

# **Code of Behaviour**

## **1 Aims of Code of Behaviour**

- (a) This code of Behaviour aims to achieve the following:
  - (1) the development of self discipline in pupils based on consideration, respect and tolerance for others.
  - (2) that pupils be trained to accept responsibility for their actions.
  - (3) that pupils learn to accept that they are wrong when that is the case and to make suitable amends.
  - (4) that sanctions when they occur should follow the 'Discipline of Natural Consequences' i.e. the sanction would be linked to the misbehaviour.

## **2 Punctuality**

- (a) The official school opening time is 8.30a.m.
- (b) Classes start at 8.50 a.m.
- (c) Children are expected to be at school on time.

## **3 Absences and Illness**

- (a) Every absence of a child from school must be accounted for by giving the child a note to explain his / her absence on his / her return to school.
- (b) If a child wishes to leave school during the school day he / she must be collected at the classroom door by his / her parent. Should the parents wish another adult to collect the child, they must send a written note to this effect to the child's teacher.
- (c) Any infectious illness should be notified to the school immediately.

## **4 Rules for Junior Room**

- 1 Listen when the teacher is speaking. Listen when other pupils have something to say.
- 2 Put your hand up if you have a question / something to say.
- 3 Always tell the teacher where you are going to the bathroom, to get a drink etc.

- 4 No running in the classroom. Stay in your seats.
- 5 Make sure you have a pencil, rubber, sharpener, colours, etc. in your schoolbag.
- 6 Be kind and considerate to others around us -----don't leave people out.
- 7 Be careful with school property and other people's property.
- 8 Always ask if you wish to borrow something.
- 9 Tidy up after yourself.
- 10 Always make sure your laces are tied.

## **5 Rules for Middle and Senior Rooms**

- 1 Always listen to the teacher.
- 2 Always put your hand up if you want to ask a question.
- 3 Stay in your seat unless you have a good reason not to.
- 4 No running in the classroom.
- 5 Walk in single file on the stairs.
- 6 Always ask the teacher's permission to leave the classroom.
- 7 Respect other children's property.

## **6 Safety Rules in the School Building**

- (a) They should never run in the school..
- (b) They must not bounce balls in the building.
- (c) Pupils should always stand back to let adults or very young children pass.
- (d) Children must be careful not to push or shove other children on the stairs.
- (e) All climbing is forbidden.
- (f) Children from classes not requiring Geometry Sets must not bring compasses to school.
- (g) Children must never throw any object within the school building.

- (h) Children who are waiting to be collected by parents at 2.10p.m. or 1.10p.m. must wait on the school steps and keep away from the road.
- (i) Pupils should not open the front door at any time to allow visitors to enter.

## **7 Playground Rules**

- (a) In the playground children must never leave it without first asking the teacher in charge.
- (b) Should they need to use the toilet they must first ask permission, and then use the toilets immediately inside the school building.
- (c) Children are asked not to open or close the playground gate..
- (d) Junior and Senior Infants are not allowed to sit on the wall. Children may only sit on the wall if they are sitting up straight with their feet forward. They are not allowed to touch a child who is sitting on the wall.
- (e) Children are asked to keep the playground litter free.
- (f) When the bell rings children should stop playing immediately and walk quietly to their lines.
- (g) Parents who wish children to stay in at lunchtime due to illness must send in a note to this effect.

## **8 Cleanliness**

- (a) Children will be encouraged at all times to maintain the highest standards of cleanliness.
- (b) *Pupils are expected to keep all their copies and books clean and presentable. They will be asked to replace any copy or book that they have defaced.*
- (c) *Should a pupil write on any item of school property he / she will be asked to clean or replace it.*
- (d) The school environment should be kept clean and litter free.
- (e) Pupils may be asked to pick up papers inside and outside on a rota basis.
- (f) Children must leave classrooms free of papers, etc. at home time and use litter bins provided at all times.
- (g) Any child seen dropping litter will be asked to pick up papers the following day in a specific area.
- (h) Care must be taken with personal hygiene. Children will be asked to wash dirty hands when appropriate.

