

St. Augustine's National School
Kilshanny, Co. Clare.
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Code of Behaviour

Introduction:

This document sets out a Code of Behaviour which has been approved by the Board of Management for the school. This code is in accordance with the Department of Education's Guidelines for Discipline in National Schools. In publishing this code, the Board wishes to communicate its policy in the school to parents and thereby to achieve a greater understanding of and support for the policy.

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Rationale

It was deemed necessary to review our Code of Behaviour because:

1. We wish to ensure an orderly climate for learning in the school
2. To ensure that the existing policy is in compliance with legal requirements and good practices as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008*.

Our School

School Ethos and Mission statement of the school are as follows:

School Ethos:

Kilshanny NS is a Catholic primary school under the patronage of the Bishop of Galway . The school community undertakes to create a Christian atmosphere of compassion, mutual respect and honest endeavour. Within this framework the school endeavours to enable each child to reach his/her full potential – spiritually, emotionally, socially, aesthetically, culturally, physically and intellectually. Children are encouraged to become considerate, respectful, confident and self-disciplined.

Mission Statement:

The school community endeavors to enable each child reach his/her potential in a Christian atmosphere of mutual respect and co-operation.

Aims & Principles:

Aims

The Aims of the Code of Behaviour are:

- To promote the safety and happiness of all children in the school
- To allow for the smooth and harmonious running of the school
- To promote self-discipline among the children attending the school.
- To enhance the learning environment of the school by promoting a sense of mutual respect among all members of the school community.
- To increase the co-operation between home and school.
- To outline a structure of fair and agreed sanctions that will be available to teachers in response to negative behaviour.
- To focus on the promotion of good behaviour.

Principles:

- (a) The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to embrace these differences.
- (b) It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, parents and pupils.
- (c) Every effort will be made to ensure that the code of discipline is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner.

School rules:

Safety: For my own safety and that of others-

- (a) I should be careful coming to and going from school
- (b) I should always walk while in the school building.
- (c) I should not climb trees, walls or railings.
- (d) I should not bring glass bottles to school.
- (e) I should remain seated at all times in class,(unless otherwise requested), and while eating lunch.
- (f) I should always show respect for my fellow pupils.
- (g) I should respect school property and that of others.
- (h) I should bring a note of explanation following absences, late arrival and when seeking permission to leave school early.
- (i) I should wait inside the school grounds until I am collected.
- (j) I should never leave the school grounds without the permission of the Principal.
- (k) I should do my homework.
- (l) I should not enter the classroom at lunch time without permission.
- (m) I should not enter the halla or any other rooms in the school at lunch time without permission.
- (n) I should not bring my mobile phone to school.
- (o) I should respond to the school bell when it rings.
- (p) I should line up with my class when the fire alarm rings.

Clár ama na Scoile

Assembly: 9a.m. (No responsibility is accepted for pupils arriving before this time)

School begins: 9.10 a.m.

School Closes: Junior,Senior Infants 1.50p.m.

(Parents must make arrangements to have the children met at the school. Parents must come to the bottom of the steps to meet their child.)

Other Classes 2.50 p.m

not later than 3pm as the school cannot accept responsibility for looking after children after that time.)

Homework

It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis. Parents are strongly advised to take an active interest in their child's homework and to sign their Homework Journal each night (ensuring that it is done).

Caring for myself:

- (a) I should respect myself and my property, always keeping my school bag, books and copies in good order.
- (b) I should always be in school before 9.10a.m.
- (c) I should show respect for my school.
- (d) I should **never** take the law into my own hands
- (e) I should always be aware of my personal cleanliness.
- (f) I should always bring a sensible, nutritional lunch to school. Crisps, minerals, sweets or chewing gum are not encouraged
- (g) I should always do my best in school by listening carefully, working as hard as I can and by completing my homework.

Caring for others:

- (a) I should be kind and respectful to teachers and fellow pupils by being mannerly and polite and by taking turns.
- (b) I should behave well in class so that my fellow pupils and I can learn.
- (c) I should always keep my school clean by using the bins provided.
- (d) I should show respect for the property of my fellow pupils, the school building and grounds.
- (e) I should be truthful and honest at all times.
- (f) I should never make false accusations.

Strategies

(a)Praise may be given by means of any one of the following:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book
- Stickers in pupil's copy.
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation.
- A word of praise in front of a group or class.
- Golden Time reward for positive behaviour.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.

