

St. Brigid's Infant School

Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement

The policy was formulated by the teachers in St. Brigid's Infant School in consultation with the Board of Management and parents in 1998, and further reviewed in 2009, in light of the NEWB guidelines, and again in 2016 and 2019.

Rationale

The Code of Behaviour was revised following the introduction of the NEWB guidelines and is reviewed from regularly.

Relationship to characteristic of the school

The code of behaviour focuses on the positive, through an emphasis on giving attention, praise and rewards for good behaviour: Mol an oige agus tiocfaidh siad.

A high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation between the teachers, other school staff, parents and pupils. Every effort is made to ensure that the code of behaviour is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner.

This coincides with our mission statement and anti-bullying policy which state that our mission is to foster respect, responsibility and acceptance thus enabling all children to reach their full potential.

Aims

Through the revision and implementation of this code it is hoped to achieve the following:

- To allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious way.
- To enhance the learning environment where children can progress in all aspects of their development.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others,
- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community.
- To promote good behaviour and self-discipline.
- To promote an understanding of the procedures of the Code of Behaviour in order to achieve co-operation by all parties.
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions are age-appropriate and implemented in a fair and consistent manner.

Content of Policy

In our school we expect that pupils will develop an age-appropriate self discipline based on respect for themselves and for others. This expectation will be explained to the children in the following simple manner.

We want to be happy so we will:

- Treat others with respect and courtesy.
- Treat all staff and visitors with courtesy, obedience and respect.
- Be kind to others in what we do and say.

We want to feel safe so we will

- Make the school safe for others.
- Walk nicely coming and going from school, around the school and on outings.

We want our property to be safe so we will

- Treat the property of others with respect.
- Treat school property, especially books with care.
- Keep our school clean and tidy.

We want to learn in school so we will

- Co-operate with teachers.
- Allow other children to learn by behaving well in school.
- Stop, look and listen as others have their turn to speak.
- Be in school on time and be in school *every day*, illness excepted.

The following behaviour is expected from each pupil in the school for safety:

- Walk carefully into and out of school and cross the road with the lollipop people.
- Wheel their bikes and scooters from the front gate to the yard.
- Walk while in the school building.

- Keep off the walls, railings and trees in the mini-woodland.
- Keep our school clean-put uneaten food in lunchbox and rubbish in appropriate bins.
- Keep pets out of the school yard.

School Rules

Class Rules

1. Have kind hands, kind feet and kind words.
2. Quiet hands up.
3. Hands to self.
4. Walking feet.
5. Listening ears.
6. Working hard.
7. Eyes on teacher.
8. Inside voice.

Around the School Rules

1. Have kind hands, kind feet and kind words.
2. Hands to self.
3. Walking feet.
4. Listening ears.
5. Inside voice.
6. Hold handrail.
7. Walk on the right.

Yard Rules

1. Have kind hands, kind feet and kind words.
2. Listening ears.
3. When the first bell rings, freeze.
4. When the second bell rings, walk quietly into your line.
5. Stay in your own yard.
6. Stay inside the yellow lines.

Wet Day Rules

1. Have kind hands, kind feet and kind words.
2. Stay in your place.
3. Quiet hands up.
4. Hands to self.
5. Listening ears.
6. Inside voice.

Sanctions

The following steps will be applied.

Classroom and Wet Day Sanctions

The child will:

1. Get a warning.
2. Be moved to another seat.
3. Miss out on a point.
4. Yellow card and name entered in the yellow book.
5. Be sent to another class with a yellow card, work to do and parents will be told.*
6. Be sent to the principal with a red card and name will be put in the red book.**

Very serious misbehaviour will be given a red card and dealt with by the principal straight away.

If a child reaches step 5 repeatedly, or in the case of a very serious misbehaviour incident, parents will be informed and may be requested to support and assist in drawing up and implementing an individual behaviour management programme for the child in consultation with the principal, class teacher and other staff.

Children with special educational needs may need to have a modified behaviour programme, devised and implemented in cooperation with their parents or guardians.

The support of outside agencies may also be sought.

**Parents will be informed in person, by phone or note.

In general, time in another class will be 5-10mins.

***Parents will be contacted by the principal.

Suspension/expulsion- at all times will be guided by the NEWB's Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools.

(see below)

Yard Sanctions

The child will:

1. Get a warning.
2. Stand in the time out zone*
3. Be removed from yard/class for supervised detention**

All yard incidents are reported to class teacher; at the teacher's discretion, a child may lose a point.

