
Scoil Sean tSráide Code of Behaviour

Principal – Mrs Lyons

Introductory Statement

This Code of Behaviour has been devised by the Staff, Board of Management and the Parents Association of the above school.

Rationale

- ❖ The Board of Management of Shountrade National School 2010/2011 have reviewed the Code of Behaviour (Discipline Policy) to ensure that it is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in developing a Code of Behaviour : Guidelines for Schools, NEWB. 2008.
- ❖ It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23(1) which refers to the obligation on schools to prepare a Code of Behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in Section 23(2) that the Code of Behaviour shall specify :
- ❖ The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school
- ❖ The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards
- ❖ The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned
- ❖ The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student and
- ❖ The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

Relationship to School Ethos

The ethos of the school is a major factor in establishing and maintaining high standards of behaviour. This points to the importance of a strong sense of community within the school and the existence of a high level of co-operation among teachers, pupils, parents and Board of Management. This school places a great emphasis on the need to give the children every possible opportunity to develop patterns of good behaviour. Greater emphasis is placed on rewards rather than on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the long term, give best results. Teachers will endeavour to employ positive techniques of motivation and encouragement at all times.

Aims of Code of Behaviour of Discipline

1. To ensure the efficient operation of the school and the structuring of in-class discipline to facilitate stimulated teaching and stimulated learning.
2. To promote positive behaviour and self discipline based on consideration, respect and tolerance of others.
3. To foster a sense of responsibility in all matters and to respect the school environment.

4. To ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption-free environment.
5. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community.
6. To employ a system of rules, awards and sanctions that are fair and consistent throughout the school and that parents and children and teachers would understand and support these systems and procedures and their application.

Guidelines for Behaviour in School

To maintain our excellent standards of behaviour, it is imperative that we use the following agreed guidelines in promoting positive behaviour:-

- Rewards and sanctions will reinforce good behaviour
- Rules are kept to a minimum and stated positively.

School Rules

SHOW RESPECT This means that you show respect and consideration towards everybody that you meet during the day e.g. your teachers, your fellow pupils, caretaker, secretary, parents, visitors to the school etc. It also means that you show respect for the school building and school furniture.

BE POLITE This means that you practice good manners at all times. Stand aside on the corridors, doorways to let others pass. Do not interrupt conversations if adults are speaking, knock when entering another classroom or office.

BE ON TIME This means that you turn up in time for school each morning and that you line up in time after each break.

BE PREPARED This means that you come to school with everything you need for the day e.g. all your homework done, all your books, your pens, pencils etc. Wear your tracksuit on PE days. Bring musical instrument on appropriate days.

BE HONEST This means that you always tell the truth no matter what the circumstances.

BE HELPFUL This means that you always try to be kind to those around you and that you help them in any way you can. It is the opposite of being selfish or being a bully.

BE CAREFUL This means that you should try to avoid any behaviour that could be dangerous or lead to an accident e.g. playing roughly, fighting, leaving the school premises without permission, running indoors, rushing while leaving classroom or school premises etc.

BE RESPONSIBLE This means that you are responsible for your behaviour in school. You are also responsible for all your items of clothing and belongings.

BRING ONLY WHAT YOU NEED This means that you do not bring anything into school that you do not need for the days work. You should not have anything that could be a distraction to others e.g. toys, games, or that could cause damage to another pupil or to the school or school furniture e.g. glass bottles, chewing gum, etc. The use of mobile phones by pupils within the school is forbidden.

DO YOUR BEST This means that you try always to do your best at any task you are given in school i.e. paying attention in class, working to your full potential, if you are asked to do a job in school that you do it willingly and cheerfully.

These are the school rules but each class is required to draft their own class rules charter through discussion within the class. These rules will be kept to a minimum and stated positively.

The school rules and class rules will be referred to regularly and will form part of the SPHE lessons.

Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Behaviour

Shountrade National School Board of Management, Teachers, Staff and Parents will strive to create a positive school climate that will support and promote good behaviour. Staff members have responsibility for their own classes and for the general school population when on yard duty or on any organised out-of-school activity. Senior students have a role to play and parents and other members of the school community may make suggestions through their representatives on the Board of Management or directly to the Principal. The school values support and co-operation of parents in promoting positive behaviour.