(b)Disapproval of unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with as follows:-

(The nature of the behaviour will determine the strategy)

- Reasoning with pupils
 - Golden Time – loss of privilege – minuted approach – 5mins,10mins, 20 mins, loss of all Golden Time.
 - Reprimand (including advice on how to improve).
Prescribing extra work.
 - Proximity control
- (1) Positioning a child near the teacher's desk.
 - (2) Positioning a child in a seat of his own to prevent distraction to other pupils.
 - (3) If the child continues to distract class, removing the child to another classroom for a period of time.

- Use of homework journal to inform parents regarding breaches of discipline. Parents to sign same.
- Written exercise -to be signed by parents.
- Temporary separation from peers and/or loss of privileges
- Discipline sheet to be completed at home and signed by parents.
- Verbal communication with parents.
- Suspension/expulsion (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular 7/88).

Procedures:

The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross, will be judged by the teachers and/or Principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours, as follows:

Examples of minor misdemeanours:

- Failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers
- Running in the hallways
- Disturbing the work or play of others
- Disrespectful language, tone, or manner
- Ignoring staff requests
- Interrupting class work
- Arriving late for school
- Misbehaving in class line
- Leaving seat without permission at lunch time
- Leaving litter on the ground
- Not wearing correct uniform
- Not completing homework without good reason
- Not having homework signed by a parent
- Displaying or using mobile phone in school

Examples of steps to be taken by teachers when dealing with minor misdemeanours:

Verbal reprimand / reasoning with pupil

Noting instance of yard misbehaviour in yard book.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with regular occurrences of minor misdemeanours:

Phase 1 (within the classroom)

Write out relevant rule to upper limit of 20 times—to be signed by parent.

Note in homework journal to be signed by parent / Temporary separation from peers/

Sending to another teacher / Denial of participation in some class activities/

Phase 2

1) Class teacher meets one/both parents.

2) Principal/ meets one/both parents concerning behaviour.

Examples of serious misdemeanours

Constantly disruptive in class

- Telling lies
- Stealing
- Damaging other pupil's property
- Bullying, e.g. persistent name calling, continuous bumping into one another, etc. I should never bully others. I should never allow others to bully me and if it happens I should tell my parents and my teacher. Bullying is always unacceptable.(See below)

- Being discourteous and back-answering a teacher
- Leaving school premise during the school day without appropriate permission
- Using unacceptable language
- Playing in “off-limit” areas during the school day.
- Behaviour which is dangerous to self or others
- Derogatory reference to another person’s race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability or ethnic origin

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with serious misdemeanour

- 1) Principal gives child a discipline sheet to be completed at home and signed by parent.
- 2) Principal meets with one/both parents
- 3) Chairperson of Board Of Management informed and parents requested to meet with Chairperson and Principal.

Examples of Gross Misdemeanours Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention

- Setting fire to school property
- Intentional possession or use of weapons
- Violent fighting or intentionally causing physical harm to others
- Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, physical condition, handicap, or ethnic origin
- Deliberately damaging school property.
- Inappropriate use of mobile phones
- Threatening or serious violent behaviour towards a pupil or staff member.
- Use or supply of harmful or illegal substances.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with gross misdemeanours

- 1) Chairperson/Principal to sanction immediate suspension pending discussion with parents
- 2) Expulsion will be considered in an extreme case in accordance with Rule 130 (6)

It should be noted that these lists consist of examples only: It is not meant to be a totally comprehensive list of misdemeanours and procedural steps.

Keeping Records

In line with the school’s policy and record keeping and Data Protection Legislation, all records in relation to a pupil’s behaviour are kept confidentially in his/her file in the office. All records are written in a factual and impartial manner.

Pupils will be told when a record is being made about their behaviour and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained.

Class Level

- Each class teacher will endeavour to keep parents up to date on all behavioural issues. Pupil’s behaviour will be discussed with the parents at Parent-Teacher meetings and reports will be sent home at the end of the academic year.
- Depending on the severity of the inappropriate behaviour, the Principal will be notified should the parents need to meet with the class teacher.

Parental Involvement-

One cannot succeed without the help of the other.

The role of the parent in implementing the school discipline policy cannot be over emphasized; either can their influence on discipline be under-estimated. The foundations for good discipline are laid long before a child comes into our care and are subsequently altered by home and social influences completely outside the control of the school. .

We would hope that parents would notify their child's teacher of any circumstances at home that might adversely affect their child's performance or behavior in school. Such information would be treated in the strictest confidence by the school.

