

Code of Behaviour

St. Benins N.S

Roll No. 18636V

SCOIL NAÍSIÚNTA



The objectives of this policy are to:

- Ensure an orderly climate for learning in the school
- Act in accordance with the requirements of the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) and 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, National Educational Welfare Board, 2008. This code of behaviour seeks to address the:
 - standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil
 - measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards
 - procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school
 - grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil
 - procedures to be followed in relation to a pupil's absence from school

The basic principles that underpin our code of behaviour include:

- Providing clarity
- Affirming that everyone's behaviour matters
- Focusing on promoting good behaviour
- Balancing needs
- Recognising that the quality of relationships between teachers and students are crucial
- Focusing on personal responsibility
- Ensuring fairness and equity
- Promoting equality
- Recognising educational vulnerability
- Attending to the welfare of students
- Attending to the welfare of staff
- Promoting safety and freedom from threat

In keeping with these principles, it is likely to be successful in achieving our goals. These goals include:

- Creating a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- Creating a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning
- Encouraging students to take personal responsibility for their learning and their behaviour
- Helping young people to mature into responsible participating citizens
- Building positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support among students, staff and parents
- Ensuring that the school's high expectations for the behaviour of all the members of the school community are widely known and understood.

Aims:

- 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 differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- To ensure the safety and well being 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 is implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

1. Guidelines for Behaviour in the school

Each pupil is expected to:

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

Section 23 (4) of the Act states that, prior to registering a pupil, the principal teacher shall provide the parents of the child with a copy of the school's code of behaviour and that the principal '*may, as a condition of so registering such child, require his or her parents to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour so provided is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child*'.

2. Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour

Our whole school approach to behaviour involves:

- 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

School policies and practices are reviewed at staff meetings to ensure that they support the objectives of the code of behaviour.

The code of behaviour also caters for children who may present behavioural difficulties arising from their special education needs. Specific strategies are used to cater for these children e.g. an Individual Educational Plan with behavioural targets, monitoring and recording of behaviours, specific class-based lessons and individual/group lessons e.g SPHE group.

The school's SPHE curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour. 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.

- New teachers are given a copy of this code and supported by the principal and staff in its implementation.
- Parents of newly enrolled children are informed about the curriculum and their part in supporting it at a special meeting with the Principal Teacher and the Infants Teacher.
- Activities such as Circle Time are scheduled to develop these skills in children.

Board of Management

The Board plays an active role in exploring the kinds of relationships and behaviours that will reflect the school's ethos and responsibilities.

- The Board of Management is consulted in reviewing/drafting the code of behaviour and sanctions it.
- The Board of Management supports the code of behaviour in the school and the staff in its implementation e.g. provision of opportunities for staff development.
- Procedures are in place for the Board of Management to deal with serious breaches of behaviour in accordance with DES policy.

Parents

Parents support the school in the promotion of positive behaviour and the maintenance of high standards of behaviour by:

- familiarising themselves and their children with this Code of Behaviour and support its implementation
- encouraging their children to have a sense of respect for themselves, others and their property
- ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually

- encouraging their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work
- communicating respectfully with the school in relation to any problem that may affect their child's progress/behaviour
- informing the school of any issue/happening in the home/school or wider community which could result in a change in the child's behaviour in school or also on the child's ability to learn in class
- being aware of and cooperating with the school rules and system of rewards and sanctions
- attending meetings at the school if requested
- helping their children with homework and ensuring that it is completed to the best of the child's own ability
- ensuring their children have the necessary books and materials for school

Pupils

Pupils are involved in formulating their own classroom rules at the beginning of each school year.

3. Positive strategies for Managing Behaviour

Classroom

- Ground rules/behavioural expectations in each class are consistent with the ethos expressed in the code of behaviour and set a positive atmosphere for learning
- Pupils are involved in formulating their own classroom rules at the beginning of each school year.
- Teachers ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave
- A clear system of acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and sanctions for misbehaviour is in place
- Classroom management techniques ensure a variety of activities and methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation

Playground

- Children are aware of playground rules which emphasise positive behaviour
- A staff rota and timetable is in place for supervision in the playground.
- Arrangements for wet days include exercise in the Halla, suitable games, e.g. board games, jigsaws etc. under supervision.
- An incident book is used to record serious incidents of misbehaviour.

Other areas in the school

Positive strategies are in place to prevent behavioural problems in corridors, halls, cloakrooms, toilets etc. e.g. children are expected to walk at all times and are reminded of this every day.

School related activities

The standards and rules contained in the code of behaviour apply in all situations where pupils are the responsibility of the school. Walking, taking care, showing respect to others, sportsmanship, good language etc. are encouraged.

