

Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement

Following discussion at a Board of Management meeting on September 15th, 2008, this plan was redrafted by a group of teachers, parents and Board of Management on Monday November 10th 2008. It was further discussed at a staff meeting on Monday November 17th 2008.

Rationale

The existing code was due for review at this time to fulfil the requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2008, section 23 (1).

Relationships to characteristic spirit of the school

The philosophy of this school is that we strive to provide a well ordered caring, happy, secure atmosphere where children will feel valued, cherished and will develop to their full potential.

St. Enda's NS will endeavour to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community, to imbue in the pupils respect for people, property and the environment, and to encourage in them an attitude of responsibility.

We will at all times be mindful of the contribution each one of us makes in caring for this generation and the next.

- 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 these differences.
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the system 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 a consistent manner throughout the school.

Content of Policy

The policy is addressed under the following headings.

Guidelines for behaviour in the school.

Whole school promoting positive behaviour

- Staff
- Board of Management
- Parents
- Pupils

Positive strategies for managing behaviour

- Classroom
- Playground

Rewards and sanctions

- Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour
- Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour
- Involving parents in management of problem behaviour
- Managing aggressive or violent behaviour

Suspension/Expulsion

- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Appeals

Keeping records.

Procedure for notification of a pupil's absence from school.

Reference to other policies.

Success criteria.

Roles of Responsibilities.

Timetable and review.

Communication.

Guidelines for behaviour in the school

- 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 in school and when doing homework.
- Any form of behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable.

Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour

A positive school ethos is based on the quality of relationships between teachers and the ways in which pupils and teachers treat each other. This positive ethos permeates all the activities of the school and helps in forming a strong sense of social cohesion within the school.

Staff

In our school, we treat all children with respect and dignity. There is a strong sense of community and cooperation among staff, pupils and parents and all are agreed that their focus is primarily on the promotion and recognition of positive behaviour.

- All staff are aware of the content of this policy. All new and temporary staff are made aware of the schools code of behaviour.
- The code of behaviour is issued to all new parents at the end of June prior to their starting school in September.
- 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 difference and develop citizenship.

SPHE will be taught through a combination of texts.

- Positive school climate and atmosphere.
- Discrete time.
- Integration with other subject areas.
- Activities scheduled to develop these skills will include circle time, co-operative
- games, drama, activities, discussion, visual images etc.

Board of Management

- The Board of Management was instrumental in drafting this code of behaviour.
- The Board of Management will support the implementation of this code throughout the school.

Parents

- Parents are regularly informed and consulted on all aspects of this code of behaviour.
- A copy of the code of behaviour will be issued to new parents prior to their child's entrance to school.
- Parents are aware of and co-operate with the school's system of rewards and sanctions.
- Parents ensure their children are at school in time.
- Parents attend meeting at the school if requested.
- Parents help their children with homework and ensure that it is completed.
- Parents ensure their children have the necessary books and materials for school.

Pupils

- To assist parent and pupils in understanding the system 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.
- Pupils are involved in devising their own class rules/contracts of behaviour for yard.
- In class discussions are carried out on a regular basis to review the operation of the code of behaviour throughout the school.

Positive strategies for managing behaviour

Classroom

- “Ground rules” / behavioural expectations in each class that are consistent with the ethos as expressed in the code of behaviour and which set a positive atmosphere for learning.
- Pupil input in devising the class rules.
- 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 sanction for misbehaviour.
- Classroom management techniques that ensure a variety of activities and methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation.
- Timetabling.

Playground

- A concise set of playground rules which emphasise positive behaviour and make it clear what activities are permitted.
- Playground supervision.
- Creation of zones on the playground, providing section for specific age groups.
- On wet days children stay in the classroom and play with board games, jigsaws and computer games.
- Incidents of misbehaviour are reported to the class teacher. Serious incidents are reported in the incident book.

Rewards

Most of the pupils are very well behaved and rewarding good behaviour is important part of our Code of Behaviour. The following strategies may be utilised to reward good behaviour.

