



Scoil Bhríde,
Lisdowney, Ballyragget, Co. Kilkenny.
Email: lisdowneyns@gmail.com
www.scoilbhridendlisdowney.weebly.com
Roll No. 00788V, Phone 056 8833495
Reg. Charity No.: 20125127



SCOIL BHRIDE N.S. LISDOWNEY

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Introduction

This code of behaviour was revised and formulated as a requirement of the Education Act 1998 section 23 of the Ed. Welfare Act 2000 by the Board of Management in consultation with teachers, staff, parents and pupils in accordance with NEWB Guidelines 2008. The involvement of pupils ensures they “buy into” the rules or take ownership of them thus diminishing instances of infringement. The children are regularly affirmed and the motto of all staff is “mol an oige agus tiocfiadh siad”.

The school has a central role in the children’s social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. In seeking to define acceptable standards of behaviour it is acknowledge that these are goals to be worked towards rather than expectations that are either fulfilled or not.

The children bring to school a wide variety of behaviour. As a community environment, in school we must work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. It follows that acceptable standards of behaviour are those that reflect these principles.

Children need limits set for them in order to feel secure and develop the skills for co-operation. Therefore any rules will be age appropriate, with clear aged consequences.

Parents can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules by visiting the school and by talking to the members of staff.

A code of behaviour is established to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to educate in a relatively disruption free environment.

Rationale

The staff in Scoil Bhríde decided it was necessary to review its Code of Behaviour at this time because:

- The existing policy was due for review and amendment.
- It is a requirement under the Education Act 1998 and Section 23 Education Welfare Act 2000.

- To clarify expected behaviour in Scoil Bhride N.S.
- To ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the rights of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.
- All children and staff have the right to learn and work in a safe environment (See Health and Safety Policy).

Vision/Mission Statement

Our mission is to create a positive learning environment which is free from discrimination, threats, bullying and harassment for all our students and staff where good relationships are fostered between pupils, teachers, parents/guardians and all involved in the running of the school.

Aims of the Code

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships.
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour.
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the parent's handbook, availability of policies and an ethos of open communication.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

In Scoil Bhride, Lisdowney we expect staff to:

- Be punctual.
- Be prepared for class.
- Be cognizant of the various needs and ability levels of all children in their class and adapt their teaching accordingly.
- Treat children, parents and other staff members with respect.
- Co-operate with each other and work as part of a team.
- Be fair and consistent.
- Be aware of their duty of care to all children, at all times.

Before/After School

Parents are reminded that the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening time of 8.45am or after the official closing time of 1.40pm (infants) 2.40pm (other classes) except where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management. Pupils involved in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with school behaviour policy during these times.

Board of Management's Responsibilities

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- Ratify the code.

Principal's Responsibilities

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Arrange for a review of the Code as required.

Teachers' Responsibilities

- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- Recognise and affirm good work.
- Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour. Inform parents of behaviours deemed serious.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

Pupils' Responsibilities

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/.advice.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow school and class rules.

Parents/Guardian's Responsibilities

- Encourage children to have sense of respect for themselves and for property.
- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour.

Responsibility of Adults

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations.
- Promote, through example, honesty and courtesy.
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment.
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others.
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.
- Show appreciate of the efforts and contribution of all.
- To discourage physical aggression and encourage kind hands, kind words, kind feet”. A Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers ensures that the rights of the children are upheld.

School Rules

- Respect for self and others.
- Respect for other’s property.
- Respect other students and their learning.
- Kindness and willingness to help others.
- Follow instructions form staff immediately.
- Walk quietly in the school building.
- Courtesy and good manners.
- Readiness to sue respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict.
- Ask permission to leave the classroom.
- Do your best in class.
- Take responsibility for your own work.

We decided to sum up our rules into 6 main rules and place them in the main lobby to remind ourselves regularly:

- Respect/Be nice
- Do your best
- Be tidy
- Be Safe
- Walk
- Listen

Each classroom will have a copy of these rules on display also along with their class rules.

Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children. These reflect and support the school rules, but are presented in a way that is accessible to the children. Class rules should be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. They should where possible emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. “Walk”

and not “Don’t run”). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage. Rules are devised taking into account the schools Anti-Bullying Policy, Homework policy and Health and Safety Statement.