Parents should aim to keep in touch with the progress of their child in school. Parents are asked in particular to be consistent in checking and signing their child's homework journal.

Above all, remember children learn best from someone they respect. Therefore, avoid criticizing the teacher in front of the child. By all means, listen carefully to what the child has to say and then, if necessary, contact the school to check out the story.

Indiscipline, misconduct or the continuous disruption by disorderly pupils interferes not only with the education of the child who misbehaves, but can also adversely affect the education of the other children in the class. While we try to meet each situation with sympathy and kindness, serious breaches of discipline or continuous misconduct will be dealt with firmly. We expect co-operation and support from parents on such occasions should we have to ask for it, as communications between parents and school will lead to a quick resolution of the problem.

We have found that the most difficult problems can be ironed out provided that a sincere and positive approach is forthcoming from all parties concerned. The members of our staff gladly make themselves available to meet parents. (However, please arrange an appointment, so that class disruption is kept to a minimum).

If a parent is anxious about any aspect of a child's school life the following procedure should be adopted:

- The matter should be discussed with the class teacher.
- If this proves unsatisfactory, the matter should be taken up with the Principal.
- If the matter is still unresolved, the parent should raise the matter with the Chairperson, B.O.M
- We stress again the importance of communication between parents and teachers. The education of the children in our care is the joint responsibility of home and school.

Procedure for the Notification of a Pupil's Absence from School.

Parent(s) / Guardian(s) should adhere to the following procedures when notifying the school of a pupil's absence:

- The school should be notified of the absence on the first day the pupil returns to school;
- The reason for the absence should be notified to the class teacher;
- The absence should be notified in writing by letter;
- Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided;
- Significant absences caused by ill health (i.e. absences longer than 10 school days) should be certified.

The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more, where the child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular and when the pupil is removed from the school register

The school is obliged to notify the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) of pupils who are absent for more than 20 days in any academic year. The NEWB officer can come to the school at any time and audit the attendance records.

A reward system is in place for full attendance during the school year.

Reference to other policies.

A number of other policies already established in our school have had a bearing on this Code of Behaviour. These policies include:-

- Anti Bullying
- SPHE/RSE/Stay Safe.
- Enrolment Policy
- Home Work Policy
- Health and Safety
- Special Educational Needs
- Attendance
- Child Protection
- Substance Use

Circulation

The following members of our school community were consulted for their contributions during the compilation of this Policy:

- Board of Management
- Staff....teachers
- Pupils
- Parents

Success Criteria

- Positive feed back from teachers, parents and pupils.
- Observation of positive behaviour in the classroom, playground and school environment
- Observation of consistency in the application of practices and procedures listed in this policy.

Implementation & Review

This Policy will be reviewed, as deemed necessary, by the Board of Management.

Ratification

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management of this School at its meeting on the

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School Policy on Bullying

Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others.

A) Indications of Bullying / Behaviour:

Anxiety about travelling to/from school
Unwillingness to go to school
Deterioration in educational performance
Pattern of physical illnesses
Unexplained changes in either mood/behaviour
Visible signs of anxiety/distress
Possessions missing
Increased requests for money
Unexplained bruising
Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her

B) Procedures for noting and reporting incidents:

- (a) All reports of bullying should be noted, investigated and dealt with by the class teacher so that pupils will gain confidence in telling. A special Incident Book will be kept for this purpose only.
- (b) Serious cases should be referred immediately to the Principal.
- (c) Parents should be informed by the Principal earlier rather than later.
- (d) Parents must be informed of the appropriate person to whom they can make their enquiries regarding bullying eg. Class teacher / Principal
- (e) Pupils must understand that reporting is not 'telling tales'.
- (f) Individual teachers should record and take appropriate measures in accordance with policy.
- (g) Non-teaching staff should be encouraged to report incidents. Discretion is important.

C) Procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying:

- (i) Calm, unemotional problem-solving approach
- (ii) Incidents best investigated outside the classroom situation
- (iii) Teacher should speak separately to the pupils involved
- (iv) Answers should be sought to questions of What?, Where?, When?, Who? and Why?
- (v) Members of a gang should be met individually and as a group
- (vi) Meet parents of parties involved.
Sanctions as outlined in discipline policy to be implemented where deemed necessary.

D) Programme for work with pupils:

Learning strategies should allow for the enhancement of each pupil's self-worth – CF. S.P.H.E. lessons/ Circle Time etc.