Other School Policies

- The Staff, as a team, will examine and implement the school Code of Behaviour and will have opportunities at staff meetings to address any concerns regarding behaviour.
- Basic classroom management approaches will be adopted and used throughout the school, giving the student a clear message of teacher expectations and creating consistent boundaries. This will be a critical factor in preventing problems.
- An inclusive and involved school community where parents have opportunities to learn how their commitment to the school can impact on behaviour and learning will be encouraged. Students learn how their behaviour and learning and the wellbeing of staff are linked together.
- The Code of Behaviour will be reviewed every two years.

- All Staff members will be aware of the Code of Behaviour. Code of Behaviour will be discussed each September thus informing new teachers.
- Staff will promote the school Code of Behaviour in a positive way.
- Interactions between teachers and students will be a feature of everyday school life.
- Good school and class routines will be set up and maintained.
- There will be clear boundaries and rules for students.
- Students will be helped to recognise and affirm good learning behaviour.
- Students will explore how people should treat each other.
- Students will be involved in the preparation of the school and classroom rules.
- The staff of Shountrade National School will endeavour to encourage mutually respectful relationships balancing warmth and empathy with objectivity, professional detachment, fairness and consistency.
- SPHE, Anti Bullying, Health & Safety, Equality and SEN policies that have a bearing on the Code of Behaviour will be in harmony with Code of Behaviour

Rewards for Good Behaviour

- ✓ Praise from teacher for good behaviour or a job well done in class or in line so all of school will recognise good behaviour.
- ✓ Merit stars/stickers, work to be signed by parents.
- ✓ Write comment on a student's copy/exercise book.
- ✓ Prize from the class teacher/Principal.
- ✓ A visit to another class, teacher or Principal for commendation.
- ✓ In-school privileges – movie, extended lunch break, PE.
- ✓ Whole class will enjoy an in-class privilege as a result of good behaviour in an individual/group – homework reduced, written work off.
- ✓ Homework off occasionally.
- ✓ A mention to parents either written or verbal.
- ✓ Student of the week cert.

Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour

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

Educational (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 23 states that a school must outline “the measures that may be taken if a student fails to observe the standards of behaviour that the school has outlined”.

Even minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour can be disruptive, particularly if they are persistent.

The following stages will be used to show disapproval of inappropriate behaviour (they are not always followed in the format listed):-

The sanctions to be used as part of a plan to change behaviour include:-

1. Reasoning, including advice on how to improve.
2. Verbal reprimand and warnings.
3. Temporary separation from peers/loss of privileges.
4. Note in journal or copy to be signed by parent.
5. Detention for part of lunchtime/additional prescribed work.
6. Teacher referral of a student to another designated member of staff.
7. Referral to Principal and/or notification to parents.
8. Reflection sheet (kept on file by teacher).
9. Written records of serious misbehaviour to be kept in the school.
10. Formal written communication to parents for serious breaches of behaviour.
11. Formal report to Board of Management, formal meeting with parents, suspension (up to 3 days) subject to authorisation of Board of Management.
12. Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a curricular area except on the grounds of health and safety.
13. Occasionally other prudent unlisted steps may be taken.

Playground

The playground is supervised by two teachers at each break.

Misbehaviour on the Yard

Incidents of yard misbehaviour will be dealt with as follows:

The teacher on duty who notices misbehaviour will reason with the pupil/s misbehaving. If no improvement occurs, the following procedure may be followed:-

- ❖ Ask the pupil/s misbehaving to accompany the teacher on duty as they patrol the yard.
- ❖ Impose a period of 'time out' where the student will be asked to remain in a specified place until told to return to play.
- ❖ Misbehaviour by any student which might endanger others results in immediate verbal reprimand and/or loss of privileges. Class teacher is informed and the Principal is informed where appropriate.
- ❖ Consistent minor offences/breaches of playground rules will result in verbal reprimand by teacher on duty. Co-operative games are encouraged in the playground.
- ❖ Inform the class teacher (who may decide to impose a further sanction, depending on the seriousness of the misbehaviour)

A written record of serious misdemeanours, exclusion of others and bullying behaviour consistent with our Bullying Policy, are recorded after break in Principals Office.

