement
- Sticker rewards are employed to recognise positive work and attitude
- Pupil of the week in classes from Senior Infants to 6th Class.

Playground(s):

- Four teachers are responsible for supervision on yard. All SNA's assist in relation to yard supervision but are primarily responsible for their individual pupil.
- Children remain in the yard designated for their class
- Inappropriate behaviour- swinging, climbing etc. on bars- is not allowed
- Children are encouraged to incorporate playground markings into their activities during break
- Children remain in their own classroom on wet days. Supervision is continued indoors by teachers on duty. Senior pupils operate a helper system with the Junior classes on these days.
- Children go to the yard once they have eaten their lunch. On hearing the bell, children walk to their line, say a prayer with the teacher on duty and then return to the classroom in an orderly fashion.
- Children who are remaining indoors due to illness etc. during break time remain near the office.
- Children who disobey yard rules are requested to go to the time out area.

Other areas in the school:

- Children are expected to behave in an orderly fashion on the corridors and in the cloakrooms
- Children are expected to behave orderly on their way in and out of Assembly
- Children are expected to leave the school quietly at home time.

School related activities

This Code of Behaviour is applicable to all school related events both within the official school day and at all extra- curricular activities.

4. Rewards and Sanctions

Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour

Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of this code. School management and staff actively foster the school ethos, policies and practices that promote positive behaviour and prevent inappropriate behaviour.

- Assemblies- positive behaviour acknowledged
- Positive behaviour is acknowledged to parents in writing or verbally

Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour

- A common framework for dealing with inappropriate behaviour is in place in this school
- It is envisaged that the class teacher is the person on the "front-line" who is responsible for dealing with all minor misdemeanours in relation to the Code of Behaviour. Children will be encouraged to discuss all behaviour and recognise the consequence of behaving in this manner. Open communication with parents will be fostered at all times.
- A staged approach for dealing with misbehaviours is employed
 - Reasoning with the pupil
 - Verbal reprimand
 - Removal from the group (in class)
 - Withdrawal of privileges
 - Withdrawal from particular lesson or peer group
 - Carrying out a useful task in the school

- Referral to the Principal
- Communication with parents
- Formal report to the Board of Management
- Suspension/Expulsion (in accordance with rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act, 2000)

All staff will endeavour to ensure that all sanctions are imposed in a fair and consistent manner in accordance with the procedures as laid out in the Code of Behaviour.

Managing aggressive or violent misbehaviour:

- Any child that may present with serious emotional disturbance will be immediately referred for psychological assessment
- Appropriate support can also be sought from the Special Education Needs Organiser
- S.E.N. personnel may be asked to facilitate teachers in sharing practice and support in the management of challenging behaviour
- School Support Plans will be drawn up for specific children, in consultation with the S.E.N. team, class teacher, Principal, parents and child
- In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil himself/herself or the safety of other pupils or staff, every effort will be made to remove the pupil from the situation. Support will be requested of parents and SENO to help improve the situation for the child. All efforts will be made to support the ongoing needs of the child.

5. Suspension/Expulsion

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a pupil.

Suspension will be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern.

Only in the most exceptional circumstances will a suspension be considered. The decision to suspend a student requires such serious grounds as:

- The pupils behaviour has had a serious detrimental effect on the education of other pupils
- The pupils continuing presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property
- A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension

Where suspension is being considered and before any form of suspension is imposed the parents will be invited to attend the school to discuss the behaviour of their child.

Any suspension being imposed will be notified to parents in advance and a return date and time specified.

On return, a formal undertaking will be agreed by the child and their parents that the behaviour which led to the suspension will not be repeated.

Expulsion

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil in extreme cases.

Under the Education Welfare Act,2000, "A student shall not be expelled from a school before the passing of twenty school days following the receipt of a notification under this section by an educational welfare officer" (section 24(4).)

It is the right of a Board of Management to take "...such other reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school concerned and that the safety of students is secured." (section24 (5).)

Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science against some decisions of the Board of Management, including;

- 1) Permanent exclusion from a school and
- 2) Suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year.

Parents will be advised of this right of appeal and associated timeframe, in accordance with Circular 22/02, if it has been decided to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil by the Principal and Board of Management. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student.

6. Keeping records

Class level

- Teachers to keep a record of inappropriate behaviour as the need arises in the classroom
- In consideration of the seriousness of the misbehaviour in conjunction with the staged approach as outlined in the code the Principal will be consulted by the class teacher as required.
- The standard end of year report incorporating reference to social development and in particular behaviour in class and on the playground is utilised by the class teacher.

Playground

- A record of misbehaviour is maintained as required by class teacher
- A fair and consistent approach in relation to the school and playground rules is maintained at all times by all teachers.

School records

- Each teacher to keep class record of inappropriate incidents as the need arises in the classroom.

7. Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school

In accordance with the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (2) (e), parents must notify the school of a student's absence and provide the reason for this absence in writing. It is recommended that this note is produced on the student's return to school. All absence notes are stored in a secure location in the office.

Parents are made aware of the terms of the Education Welfare Act and its implications for schools to report absences that exceed twenty days.

If a report has to be made to the National Education Welfare Board the standard reporting forms are used.

8. References to other Policies

A number of organisational and curricular plans and policies help support the aims of this Code of Behaviour:

- SPHE plan
- Anti-bullying
- Enrolment
- Special Educational Needs

Success Criteria

- Parents and teachers are a dominant influence on the lives of children and for this reason the school holds as an ideal that parents and teachers will model good example at all times.
- The success of this Code of Behaviour will be reflected in the positive atmosphere in the school.
- This Code of Behaviour will serve to enhance the channels of effective communication that already exists between parents, children and teachers.
- All members of the school community will display respect for one another in accordance with the school rules as outlined during this policy.

Roles and Responsibility

- The overall responsibility for ensuring that a code of behaviour exists in the school rests with the Board of Management

- All staff members, parents and pupils have responsibilities to adhere to the Code of Behaviour
- Teachers and Principal will ensure that this code is enforced and reviewed when necessary.

Implementation Date

The updated and reviewed policy will come into effect as and from September, 2009.

Timetable for Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Ratification & Communication

This policy was reviewed and updated by the Board of Management on 09/10/2024

A copy of this policy has been made available to the Parent's Association and is published on the school website.

Signed: *Patrick Wode*
Chairperson of B.O.M

Signed: *Miriam Foley*
Principal

Date: *9/10/24.*

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