## **9 Behaviour during out of school based Activities**

- (a) From time to time children will leave the school for school based activities e.g.
- (b) Tours, football matches, swimming, concerts etc. Prior to these activities parents are asked to remind their children of the personal safety codes regarding speaking with strangers, etc.
- (c) On these occasions pupils are expected to exhibit the highest possible standards of behaviour. They must:
  - (1) obey any instructions or directions given by the supervising teacher or other adults in charge of the group.
  - (2) walk in pairs, standing back to let others pass when appropriate.
  - (3) dress in type of clothes they have been asked to.
  - (4) behave in a way which does not endanger themselves or others.
  - (5) show respect to and consideration for those they encounter e.g. bus drivers, restaurant staff.
  - (6) - never use bad language or be bad mannered.
  - (7) - show respect for the property of others.
  - (8) - leave the places they have been in clean and as they found them.
  - (10) - remain with their group at all times.

## **10 Dress Code**

- (a) Children must not wear any jewellery, with the exception of watches. They will be asked to remove other items of jewellery.
- (b) Earrings are not permitted, however children will be permitted to wear studs only. Children who break this regulation will be asked to have the earring removed by the following day.
- (c) Children must not wear outdoor clothes, caps etc. in the classroom.

## **11 Property**

- (a) Children are expected to show respect for their own, the property of other children and that of the school.
- (b) Mobile phones and expensive toys are not permitted in school.

## **12 Bullying**

- (a) The School recognises the seriousness of the issue of bullying.
- (b) The following definitions may be of help in deciding whether your child is being bullied.
  - (1) A bully has been described as a child who fairly often oppresses or harasses somebody else in a physical or mental way.
  - (2) A victim is a child who for a fairly long time has been exposed to aggression from others.
- (c) It is important for parents to report any sign of school related distress to the child's teacher.

## **13 Suspension**

- (a) The Board of Management reserve the right to suspend a child for:
  - (1) any incident in serious breach of the school's Code of Behaviour or general ethos
  - (2) in the case of gross misbehaviour.
- (b) This step will not be taken lightly and the totality of the situation will be considered.
- (c) In the case of serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour teachers will keep a written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour, as well as a record of improvements in the behaviour of disruptive pupils. These will include the warnings or advice given to the pupil. Parents will be involved in this process at an early stage.
- (d) In cases of gross misbehaviour the principal will determine whether or not a specific situation constitutes an incident of gross misbehaviour, taking into consideration the actual incident involved and its implications for the health, safety and overall welfare of the members of the school community.
- (e) Valid grounds for suspension include:
  - (1) -stealing
  - (2) -damaging property

- (3) -disrespect to teachers or other school staff
- (4) -leaving school / school based activities without permission
- (5) -causing injury to another pupil through misbehaviour
- (6) -repeated case of bullying

## **Principles**

- A pupil may be suspended only by the Board of Management.
- An initial period of suspension shall not exceed 3 school days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than 3 days is needed in order to achieve a particular objective.
  
- The principal shall not extend a period of suspension except with the prior approval of the Chairman of the Board of Management. Only in exceptional circumstances should a period of suspension be extended. In each case, the principal shall give written notification of the extension and the period of extension to the parent of the pupil and to the Board.
- The Board of Management places a ceiling of 10 days on any one period of suspension imposed by it.

## **Steps to be followed prior to suspension**

Suspension should be considered only after:

- a period of indiscipline

The school must maintain a written record of events and of the interventions of teachers and contacts with parents.

- a serious incident of indiscipline

The school must have investigated and documented the incident. The investigation should include an opportunity for the pupil to be interviewed and for his or her version of events to be given before the decision to suspend.

## **Instigating suspension**

- On taking the decision to suspend a pupil the principal must immediately notify the parent, in writing, of the suspension. The letter must specify arrangements for the provision of work to the pupil, the duration of and the reasons for the suspension.
- The letter must invite the parent to visit the school in order to discuss the suspension and enlist support for the school's efforts to resolve the difficulty.
- The principal should ensure that a full record of the meeting is kept.

- A copy of the letter must be sent immediately to the Chairman of the Board of Management.
- All suspensions must be notified immediately to the Board using the appropriate form and accompanied by a copy of the letter sent to the parent.
- A suspended pupil can be sent home before the end of the normal school day only with the agreement of the parent and only if the pupil can be delivered directly into the care of the parent or of a person nominated by the parent.
- The Board's Educational Welfare service should be informed immediately if a pupil does not return to school at the end of a period of suspension.