4. Rewards and Sanctions

Good Behaviour

Good behaviour is regularly praised and acknowledged. It is rewarded with a selection from the following options, according to class and teacher requirements:

- stickers
- star charts
- a mention at assembly
- being given a special responsibility or privilege
- an occasional subject or night off written homework

Inappropriate Behaviour

Strategies

Some or all of the following strategies may be used, at the discretion of the staff, to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour and to modify same. Examples of misbehaviour are included in Appendix 1

Classroom & Playground

- Reasoning with pupil. Initial warning to include self-appraisal, discussion of consequences and restitution where possible.
- Temporary separation within the class or on the yard
- Loss of privileges e.g. golden time/prescribed additional homework/detention during a break/withholding from a class trip.
- A pupil may be required to complete a Reflection Sheet to be signed by parents and kept on school file.
- Withdrawal from class.

- Referral to Principal.
- Class teacher informs parents with the letter included in Appendix 2
- If misbehaviour continues a second letter will be issued requesting a formal meeting with the parents, class teacher and Principal. (Sample in Appendix 3)
- Formal meeting of Principal and class Teacher with parents with a view to seeking a solution.
- In the event of a child's behaviour having a detrimental effect on their own education/safety or that of others the BoM has authorised the school authorities to contact the parents to have the child removed from school for the remainder of that

- school day.
- Following this if no improvement has occurred 'Internal Suspension' may be introduced at this stage. This is when a pupil is removed from their own base class and is placed in another class for up to three school days. This will be activated when all of the above strategies have been exhausted or when a serious incident of misbehaviour occurs.
 - Formal report to the Board of Management

Managing aggressive or violent misbehaviour

Children who are emotionally disturbed are referred to the Special Educational Needs Organiser and/or to the National Educational Psychology Service. Appropriate support is sought from services available e.g child's GP/Paediatrician/Psychiatrist/CAMHS/Health Service Executive and ISPCC.

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, steps will be taken to remove the other children from the scene and the Special Education teacher will remain with the pupil until the situation is in hand. Parents/Guardians will be notified.

5. Suspension

- Before resorting to serious sanctions e.g., suspension, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Parents/Guardians will be involved at an early stage rather than as a last resort. Communication with parents/Guardians depend on the nature of the offence.

The Grounds for Suspension:

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as:

- That the pupil's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others in the class and to the teaching process
- That there is a real and immediate threat to the safety of others or that of the pupil by continuing in the classroom at this time
- Serious damage to property.
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of school staff will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour, depending on circumstances.
- Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the BOM may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension.
- Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern

and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information.

- Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130(5) of the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.
- Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with Rule 130(6).

The Appropriateness of Suspending a Pupil:

The following should be reviewed:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour on other pupils' learning and on the teaching process
- The interventions tried to date
- Whether suspension is a proportionate response to the pupil's behaviour
- The possible impact (positive or negative) of suspension

Rule 130(5) Rules for National Schools read:-

5(a) Where the Board of Management deems it necessary to suspend a pupil, the maximum initial period of such exclusion shall be three school-days.

5(b) A special decision of the Board of Management is necessary to authorise a further period of exclusion up to a maximum of 10 school-days to allow for consultation with the pupil's or pupils' parents or guardians.

5(c) In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Management may authorise a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed.

6. Expulsion

This will be considered in extreme cases and the following aspects of the case will be reviewed in order to make this decision:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour on other pupils' learning and on the teaching process
- The interventions tried to date
- Preliminary investigation
- Whether expulsion is a proportionate response to the pupil's behaviour
- The possible impact (positive or negative) of expulsion.

If necessary, please refer to page 70 & 71 of the NEWB "Guidelines for Developing School Codes of Behaviour".

Suspension/expulsion procedures in accordance with the Education Welfare Act 2000

(A) Written notification shall be sent to the Education Welfare Officer before any pupil is suspended or expelled. This is in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act 2000

Suspension/Expulsion begins on the day that notification is received by the E.W.O. This shall be sent by registered post and an email shall also be forwarded giving notification of the letter. The E.W.O. shall try and arrange for the education of the pupil for this period.

(B) Under Section 29 of the Education Act (1988), parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Dept. 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. The school will advise parents/guardians of this right of appeal and associated timeframe if it has been decided to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student.

Rule 130(6) Rules for National Schools read:-

6. No pupil shall be struck off the rolls for breaches of discipline without the prior consent of the Patron and unless alternative arrangements are made for the enrolment of the pupil at another suitable school.

The policy on expulsion will be communicated to every parent on enrolment as part of the code of behaviour. Parents and pupils will be informed about their right to

appeal. The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion in the school as required.

7. Keeping records

Class level

Teachers will maintain written records of any ongoing behaviour which is a cause of concern. Improvements will also be noted. These records will be kept securely by each teacher. Where necessary a written record is kept of communication between school and home, with outside agencies, Board of Management etc.

Playground

A written record of misbehaviour is kept by supervising staff if deemed necessary.

8. Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school

The Education Welfare Act, 2000 requires the school to inform the education Welfare Board where a student is absent from school for 20 school days or more in a school year, using the standard form. Parents are requested to notify the school in writing of a pupil's absence at all times and the reason for this absence.