Before/After School

Parents are reminded that the staff of Shountrade National School does not accept responsibility for pupils before 8:50am or after 1:40 pm (J.I. & S.I.) and 2:50pm (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 at these times.

Parental Involvement

The most effective schools are those with the best relationships with parents. Every effort will be made by the Principal and staff to ensure that parents are kept well informed, that the school provides a welcoming atmosphere towards parents and that parents are not only told when their children are in trouble but when they have behaved particularly well.

- Parents will be made aware of the Shountrade National School Code of Behaviour in our Prospectus.
- Parents are helped to understand and expected to support the Code of Behaviour, where necessary.
- Parents are encouraged to share information with the school about any matters outside of school or in school that might be affecting their child's behaviour.
- Parents are encouraged to make an appointment to speak with class teacher **firstly** if they have concerns about the behaviour of or against their child.

Roles & Responsibilities of Parents

Parents are expected to :

- Equip pupils with appropriate school materials, a sufficient healthy lunch and full uniform.
- Be courteous towards pupils and staff
- Make an appointment to meet with a teacher/Principal through the school office
- Respect school property and encourage their children to do the same.
- Label pupils coats and other property.
- Supervise their young children on school premises when collecting other pupils or visiting the school.
- Refrain from bringing family pets/dogs into the school yard (even if on a lead).
- As the Board of Management are responsible for the Health & Safety of all staff and students, parents are requested not to approach or reprimand another person's child on the school premises.

Managing Aggressive or Violent Behaviour

The school recognises that occasionally students may not respond positively to the usual interventions and that they may require extra support in an effort to manage aggressive or violent behaviour. A small minority of students may show particular challenging behaviour. These students will need a sustained and systematic response involving the important adults in their lives, in school and at home. Regular communication, in the form of a written log, will be completed by the class teacher, in order to provide continuous feedback between parents and teachers on the child's behaviour, in addition to regular verbal communication.

Misbehaviour falls into three categories. Minor, Serious and Gross.

Minor Misbehaviour

Examples of minor misbehaviour are interrupting class work, talking in class, inattention, regularly arriving late for school, running in school building, littering the school, talking out of turn, not completing homework without good reason (to include a note from parent/guardian).

Sanctions as outlined on page 6 will be used in dealing with minor misbehaviour.

Serious Misbehaviour

The following are examples of possible serious misbehaviour:

- Constantly disruptive in class/telling lies/stealing/damaging others property/bullying/answering back a teacher/endorsing self or fellow pupils in the class or yard/using unacceptable language/deliberate, continual disobedience/discourteous or unmannerly behaviour/leaving school premises without permission.

All incidents of bullying will be dealt with as outlined in the school's Anti-Bullying Policy
(see separate policy)

Teachers/Principal may proceed to the following steps when dealing with Serious Misbehaviour

- ✚ An account of all incidents will be entered in the relevant Incident Book
- ✚ Suspension will be used as a sanction where all attempts at reasoning with the pupil have failed and where all other efforts of the school in consultation with the parents or guardians of the pupil have failed to achieve a satisfactory conclusion. Following formal verbal discussions, a letter outlining items discussed will be sent to parents. Communications to parents regarding the suspension of a pupil or the possibility of considering suspension as a sanction, will be in writing (copies of all correspondence will be retained).

Regular occurrences of Serious Misbehaviour will be dealt with as follows

All previous steps will be explored. Parents will be invited to meet class teacher, the Principal and/or the Chairperson to discuss repeated serious incidents of misbehaviour.

Gross Misbehaviour

The following are examples of gross misbehaviour:

- Bringing weapons or dangerous substances to school
- Persistently engaging in activities which have been identified by members of staff as dangerous or inappropriate
- Leaving school premises without permission
- Deliberately injuring any member of the school community
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff or a pupil (eg physical violence, striking, nipping, biting, spitting)
- Persistent incidents of serious misbehaviour will be classified as gross misbehaviour.

Teachers will take the following step when dealing with Gross Misbehaviour.