Incentives

Part of the vision of Scoil Bhríde, is to help children achieve their personal best – academically, intellectually and socially. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and that similarly children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Reward systems which are based on academic merit or particular extrinsic goals continuously apply to only a limited number of children and undermine the individuality of children. All children deserve encouragement to attain their own best. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to at all times by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given:

- A quiet work or gesture or show approval.
- A comment in a pupil’s exercise book.
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation.
- A word of praise in front of a group or class.
- A system of merit marks or stickers.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.

Behaviour in Class

- Courtesy and respect for others is the basis for classroom behaviour.
- Pupils will respect the right of others to learn in a safe atmosphere.
- Pupils will co-operate with instructions given by the teacher.
- Pupils will complete assigned homework which may be oral/written, memorisation or other tasks. Written work will be in a neat and presentable form.
- Pupils will bring to school each day the books, copies, pens, pencils etc. Necessary to do their work properly. Pupils will take proper care of these items.

Examples of misbehaviour in class: This list is not exhaustive. The teacher’s discretion in relation to misbehaviour is final.

- Talking in class – when specifically asked not to, often, regularly, continuously.
- Causing disruption by speaking out of turn.
- Infringing on the rights of other children to access the curriculum.
- Not carrying out or not completing assigned work either in school or for homework without good reason.
- Homework not presented in a neat and acceptable form.
- Coming to school without items outlined above.
- Displaying cheeky or sulky behaviour.
- Verbal abuse of another child or teacher.

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- Stealing, ranging from minor to serious theft.
- Leaving the class room or individual space untidy.

Behaviour in the Playground

- Pupils should recognise the rights of all children in the playground.
- Any behaviour, which endangers one self, is not permitted.
- Behaviour, which interferes with other children at play, is not permitted.
- Pupils must remain within playground boundaries during breaks.
- Pupils must always respect the rights of others.

Examples of misbehaviour in playground:

- Littering.
- Games considered dangerous to oneself or others.
- Fighting, kicking, pushing, spitting.
- Bullying or intimidation.
- Pupils leaving the playground (this includes re-entering the school building) without the permission of the supervising teacher.
- Entering out of bounds areas.

Behaviour in School Environment

- For reasons of safety and to minimise accidents, pupils will move about the school in an orderly manner.
- Pupils must show respect for school property at all times.
- Respect and consideration for others are the basic rules.

Examples of misbehaviour in school environment:

- Running on corridors.
- Shouting/talking thereby disrupting others.
- Loss of school property.
- Theft of school property.
- Damage to school property.
- Graffiti.
- Assault on another pupil or member of staff.
- Leaving the classroom untidy.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour, parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the Principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of serious misbehaviour:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person

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- Damage to property
- Theft

Examples of gross misbehaviour:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil
- Serious theft
- Serious damage to property

Sanctions

The use of sanctions or consequences should be characterised by certain features;

- It must be clear why the sanction is being applied
- The consequence must relate as closely as possible to the behaviour
- It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions
- Group punishment should be avoided as it breeds resentment
- There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences.
- It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus.
- Parents should be informed if deemed necessary.

The following steps will be taken when the children have behaved inappropriately. They are listed in order of severity with one being for a minor misbehaviour and ten being for serious or gross misbehaviour. The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the features by which sanctions should be characterised. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupils devise strategies for this:

- Reasoning with pupil.
- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class.
- Prescribing extra work/writing out the story of what happened.
- Loss of privileges.
- Detention during break.
- Communication with parents.
- Referral to Principal.
- Principal communicating with parents.
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).

However, sanctions should relate as closely as possible to the behaviour. Therefore, a child, who does not do his work in class or has not completed his homework, may be detained at break time to finish the work.

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health and safety.

Suspension and Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as detention, supervision or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and partners will be utilised. Where it is proposed to detain a pupil after school hours, the parents or guardians will be notified. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the chairperson and the principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National School and the Education Welfare Act 2000. In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Procedures in respect of Suspension

While the BOM has the authority to suspend, they may delegate this authority to the principal, for periods of up to three days.

- 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 response.

If suspension is still decided upon:

Principal notifies parent in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter should confirm the following:

- The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
- The reasons for the suspension.
- Any study programme to be followed.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents.
- The provision for appeal to the Board of Management or Secretary General of the DES. (Ed. Act 1998 Section 29).
- The principal will report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB guidelines (Ed. Welfare Act 2000 Section 21 (40 (a)).

Removal or Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

Records and Reports:

Formal written records will be kept of:

- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- The decision-making process.
- The decision and rationale for the decision.
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.
- The principal will report all suspensions to the BOM with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.
- The principal will report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB guidelines (Ed. Welfare Act 2000 Section 21(4) (a)).