*Yard teacher records in yard book.

**Parents will be notified.

Rewards

Good behaviour will be recognised and rewarded in the following ways:

- Praise and attention, verbal and non-verbal.
- Points awarded on Class Dojo, green cards, certificates, wristbands, vouchers and stickers.
- Golden chair, Golden Time.
- Visit to other class with green card. Green card sent home to show family.
- Name entered in principal's green book and read out during assembly

Strategies to promote good behaviour

Teachers will choose from the following strategies to promote good behaviour:

- Golden rules (Early Start)
- 5:1 ratio (five constructive comments directing attention to good behaviour: one correction)
- Display of good behaviour rules in every room (in pictorial charts or written chart)
- Rules for good behaviour formally taught at start of school year
- Regular revision of rules at class and whole-school level
- Modelling, prompting and praising appropriate behaviour/ good manners
- Verbal and non-verbal attention for good behaviour (praise, smile, thumbs up, comments etc.)
- Modelling and encouraging age-appropriate conflict resolution strategies

- Discussion/role play of appropriate behaviours with class as part of S.P.H.E. programme
- Reward of good behaviour through the use of the green card system, class dojo, and wall displays.
- Special duties given to children, i.e. Leader, messenger, yard ceannaire, class jobs
- Buddy list for staff to keep an eye out for vulnerable or lonely children
- “Good news” communication with parents
- Class/group rewards
- Fostering a sense of pride in our school through regular assembly and Green School Committee
- Strategies to promote good attendance e.g. certificates, raffle, names mentioned at assembly

Keeping Records

Class Level

Each class teacher has a green book and a yellow book in their D.F.L. kit. When children have reached step 4, their name will be entered in the yellow book. The principal is informed when the child gets a red card. To keep the focus of attention on the positive, the green book is frequently used for entering names of children behaving well.

Playground

Yard duty teachers will enter brief details of incidents in the yard book and will inform the class teacher who will follow up as necessary. A copy of the yard rules is displayed in the yard book to encourage consistency in the interpretation of the rules. Accidents which are treated in the First Aid Room are recorded in the accident folder.

School Records

Very serious “red card” incidents will be recorded in the incident book in the office.

The principal will also keep a green book for the names of excellent or improving children.

Communication Procedure for Parents/Children

Children are encouraged, at all times, to talk to any teacher if they are worried.

Parents may ring to arrange a meeting with the class teacher/principal should they have a concern.

Parents are given a copy of this code of behaviour.

Text-a-Parent is used to communicate urgent messages to parents.

It is very important that the school has up-to-date contact numbers: please inform the secretary if any of the numbers change.

For the smooth running of the school, parents are expected to observe the following:

Please notify the school in writing, email or phone call of any absences from school, stating the reason for the absence. (A legal requirement under the Education Welfare Act)

The school has a healthy eating policy; sweets are given as an occasional reward.

In general toys prove a distraction; the school supplies activities, games and toys for the children. Handheld media devices are not allowed in school and if found will be confiscated. Confiscated items may only be reclaimed by a parent/guardian. Toys may be requested by the teacher at times to enhance a curriculum activity or as a reward e.g. show and tell/golden time/holidays. The school holds no responsibility for lost or damaged toys.

Invitations to parties, birthday cakes, Christmas cards, presents, party foods etc. are not to be distributed in school to prevent the exclusion of any child.

Children are encouraged to wear the school uniform and are expected to dress suitably for the weather.

Children's hair should be checked weekly and they should come to school with clean face and hands.

Suspension and Expulsion

The St. Brigid's Infant School code of behaviour focuses on the positive, through a whole-school, consistent emphasis on giving attention, praise and rewards to good behaviour: Mol an oige agus tiocfadh siad.

However, the code of behaviour must also take into account the matter of suspension and expulsion; schools are required, under section 23(2) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, to include their procedures for suspension and expulsion in their code of behaviour. All suspensions and expulsions will be carried out with reference to Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (NEWB, 2008, chapters 10-12) and related documents.

Grounds for Suspension

- Suspension will be a proportionate response to the behaviour causing concern.
- Usually other interventions will have been tried.
- Grounds for suspension include the following:
 - Behaviour that has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other children;
 - The child's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety;

- The child is responsible for serious damage to property;
- A single incident of serious misbehaviour may be grounds for suspension.