Principal and Chairperson are informed **immediately** and suspension sanctioned.

Suspension

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. 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. 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, teacher and the Principal. If the parents (and the pupil) 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 of National Schools 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 health and safety of pupils and teachers, the Board has

deferred responsibility to the Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Further suspensions will require Board of Management approval. This approval may be obtained at a regular meeting of the Board of Management or at an emergency meeting at which the Chairperson and Principal have outlined for the Board of Management the reasons why they feel it is necessary to impose a further suspension. In line with the requirements of the EDUCATION WELFARE ACT (2000) the Board of Management will inform the Education Welfare Board when any pupil's period of suspension equals or exceeds six school days.

When a student is suspended, the parents/guardians will be requested to remove the student from the school. The Principal will meet with the parents/guardian to outline the decision to implement the suspension and will present the parents/guardian with a written statement of the terms, duration and date of the termination of the suspension.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parents may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parents/guardian (and pupil) 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 pupils own safety or that of the other pupils or staff and will not have a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils. The Principal, in consultation with the parents, the class teacher and the pupil (if appropriate) will facilitate the preparation of the behaviour plan for the pupil, if required, and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

Where a satisfactory resolution of the problem is achieved, a pupil may be re-admitted to school within a suspension period at the discretion of the chairperson of the board and the Principal.

Expulsion

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil in an extreme case (see p 80/81/82 Developing a Code of Behaviour, Guidelines for Schools) eg where repeated incidents of serious misbehaviour interfere with the educational opportunities of fellow students or where there is a threat to the health and safety of either students or staff. Where expulsion is considered the school authorities will have tried a range of other interventions and will have formed the opinion that they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour. This sanction would be imposed under the terms of

the EDUCATION WELFARE ACT (2000). Suspension/expulsion procedures are in accordance with the Education Act (1998)

Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Ed Act 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Dept of Ed & 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. 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).

Keeping Records

In line with the school's policy on record-keeping, formal records in relation to pupils behaviour are kept in a secure filing cabinet. Copies of all communications with parents/guardians will be retained in the school. Records of more serious incidents are recorded in a specific journal. All such records are retained until students reach 21 years. Class teachers may dispose of personal records at the end of each year.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management Responsibilities

The Board of Management is expected to –

- ✓ Provide a comfortable, safe environment
- ✓ Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code
- ✓ Ratify the code
- ✓ Ensure the code is communicated to the whole school community

Principal's Responsibilities

The Principal is expected to –

- ✓ Promote a positive climate in the school
- ✓ Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner
- ✓ Arrange for review of the Code, as outlined in the timetable for review

Teacher's Responsibilities

Teacher's are expected to –

- ✓ Teach the code
- ✓ Support and implement the school's code of behaviour having regard to decisions made on a whole school basis

- ✓ Be cognisant of their duty of care
- ✓ Create a safe and welcoming working environment for each pupil
- ✓ Develop and nurture a sense of self-esteem in each pupil
- ✓ Praise desirable behaviour
- ✓ Facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential
- ✓ Listen, at appropriate times, to pupils' explanations for behaviour
- ✓ 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 for instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour
- ✓ Provide support for colleagues
- ✓ Communicate with parents when necessary
- ✓ Provide reports on matters of mutual concern

Pupils Responsibilities

Pupils are expected to –

- ✓ Attend school regularly and punctually
- ✓ Listen to their teaches 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

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Parent/Guardians are expected to –

- ✓ Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and their own and other people's 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 stances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others

- ✓ Communicate to the school the reasons for children's absences
- ✓ Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour – class teacher firstly and then Principal.

Reference to other Policies

Other school policies that have a bearing on the code of behaviour include –

- ❖ SPHE Plan
- ❖ Anti-Bullying
- ❖ Enrolment
- ❖ Health & Safety
- ❖ Special Needs
- ❖ Tours

Success Criteria

This policy will be deemed to be successful when the following are observed:

- 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

Implementation Date _____

Review – The Code will be discussed at staff meetings and reviewed periodically

Ratification and Communication – The Policy will be posted on the school website. Any parent who does not have access to the internet will be advised to call to the school to obtain a hard copy.