

Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement

This code of behaviour was formulated by a sub-committee from the teaching staff in consultation with parents, PTA, other staff members and the B.O.M.

The impact of the following school policies were also taken into consideration when finalising this document.

- **RSE**
- **Homework**
- **Anti-Bullying**
- **Health & Safety**
- **Enrolment**
- **S.E.N**
- **Child Protection**

Rationale

Our previous code was reviewed in response to the guidelines issued by the National Education Welfare Board.(2008) The purpose of the code is to provide a framework that will guide our school in creating an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning.

This code was prepared in accordance with DES Circular 20/90 on School Discipline, the Education Welfare Act 2000 and the Education Act 1998.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

This Code of Behaviour will assist our school, Scoil an Linbh Iosa, in its aim to promote learning in a safe and caring environment. It is based on the principles of fairness, co-operation, trust and respect.

Aims

- To promote positive behaviour and self discipline
- To ensure that behaviour is managed in a consistent manner
- To create a safe environment where learning can take place
- To inform the whole school community of how behaviour is managed in the school and to promote home/school links
- To provide support for the staff

Strategies to Promote Positive Behaviour throughout the School

In Scoil an Linbh Iosa, we recognise the need to acknowledge positive behaviour, and every effort will be made to affirm those who are doing their best to keep these rules without an over emphasis on extrinsic rewards. Sincere praise will be given and rewards will be at the discretion of teachers/ principal.

A variety of strategies will be used to promote positive behaviour. While, in general, the class teachers will adapt various strategies to suit their pupils, these strategies will include:

- Positive everyday interaction between staff and pupils
- Good school and classroom routines.
- Rules/ expectations are clear and consistent.
- Rules/ expectations are taught
- Pupils are involved in the preparation of class rules in a manner which is appropriate to the age/ ability of the pupils
- Pupils are given responsibilities in the school (eg. Green Schools Committee, Yard Buddies)
- Class / yard rules are clearly displayed
- Positive feedback about good behaviour
- Staff encourage pupils to recognise and affirm good learning behaviour (self assessment).
- Assembly (rules are reinforced)

Other strategies might include

- Reward systems
- Positive notes home
- Thinking chair
- Circle Time
- Redirection

Additionally, programmes such as Walk Tall, Stay Safe. Alive O will be taught in order to model positive behaviour for the pupils and enhance their self esteem.

We recognise the need to introduce, and remind the children of, the school rules in a way that is age appropriate and suitable to their needs. The teaching of the rules will be an ongoing process.

School Rules

Be Prepared

- Pupils are expected to have what they need coming to/ going home from school
- Be punctual
- Pupils are expected to wear the appropriate uniform/ tracksuit/ bring swimming gear according to the timetable. (no jewellery apart from watches and ear studs/ no make up)
- Lunch to be in line with Healthy Eating Policy. Environmental packaging is encouraged. All nuts and products containing nuts are forbidden. Chewing gum is not allowed.
- Home Work should be in line with the school's Home Work Policy

Be Courteous at all times

Be Respectful of:

- All members of the school community including visitors
- Your own property and that of others
- School Property
- The environment (use paper and compost bins)

Obey Safety Rules

- Avoid the car park except under supervision
- Obey the traffic warden
- Be signed out by an adult when leaving early
- Bicycles not to be cycled on school grounds and/or footpath
- Bring concerns to the attention of the teacher
- Walk in the school building

Do your best

Our rules for the yard

1. Respond to the whistle (Stop, walk, line up quietly)
2. Food without wrappers /bags (Lunchboxes only)
3. Play safely (No wild chasing or rough play)
4. Ask permission to leave the yard
5. If there is a problem-Tell

Mornings/ Break time (Inside)

Pupils are expected to remain in their classrooms and to follow the instructions of the teacher and those who are supervising.

The standards and rules contained in this Code of Behaviour also apply to any situation where a pupil is involved in school related activities outside the school premises. This includes such activities as school tours, games and extra curricular activities and attendance at events organised by the school.

Pupils with Special Needs

We expect all students with special needs to follow the Code of Behaviour of Scoil an Linbh Iosa to the best of their ability. We recognise that they may require help to understand and observe the code, and may need to be taught how to relate cause and effects of behaviour. This may involve a specific plan drawn up in consultation with relevant staff, parents and outside agencies.