## **Expulsions**

### **Principles**

- The decision to expel rests solely with the Board of Management of the School.
- A pupil may be expelled from a school only after serving a period of suspension.
- A pupil may be expelled from a school only after consultation has taken place between the principal, the parent of the pupil, and Chairman of the Board of Management, provided that any neglect or refusal on the part of the parent to take part in such consultations shall not prevent a pupil being expelled from the school.
- The consultations must include consultation about the future provision of suitable education for the pupil concerned.
- The parent of any pupil expelled from school must be given immediate written notice of the right to appeal against the decision.

### **Steps to be taken prior to expulsion**

- In all cases where a recommendation for expulsion is being considered the principal shall convene a meeting to be attended by the principal, the Chairman of the Board of Management, and the parent.
- Any neglect or refusal on the part of the parent to take part in this meeting shall not prevent the meeting from taking place or the pupil being recommended for expulsion.
- At this meeting the possibility of expulsion and the implications of this course of action must be discussed. The meeting must also consider the future provision of suitable education for the pupil concerned.
- The principal must keep a record of the meeting.
- Following the meeting the parent must be informed by the principal that a report on the matter will be presented to the next meeting of the Board of Management.
- Following discussion by the Board of Management of all the available evidence, including the outcome of all consultations, any decision taken and the reasons for it must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

## **Right of appeal**

Where it has been decided to expel the pupil, the school must inform the parent of the statutory right to make an appeal to the Independent Appeal Tribunal.

### **14 Reward for Good Behaviour**

- (a) The staff will be conscious at all times of the necessity to encourage and reward good behaviour. Specifically the following strategies will be used: -
  - (1) 1. Small prizes, merit-stickers, stars, student of the week.
  - (2) 2. Oral praise, yearly reports.

### **15 Parental Role**

- (a) The support and co-operation of parents are essential to the effective operation of the Code of Behaviour.
- (b) If teachers and parents are not working in harmony, inevitably the pupils will suffer.
- (c) Parents can co-operate by:
  - (1) - encouraging their children to abide by the school rules.
  - (2) - by visiting the school when requested to by the Principal teacher or other member of staff.
  - (3) - by contacting the school should they be concerned about a school related matter.
  - (4) - by ensuring that homework is allocated due time and effort.
- (d) Parents are invited to keep in close contact with the school with regard to all aspects of the child's progress.
- (e) Parents will be informed at an early stage of incidents of serious misbehaviour on the part of their children.
- (f) When detention or suspension is contemplated parents are encouraged to come to the school to discuss this with the principal, which is their right.
- (g) Every effort will be made by the principal and staff to ensure that parents are kept well informed:
  - (1) - that the school provides a welcoming atmosphere towards them.
  - (2) - that they are not only told when their children are in trouble but when they have behaved well.



## 16            **The positive use of sanctions**

Sanctions are employed within the schools not to punish people but ensure adherence to agreed responsibilities. Within the school it is vital that sanctions are employed within a context where:

Teacher and pupils have unconditional, positive relationships with each other.

Positive, respectful ways of communicating are used.

Teachers model appropriate responsible behaviours.

Effort rather than performance is consistently encouraged.

The implementation of sanction must be done in such a way that the child knows precisely:

How he or she has been irresponsible and what exactly is required of him or her.

Sanctions are used to educate for responsibility; they are not a means of putting down children.

The positive use of sanctions has certain clear characteristics:

- a.        When possible, the sanction used should be the natural result of the irresponsible behaviour.
- b.        Sanctions must be predictable and consistent. This means that children always know where responsibility lies and know that breaching that line will always lead to the application of a sanction.
- c.        Sanctions must always be fair and just : the sanction must always fit the irresponsibility.
- d.        Sanctions must emphasise what is expected of children so that when they occur they can become an opportunity for more responsible behaviour and self-control.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Code of Behavior Policy will be implemented by all members of Staff. The policy will be discussed during staff meetings on an annual basis.

Timeframe for Implementation & Review:

The changes to this policy will be implemented immediately.

This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily accessible to parents on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

**This policy was adopted and ratified by the Board of Management on**

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

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Principal**

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

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chairperson of Board of Management**

**This policy will be reviewed in light of changes in legislation, circular letters and incidents in the school.**