9. Roles and Responsibility

Code of Behaviour at Break times

Break time rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and wisely.

1. Pupils leave and enter the school building in an orderly fashion.
2. Pupils must not behave in any way, which endangers themselves or others. Rough play comes into this category.
3. Any form of threatening behaviour is unacceptable.
4. Any instructions or directions given by the supervising teacher, secretary and/or by the SNA must be complied with.
5. Pupils line up in an orderly manner at the end of breaks.
6. Pupils are not allowed to run on corridors.
7. Pupils may not re-enter the school building during breaks without the express permission of a teacher.
8. If, due to inclement weather, the pupils are allowed to remain indoors normal classroom behaviour rules apply.
9. Show courtesy to adults in yard, teachers and supervisors.

“Time Out” area and procedures

1. The “Time-Out” area is located at the wall beside the back door beside the staffroom. A child may be sent to this area for a serious incident or a series of minor disruptions. In the case of a serious incident a note will be made in the Yard Incident Book.

2. After successive serious incidents further steps will be taken as outlined elsewhere in the school Code of Behaviour
3. It is recommended that children, who are sent to the “Time-Out” area three times, should be brought to the attention of Principal by the teacher. Lists of all pupils’ names are kept in the Incident Record notebook and the date of sanction should be entered opposite their name. With three entries a standard letter will be sent out to parents. The letter must be signed and returned to the Principal. The letter will then be filed in the appropriate folder. If the pupil appears in the notebook again, his parents will be asked to meet the Principal and teacher. Further transgressions may result in parents being asked to bring their child home for the duration of break-times for a period of time and/or a period of suspension from the school.
4. The teacher on the yard should inform class teachers when child/children from their class have been written into the yard book.

APPENDIX 1

Examples of Misbehaviour

- A. To refuse to obey an instruction from a teacher.
To make gesture to, or behind, a teacher or any other staff member signaling defiance.
To make rude noises or obscene gestures when a teacher passes.
To use bad language.
To turn away when spoken to by a teacher.
To give cheeky replies to a teacher.
To interrupt class work through constantly talking.
To disrupt class by making rude noises.
To disrupt class by throwing objects across room.
To refuse to co-operate with teacher or other children in the general organisation of class work.
- B. To use indecent words to other children.
To threaten another child.
To make obscene drawings in notebooks.
To cover notebooks, desks, walls or grounds of school with graffiti.
To play in areas of school grounds in which it is forbidden to do so.
To use bad language towards other children.
To spit at other children.
To fire missiles from elastic bands or catapults of any description.
To bring any dangerous or obnoxious substance, (alcohol, drugs etc.) into school.
To bring any dangerous articles (knife etc.) into school.
To make, do, or say anything with the object of disrupting the efficient running of the school.
- C. To deface school property by writing, vandalising, standing, walking or running on it.
To interfere with school equipment, (computer, video, P.E. equipment etc.) without permission.
To deface other children's property.

This list of examples is not exhaustive.

The problem of bullying assumes such great importance that it is dealt with as a separate policy, but is included in the Code of Behaviour as our “Anti-Bullying Policy”.

The use of technology in school is a constantly changing situation and areas of pupil responsibility are outlined in the Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP). Breaches of the AUP constitute acts of misbehaviour.

APPENDIX 2

The STAGE I Disciplinary Letter to Parents/Guardians

Pupil's Name: _____ Date: ___/___/___

Class Teacher: _____

Dear Parents/Guardians

I would like to draw your attention to the fact that your child's behaviour has been unsatisfactory as indicated below. His/Her name has been noted on a number of occasions.

Disruptive in class

Inattentive in class

Has shown lack of respect towards teacher/pupil/property

Homework assignment not completed/completed unsatisfactorily

Behaviour on playground unsatisfactory

I would appreciate if you would discuss this matter with your child. Please sign and return.

Yours sincerely

Class Teacher

***Caoimhe Mellett
School Principal***

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Signature:

APPENDIX 3

The STAGE 2 Disciplinary Letter to Parents/Guardians

Pupil's Name: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Class Teacher: _____

Dear Parents/Guardians

I sent you a note previously on ____/____/____. I would like to draw your attention to the fact that your child's behaviour has again been unsatisfactory as indicated below and his/her name noted again on a number of occasions.

Disruptive in class

Inattentive in class

Has shown lack of respect towards teacher/pupil/property

Homework assignment not completed/completed unsatisfactorily

Behaviour on playground unsatisfactory

I would appreciate if you could contact the school (093) 21275 to make an appointment to meet with me to discuss this matter.

Yours sincerely

Class Teacher

***Caoimhe Mellett
School Principal***

Reviewed: October 2021

Responsibility for Review:

All members of staff

Parents' Committee

B.O.M.

Ratification and Communication:

Policy ratified by B.O.M

Signed: _____

Chairperson Board of Management

Date: _____