Among the strategies used to encourage adherence to the code are

- Explanation, teaching and repetition of rules
- Consistent reminders
- Visual timetables
- Adapted environments
- Social stories to improve behaviour
- Increased support/ supervision from staff
- Team approach-staff, teachers, outside agencies

Teachers should take particular care to help the students with special needs to understand the reason why their behaviour is unacceptable and the purpose of the sanctions, if imposed. However, in repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, when the safety and duty of care to others is at issue, the code takes precedence.

Dealing with inappropriate behaviour

Unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with according to the nature of the behaviour. The seriousness of the behaviour will be judged by the teachers/ principal - based on a common sense approach with regard to the nature of the behaviour and the degree/ frequency of such behaviour.

Ladder of Intervention

- **Class Teacher**

The class teacher will deal with routine incidents of misbehaviour through classroom management strategies.

- **Additional Support**

Some pupils require additional support and more active interventions to help them manage their behaviour. Additional inputs or interventions might include:

1. Referral to another teacher or adult who will work with them
2. Referral to the Deputy Principal or Principal
3. Setting targets for behaviour and monitoring them with the pupil in a positive way.
4. Behaviour contracts.
5. Record positive responses to interventions by a student.(journal-pupil's or teacher's/ behaviour plan/ Principal's journal).

- **Specialised Support**

Pupils who show particularly challenging behaviour will need a sustained and systematic response involving the important adults in their lives, at home and at school. The Principal/Deputy Principal might also seek support from professional external agencies such as NEPS or the HSE.

At each level, parental and family support may be sought.

Minor Misdemeanours

Minor misdemeanours such as occasional breach of homework policy, rough play on the yard, irregular instances of interrupting in class, isolated acts of unkindness/being discourteous/unmannerly, disregard for uniform.

Sanctions to deal with minor misdemeanours include:

- Verbal reprimand
- Reminding pupil of rule broken
- Noting in yard book if incident happened during break time and informing class teacher

Serious Misdemeanours

Serious misdemeanours such as bullying (as defined in 'The Anti Bullying' policy), regular acts of unkindness, disruptive behaviour in class, frequent breach of home work policy, inappropriate language, aggressive behaviour, deliberately refusing to co-operate with instructions.

Sanctions to deal with serious misdemeanours include.

- Write a story of what happened to be signed by child and ,when requested, by parent/guardian
- Note in journal to be signed by parents/ guardians
- Temporary separation from peers
- Sending to another teacher
- Withdrawal of privileges (e.g. class jobs)
- Denial of participation in some class activity
- Send to Deputy Principal/Principal
- Principal and/or class teacher contacts parents/guardians
- Teacher meets with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Principal meets with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Chairperson informed and parent(s)/guardian(s) requested to meet with chairperson/principal

Gross Misdemeanours

Gross misdemeanours include repeated bullying, assault, malicious damage

Sanctions to deal with gross misdemeanours

- Immediate contact between Principal/ Deputy Principal and parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss behaviour
- Removal of pupil to Principal's office
- Chairperson/Principal to sanction immediate suspension pending discussion with parent(s)/guardian(s). 0-3days, 4-10 days plus longer.
- The Principal may exclude a pupil from school for a maximum of three school days.
- The Board of Management may authorise a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed.
- No pupil shall be struck off the register for breaches of discipline without prior consent of the patron and advising the Education Welfare Officer to whom functions under the Educational Welfare Act 2000 have been assigned, in writing, of the reasons therefore.

Procedures for Suspension

The Board of Management and staff of Scoil an Linbh Iosa will follow the procedures for suspension and expulsion as outlined in the Guidelines for Schools on Developing a Code of Behaviour.

Fair procedures (i.e. the right to be heard and the right to impartiality) will be applied at all times. Accordingly, pupils and their parents/guardians will be fully informed about an allegation and the process that will be used to investigate and decide the matter. They will be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation before a decision is made re suspension.

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal/ Board of Management may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary, when, the continued presence of the pupil in the school, at that time, would represent a serious threat to the safety of any member of the school community.

The Board of Management will also consider the following factors before suspending a pupil.

