

## *Scoil an Chlochair, Kilbeggan, Co Westmeath*

### **Code of Behaviour**

The Code of Behaviour seeks to create a happy atmosphere where Christian virtues of respect, obedience, fairness, forgiveness, trust and truth are practised. The aim of the Code of Behaviour is to achieve and maintain a harmonious teaching and learning environment.

Our approach to discipline is a 'positive' one that concentrates on all aspects of school life including class-work, homework, play, dealing with correction, success and failure. Over a period of time, such an approach enables the children to develop self-discipline that in turn will guide and direct them as they develop into young adults.

Parents, the prime educators of their children, play a key role in helping their child achieve positive attitudes in these areas by taking an active interest in the child's school life and by being fully aware at all times of how their child is coping with the work aspect of school as well as with the social dimensions of the child's life.

#### **Principles of the Code**

Our Code of Behaviour:

- Promotes positive behaviour in order to develop self-discipline.
- Acknowledges the profound influence that self-esteem has on learning.
- Recognises the uniqueness and endless potential of each child. Some children for a variety of reasons, including having additional educational needs, can find it difficult to conform to the normal classroom rules and may require an individual behaviour plan.
- Embraces failure as well as success as important in the process of learning.
- Sees the support and co-operation of parents as being essential to the effective operation of the 'Code of Behaviour.'
- Imposes sanctions in order to maintain good order and to discourage offenders.
- Provides a safe and suitable learning environment for children and staff that takes account of individual needs.

## **Restorative Practice**

Restorative Practice in our school provides a focus on developing positive relationships between all members of the school community. It gives opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and learning. Restorative Practice is a process whereby children are given the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and how they and others have been affected by it so as to help heal broken relationships and prevent reoccurrence. Where suspension occurs, the school will use restorative practice involving all parties affected to help repair the harm done.

### **Restorative Questions to respond to Challenging Behaviour**

- What happened?
- What were you thinking about at the time?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- Who has been affected by what you did?
- In what way have they been affected?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

### **To help those harmed by other actions**

- What did you think when you realised what had happened?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- How has this affected others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

### **Strategies/Incentives to encourage Positive Behaviour**

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment on a child's exercise book.
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group.
- Individual class merit awards, point awards or award stamps.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Written or verbal communication with parent.
- Behaviour management plans in the case of certain pupils

## **Discouraging Misbehaviour**

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development. These may include:

- (a) Reasoning with the pupil
- (b) Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
- (c) Temporary separation from peers, friends or others (within class/ different class)
- (d) Prescribing extra work.
- (e) Loss of privileges – which may include golden time, library, ICT, Trips etc
- (f) Detention during a break or break at a separate time to peers (SNA dependant)
- (g) Prescribing additional work
- (h) Referral to Principal Teacher
- (i) Communication with parents – Note/ phone call Home
- (j) Suspension if deemed necessary

## **Implementation of the Code**

Our code acknowledges three broad categories of misbehaviour as

- a) misdemeanour
- b) serious misbehaviour
- c) gross misbehaviour

### **Examples of Misdemeanour**

- Continuous talking in class
- Inattention
- Pushing in the line
- No homework done on a regular basis
- Repeated interruption or shouting out
- Disobedience
- Taking the belongings of others without permission

When misbehaviour occurs, the following is a list of possible sanctions, strategies and procedures that may be used.

### **Misdemeanour**

1. The pupil is made aware that his/her behaviour is unacceptable, receives a verbal reprimand from teacher and is asked to make a conscious effort to improve.
2. A yellow card is issued to the child as a first warning.
3. If the behaviour still continues a red card is issued and the child may be temporarily separated from peers, friends and others within classroom and yard.
4. A note or comment on misbehaviour may be written on Aladdin to be responded to by parents/guardians.
5. A phone call will be made to the parent by the class teacher if there is no improvement.
6. If children continue to disrupt class, the parents/guardians will be asked to meet with the teacher and or Principal to give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future.

### **Examples of serious Misbehaviour**

- All misdemeanours when on a continuous basis
- Rough play leading to a child getting hurt
- Fighting
- Refusal to do work
- Stealing from others
- Ongoing lying, dishonesty
- Showing disrespect for others or for property
- Hitting or aggressive behaviour
- Bad/inappropriate language or gestures
- Racist /homophobic remarks or name calling
- Biting, spitting or kicking
- Blatant disobedience or disrespect
- Use of a mobile phone during school hours
- Leaving the school grounds without permission

### **Serious Misbehaviour**

In instances of serious misbehaviour the following stages will be followed:

#### **Stage 1. – Contact is made with parents by phone call**

## **Stage 2. Detention**

Class /yard teacher recommends detention and this is communicated to parents via Aladdin

## **Stage 3.- Detention and Contract**

If a pupil receives two detentions in any four school weeks the child's parents will be asked to meet the class teacher and principal. A contract will be drawn up whereby the child gives an undertaking to abide by the rules of the school. This contract will be signed by the child and parent in the presence of the Principal.

## **Stage 4-Suspension**

- a) If stage 3 is exhausted or there is a single incident of gross misbehaviour the Principal requests a meeting with the parents. If considered warranted the Principal reserves the right to suspend the pupil for 3 days initially. This power of suspension is delegated to the principal by the school Board of Management.
- b) In certain circumstances the Principal with the approval of their Chairperson of the BoM may suspend a pupil for 5 school days
- c) A meeting of the BoM may authorise further suspension up to a maximum of 10 days. Suspension will be in accordance with Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

## **Examples of Gross Misbehaviour**

- All serious misbehaviour when on a continuous basis
- Insults to staff
- Damage to property
- Bullying including cyber bullying, homophobic, transgender, racist, sexual
  
- Any behaviour which has a detrimental effect on the Education or safety of others
- Assault on another pupil
- Assault on staff
- Sexual assault

## **Gross Misbehaviour**

In instances of gross misbehaviour:

- a) the pupil will be sent immediately to the Principal's office
- b) parents/guardians will be contacted and requested to meet with the Principal as soon as possible.
- c) warned that should there be another incidence of gross misbehaviour the Board of Management, may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension or expulsion in accordance with the provisions of the Educational Welfare Act 2000.

## **Appeal**

Parents of a pupil who has been suspended for 20 school days or more are entitled under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 to appeal such a suspension.

## **Stage 5– Expulsion**

This procedure may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

## **Grounds for Expulsion**

- Behaviour is persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- Continued presence of pupil constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- Pupil responsible for serious damage to property.

## **Automatic Expulsion**

BoM may sanction automatic expulsion for certain prescribed behaviours:

1. Sexual Assault
2. Possession of illegal drugs
3. Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
4. Actual violence or physical assault
5. Serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff.

### **Procedures in Respect to Expulsion**

1. Detail investigation by school principal
2. Recommendation by principal to BoM
3. BoM considers Principals recommendation and holds hearing
4. BoM decision, is expulsion appropriate? If BoM recommends expulsion, the BoM will propose a date which will allow a 20-day cooling off period
5. Education Welfare Officer is informed of proposal to expel pupil and effective date of that proposal
6. Parents of the pupil are informed of rights to invoke a Section 29 appeal under the Education Act 1998
7. Education Welfare Officer arranges consultations
8. Confirmation of decision.

### **Damage, Loss or Theft of School Property**

- a) Recompense is expected to be made by pupil/parents/guardians for damage to, loss or theft of property.
- b) Appropriate sanctions and procedures to be followed, depending on which category of misbehaviour – serious or gross – the offence applies to.

*The code of behaviour was ratified by the B.O.M ON 22-03-23*

---

Geraldine Fennell Chairperson Board of Management