Procedures in respect of suspension

School will endeavour to ensure fair procedure including the right to be heard and to impartiality.

The process will include the following stages:

- Investigation of the facts to confirm serious misbehaviour;
- Parents will be informed by phone or in writing about the incident;
- Parents will be given an opportunity to respond;
- If suspension is decided upon:
- Principal informs parents in writing of the decision to suspend,
 - confirming the period of the suspension and the dates on which it will begin and end. (This shall not be for more than three days except in exceptional circumstances)
 - the reason for the suspension
 - any work to be done at home
 - the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the parents
 - the provision for appeal to the BoM or Secretary General of the DES (only where the total number of days for which the child has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days).
- Where the cumulative total of days is 6, Tusla (now incorporating NEWB) will be notified.
- In exceptional circumstances an immediate suspension may be necessary. Fair procedures will still apply.

Records and Reports

Formal written records will be kept of the following:

- The investigation (including notes of interviews held)
- The decision-making process
- The decision and the rationale for that decision

- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached

Grounds for Expulsion: Expulsion will only be used in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will have taken other significant steps to address the misbehaviour except in exceptional circumstances. Due process and fair procedure will apply in all circumstances.

Procedures in respect of expulsion:

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
- Parents informed in writing about alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- Parents given an opportunity to respond before decision is made.
- A recommendation to BoM by principal.
- A consideration by the BoM of principal's recommendations and a hearing.
- BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing.
- If BOM is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled, it must notify the EWO in writing (using the Notice of Intention to Expel form available the Tusla website) of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. The intention to expel a pupil does not take effect until 20 school days have elapsed after Tusla have received written notification. The Notice of Intention to Expel form should be returned by post to: Education Welfare Service, Tusla – The Child and Family Agency, Floor 4, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Dublin 8. (Phone number of Tusla: 7718500.
- Consultation arranged by EWO
- Confirmation of decision to expel

Right to Appeal

Parents will be informed of their legal right to appeal a decision (either to expel or to suspend for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year) to the Secretary General of the DES (Education Act 1998, section 29)

Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student. (See Circular 22/02)

Parents/guardians will be informed of their entitlement to appeal a decision of the Board of Management in relation to suspension or expulsion. Parents will be given a copy of Circular 22/02 and related forms.

The BoM will prepare a response if and when an appeal is being investigated by the DES (Section 12, Circular 22/02-Processing of an appeal)

Records and Reports

Formal written records will be kept of the following:

- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- The decision-making process
- The decision and rationale for the decision

Roles and Responsibility

A considerable amount of time has been spent by the staff as a whole on staff training and on developing a simple, clear and concise code of behaviour, based on the Discipline for Learning a method, which focused on a consistent, whole-school promotion of good behaviour. We have consulted the NEWB's *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*, and the INTO document *Managing Challenging Behaviour*, and *Discipline for Learning* by Dr. Adrian Smith, and *The Incredible Years* by Dr. Carolyn Webster-Stratton in devising and reviewing our code of behaviour.

All teachers have a Discipline for Learning (DFL) kit which consists of the following: a teacher's booklet: yellow book: green, yellow and red cards: a class dojo account, certificate folder, copies of the rules in written and pictorial format. Teachers are aware of the staged approach to rewards and sanctions and they are implemented consistently across the school. New members of staff are trained in our DFL approach. DFL is on the agenda at every staff meeting.

All members of staff work together consistently and collaboratively to implement this code of behaviour at class and school level.

While the Board of Management has the authority to suspend, it delegates this authority to the principal, for periods of up to three days. The board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil.

The principal will become involved at the red card level and will follow the steps outlined above.

The BoM will be guided by TUSLA (incorporating the former NEWB) guidelines when dealing with issues of suspension or expulsion.

Responsibility for i) communication and dissemination of decisions, information and materials, and ii) training new members of staff will be a post of responsibility, currently the DP.

Parents are expected to read the code of behaviour document when enrolling their child, support the school in its implementation, and communicate with the school if they have any queries. ***For some children with special educational needs or in exceptional circumstances, an individual***

behaviour management plan may be required: their parents are expected to work on drawing up and implementing this plan in consultation with the principal and relevant staff members.

The school will support parents in seeking help from other agencies as necessary for children with special behavioural or other support needs.

Timetable for Review

This Code of Behaviour will be reviewed at regular intervals when required.

Ratified by Board of Management _____