Expulsion (As per page 82 of the NEWB Guidelines)

Procedures in respect of expulsion.

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
 - Inform the parents in writing of alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
 - Give parents and students the opportunity to respond before a decision is made.
- A recommendation to the BOM by the principal (see page 84 NEWB Guidelines).
- Consideration by the BOM of the principal recommendations and the holding of a hearing. (see page 84 NEWB Guidelines)
- BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing. (page 85 NEWB Guidelines)
- If BOM is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing, of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. The intention to expel a student does not take effect until 20 school days have elapsed after NEWB have received written notification. The NEWB should be notified using a Notice of Intention to Expel form which is available on www.schoolreturn.ie or from our helpline (1890 36 3666). This form should be completed and sent to School Return Section, National Educational Welfare Board, 16 – 22 Green Street, Dublin 7.

Consultations arranged by the EWO.
Confirmation of the decision to expel.

Appeals as per pg. 86 of NEWB Guidelines

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 section 29).

Children with Special Needs

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning support/resource teacher, and or Principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

Methods of Communicating with Parents

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents should be encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour.

School Rules – General

- All children must assemble in the school for prayer at 9.00 hours.
- No responsibility can be accepted for children who are present in the school grounds prior to 8.45am hours or after 14.50 hours.
- Children must wear full uniform/sports tracksuit depending on the day.
- On days when ground conditions dictate that all children must remain on the tarmac. No ball games are allowed when the children are restricted to the hard surface area. Infants – 2nd class inclusive use the left half of the hard surface area, 3rd – 6th classes use the right hand side.
- All children hurling must wear:
 - a. Protective headgear.
 - b. A safe hurl. (Bands on hurls must be taped over).

- c. Suitable footwear.
- When the grass is wet it is expected that children wear tracksuit bottoms over their uniform and have change of footwear.
- Safety gates must be used by all children except cyclists.
- On mornings when the path is deemed dangerous, children are allowed use the car park gates.
- No cycling in school grounds.
- Litter must be brought home in lunch box.
- No dangerous implements may be carried by pupils.
- The following areas and buildings are out of bounds to children:
 - a. Front of school during playtime.
 - b. Pump house and oil storage area.
 - c. Boiler house.
 - d. River frontage.
 - e. Garden unless supervised by a teacher.
- Children must see permission before going to pond area.
- Unacceptable language is not permitted.
- All children must line up when the bell rings for class.
- All children and staff show and expect respect at all times.

Arrangements for wet days

Children remain in their classroom during inclement weather, supervised by school staff. Infants may be brought to the lobby area. In the interest of social interaction senior pupils, under staff supervision may go to the junior room. Children will be engaged in appropriate activities on wet days.

Hygiene

- Pupils should be clean and neat.
- Attention should be paid especially to cleanliness of hair. (Regular Friday check for head lice).
- Pupils with long hair are required to have it in a neat fashion during the school day.

The draft policy was presented to the BOM and amendments were made.

The policy was ratified on: 14/6/ 2010

Policy amendment 4th October 2016

Brian Lyons
Mairead Dowling

Chairperson, Board of Management
Principal

Appendix 1

Amendments to Code of Behaviour September 2016

In light of the behaviour observed and reported in the yard and on the grass recently the following system of **red** and **yellow card** will be introduced subject to Board of Management approval.

The system will apply on the yard and on the grass.

If a child breaks a rule the offence will be recorded and the child will be issued with a **yellow** card. If a child breaks a rule a second time they will be given a **red** card and removed from peers to the infant yard. They will also be removed from their peers for the next day.

Examples of **yellow card infringements** include negative comments, slide tackles, sarcasm and criticism.

Examples of **red card infringements** include using bad language, back answering or any physical rough play.

When playing on the pitch teams will be picked by the adults on the yard. The team will remain the same for the week. Children will not be allowed to change teams or positions without permission from an adult. The middle room will wear bibs.

This card system will be used in classrooms as the needs arises.

Please return the signed section below to the school when sending in the application form.

I have read Scoil Bhríde N.S. Code of Behaviour policy and agree to abide by the contents.

Signed:

Parent/Guardian 1: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian 2: _____ Date: _____

Communication

The policy is given to the parents/guardians of each child on admission to Scoil Bhríde. Parents are requested to support and sign the Code of Behaviour. A hard copy is available in the office

Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years or as is deemed necessary.

Implementation

This policy was implemented on 30/8