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date
- Whether suspension is a proportionate response
- The possible impact of suspension

(Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, page 72)

In relation to suspension

- Parents/guardians and the pupil will be invited to meet the Principal and/or the Board of Management to discuss the proposed suspension.
- Parents/guardians and pupil will be given an opportunity to respond.
- In the event that an immediate suspension is warranted, parents/guardians and the pupil will be invited to discuss the matter with the principal and the procedures governing suspension will apply.
- A written letter of the terms and date of the suspension will be given to the parents/guardians. This letter will contain
 1. The period of the suspension
 2. The reasons for the suspension
 3. Any study programme to be followed.
 4. The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitment to be entered into by the parents/guardians and pupil. (eg. it might be necessary to reaffirm their commitment to the Code of Behaviour)
 5. The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
 6. The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education (Education Act 1998 Section 29)
- When the period of suspension ends, the pupil will be re-admitted formally to the class by the Principal.
- Where a satisfactory resolution to the problem has been achieved, the pupil may be re-admitted to the school, within a suspension period, at the discretion of the Principal and or the Board of Management.
- If a pupil continues to misbehave he/she may be suspended for a major fixed period (up to 10 days) to allow for consultation with both the pupil and parents/guardians to address the issue.
- The Education Welfare Officer will be informed when a pupil has been suspended for a period of 6 days or more.
- Section 29 Appeal - when the total number of days for which a student has been suspended, in the current academic year, reaches 20 days, the parents may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act and will be given information about how to appeal . This information will be given by the school Principal or by the Chairperson of the board of Management.
- When the suspension is completed, the pupil will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed the school will expect the same behaviour of this pupil as all other pupils.

Records and Reports

Formal written records will be kept of

1. The investigation
2. The decision making process
3. The decision and the rationale for the decision
4. The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management

The principal will report all suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines. (Education (Welfare) Act ,2000, section 21.

Procedures for Expulsion

Factors to consider before proposing to expel a student

1. The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
 2. The context of the behaviour
 3. The impact of the behaviour
 4. The interventions tried to date
 5. Whether expulsion is an appropriate response
 6. The possible impact of the expulsion,
- Subsequent to the above suspension procedures and meetings with parents/guardians, if, serious /gross incidents continue, the pupil will be recommended for permanent expulsion by the Board of Management. In exceptional circumstances, pupils may be expelled for a first offence. The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach to the code could include
 - a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
 - actual violence or physical assault
 - supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
 - sexual assault
 - Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include
 1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
 2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal
 3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing
 4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing
 5. Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer
 6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.
 - A parent/guardian may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 Section 29). An appeal may also be brought to the National Welfare Board on behalf of a pupil.

Absences from School

The following procedures are to be used in the case of absences from school. The Education Welfare Act 2000 section 23 (2) (e) & section 18 must be fulfilled. It is the responsibility of the school to inform the parents of these procedures.

Parents are requested to

- Inform the school in writing about the absence. Where possible this should be prior to the absence.
- In the case of a short illness, the school should be informed, in writing, on return to the school.
- In the case of a longer illness, the school should be informed as soon as possible.
- Notes re. absences should be written in the back of the child's homework journal.
- Notes should be shown to the class teacher.
- Pupils absent with a medical certificate should not return to the school prior to the date stated on the certificate.

When a pupil has been absent for 20 days the NEWB (National Education Welfare Board) will be informed by the school.

Implementation of the Code

- Parents will be given a copy of the code and, as a condition of enrolment, all new parents will be requested to confirm in writing that the code is acceptable to them
- At parent/ teacher meetings, at the AGM of the PTA and at the introductory meeting for new parents to the school, parents will be advised that support around behaviour is available from the school
- Parents will be encouraged to share information that they feel might be impacting on their child's behaviour
- Where necessary, translations of the code will be provided
- PTA may provide talks on behavioural matters
- Behaviour will be monitored on an ongoing basis by all members of the school community. Concerns re behaviour will be shared with the relevant parties- Principal/Deputy Principal/teachers/SNA. Steps will be taken to address concerns and interventions will be put in place.
- Teachers will inform the Principal if and when a pattern of absences is becoming apparent.

Roles and Responsibilities

Principal/ Deputy Principal

- To co-ordinate, monitor and implement the code in partnership with all members of the staff
- To organise an audit and review of code

Teachers

- To manage the classroom in such a way that the children are positively engaged.
- To involve the pupils in the drawing up of rules for the class room.
- To teach the rules in a way that that is appropriate to each class level.
- To display the rules in the class room
- To develop lesson plans and programmes to teach the skills for building positive relationships
- To implement behaviour plans

Ancillary Staff operating under the guidance of the Principal/ Deputy Principal.

- To co-operate with the Principal / Deputy Principal and teachers in the implementation of the code
(observing ,monitoring, providing feedback, supporting)

Parents/ Guardians

- To encourage the pupils to keep the school rules
- To co-operate with the school in the implementation of this and other policies

Board of Management

- Participation in review
- Ratification

Success Criteria

- Positive feedback from the whole school community
- Observation of behaviour
- Atmosphere in the school

Date of Ratification : September, 21st 2010