- Note in pupil’s homework notebook to convey messages of approval from teachers.
- Some homework off if particular targets are achieved.
- Extra privileges such as doing jobs or being shown a DVD.

Sanctions

The following strategies may be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour.

1. Reasoning with pupils.
2. Verbal reprimands, including advice on how to improve.
3. Temporary separation from peers, friends and others.
4. Recording of incident of misbehaviour by means of misbehaviour marks.
5. Note in homework journal.
6. Detention during breaks
7. Withdrawal of privileges.

8. Extra exercises to write out.

9. Pupils who misbehave frequently may not be allowed to participate in school outings for their own safety and that of other pupils.

Note: Although incidents of behaviour are recorded, the emphasis is on encouraging children to behave well and praise is given for commendable behaviour. Parents will be informed at an early stage if problems occur and not simply at the point where crisis has risen. At times, some parents suggest that the matters to which their attention is being drawn are of a trivial nature, and that there was no necessity to have informed them that their children were misbehaving. The response to this is that while the misbehaviour may appear to be of trivial nature, it is the cumulative effect of such breaches of the rules which is important and not the offence itself.

Managing aggressive or violent misbehaviour

- Children who are emotionally disturbed are immediately referred for psychological assessment.
- Through the Special Education Needs Organiser, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Service
- Executive, NEPS.

Suspension

Disciplinary Procedures:

Stage 1

- a) Child's name and class recorded; nature of incident is noted.
- b) Written exercise is set as punishment and signed by both parents where possible.

Stage 2

If there are three incidents in a week, a note will be sent home. Both parents, where possible, should sign this note and return it to school.

Stage 3

If misbehaviour continues, a note will be sent to parents requesting that they call to the school to discuss the child's behaviour. The child may also be detained during lunch break on a specified day.

Stage 4

If a pupil misbehaves on a continuous basis, or if there is a serious incident of misbehaviour, it may be necessary to suspend a pupil. Procedures for the suspension of a pupil are as follows:

1. Parent is invited to discuss the matter with the class teacher and the principal.
2. If suspension is being invoked, the parent is informed, and then confirmation of the duration of the suspension is provided in writing.
3. The maximum period of an initial suspension is three school days.

4. A special decision of the Board of Management is necessary to authorise a further period of exclusion up to a maximum of ten school days to allow for consultation with the pupils' parents, in exceptional circumstances, the Board of Management may authorise a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed.
5. The Principal shall inform the Education Welfare Officer, by notice in writing, when a student is suspended from a recognised school for a period of not less than 6 days. (section 21 (4) a).

Expulsion (permanent exclusion)

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 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." (section 24(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. Accordingly, schools should advise parents of this right of appeal and associated timeframe if it has been decided to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil.

Keeping Records

- Incidents of serious misbehaviour are recorded in the incident book which is stored in the filing cabinet in the office.
- End of year reports include a reference to behaviour.
- Parents are kept up to date when necessary during the year regarding behaviour issues.

Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school.

St Enda's NS promotes a positive school climate by:

- Creating a stimulating and attractive school environment.
- System for acknowledge/rewarding good or improved attendance.
- Adapting curriculum content and methodologies to maximise relevance to pupils.
- Adapting the class and school timetables to make it more attractive to attend and to be on time.
- Making parents aware of the terms of the Education Welfare Act and its implications.
- Parents send in a note stating date of absence and reason for same. Notes are signed and dated by parents.
- Notes are kept until absences are recorded in the school absence folder.

- The school uses the standard form to report on pupil absences to the National Education Welfare Board.

Reference to other policies

Other school policies that have a bearing on the code of behaviour e.g.

SPHE plan.

Anti-bullying.

Enrolment.

Record keeping.

Health and Safety.

Equality.

Special Education Needs.

Success criteria

The success of this policy will be judged using the following:

- Observation of positive behaviour in classrooms, playground and school environment.
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all partners in education i.e. teachers, parents, Board of Management and pupils to implement all aspects of this policy.

Timetable for review

This policy will be reviewed biannually.