

Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement

Our code of behaviour was revised in 2025 by the Board of Management and the staff following consultation with the children and parents.

Rationale

We have updated our code of behaviour as part of our on-going review of policies and to ensure that existing policy is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Education Welfare Board, 2008. We also wanted to ensure that children understood the process that would commence if they refuse to meet school expectations in terms of Behaviour.

Relationship of characteristic spirit of the school

Clonmellon NS seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment. The school climate and atmosphere are created by the actions and behaviour of everyone in the school. The code will be most effective where there is clear understanding of the standards of behaviour required and a high level of openness and co-operation between staff, parents and pupils.

Aims

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement and enables children to learn and teachers to teach.
- To promote positive behaviour, a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in all pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others.
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions is understood by all and implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

Guidelines for positive behaviour in the school

Each pupil is expected:

- To treat all staff, fellow pupils and visitors to the school with respect and courtesy.
- To show respect for their belongings, the belongings of others and the property of the school.
- To attend school regularly and to be punctual.
- To obey a teacher's instructions and to work to the best of their ability. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of pupils to learn or the rights of the teachers to educate is unacceptable.

Teachers will ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave. As part of their Social Personal Health Education curriculum each class will draw up their own classroom rules, in line with this code, in order to deepen their understanding of the behaviour expected. The older classes will be asked to sign up to their classroom rules to acknowledge their acceptance of them.

Children with special educational needs will have an individual plan drawn up to address behavioural issues, if necessary. This Behavioural Plan will outline the expectations for that child.

The code of behaviour applies to all school related activities where the children are under the supervision of the teachers- i.e. school matches, tours and other outings.

Parents will have access to a copy of the code and asked to confirm that the code is acceptable to them upon enrolling their child.

This policy will deal with all poor behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying. Bullying incidents will be processed following the Bí Cineálta policy.

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

School Standards of Behaviour:

Our school rules are devised with regard for health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. All students and staff in Clonmellon NS are responsible for their own behaviour. There will always be events that contribute to our behaviours but we recognise that our reactions are within our control.

The following are the expectations we have of the children:

1. Pupils must show respect for teachers, parents and fellow pupils. - Children are not allowed answer any member of staff or any adult in the school disrespectfully, under any circumstances. If a child is called by a teacher, they are expected to walk to the teacher and listen respectfully.
2. Pupils must show respect for their personal property, school property and the property of others at all times. Items borrowed must be returned in a similar condition. If this is not possible, they must be replaced.
3. **Aggressive behaviour (hitting, pushing, etc.) will not be tolerated in the school.**
4. Any sort of rough play is not permitted.
5. Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling
6. Include other pupils in games and activities
7. No child is allowed to leave their classroom, designated yard or the school grounds without permission
8. Time wasting in class is not permitted, every child is entitled to an education and we do not have the right to monopolise class time.
9. Children must wear their full school uniform to school, only loose knee length navy shorts may be worn in the summer. Children are also asked to wear tracksuit bottoms rather than leggings the rest of the year. Legging shorts are not permitted.
10. Wearing make-up is not allowed.
11. No chewing gum in school.
12. Children are not allowed to eat during class time, unless their teacher has instructed them to do so.
13. The following are not allowed on school premises and will be confiscated:
 - Mobile Phones
 - Smart watches with capability of making/ receiving calls or recording either audio or images
 - Dangerous articles, i.e. knives, sharp objects, matches, lighters, dangerous substances or any object that is considered a danger to any pupil or others.
 - Tipp-Ex and all aerosols (including deodorant aerosols)
 - Jewellery – other than small stud earrings and watch. Elastic wristbands may only be worn if in recognition of an achievement.
 - No glass bottles allowed in the school.

Parental responsibilities

Parents, in agreeing to this code of behaviour, are accepting responsibility for ensuring that their child:

- 1) Attends school regularly. Days missed frequently has a very negative impact on your child's academic and social progress.
- 2) Wears the school uniform each day. Parents are asked to ensure that shorts worn in the summer are loose, navy, knee length shorts. **Label pupil's coats and other personal property.**
- 3) All absences shall be explained by written notification. This can be done in their homework notebook but it would reduce school administration time if parents entered absence reason on Aladdin Connect.
- 4) Punctuality is encouraged at all times. Children should arrive in school shortly before 9.10.
- 5) Co-operate with teacher in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others
- 6) Is equipped with appropriate school materials and has a healthy lunch. Please ensure that Hot meals ordered are ones that your child will eat. Please change your order or cancel meals if your child is not eating them.
- 7) Parents are expected to model appropriate behaviour for their children. Courtesy is expected towards all members of staff, appointment to meet with a teacher / the Principal are made through emails or through the office. Respect school property and encourage their children to do the same. Strictly supervise pre-school children, when in the school.

- 8) Any items that are banned from the school in number 13 above, will be confiscated from the children and parents will be obliged to collect from the principal's office within an agreed time frame.
- 9) Any child leaving the school before home time must be collected from the school office, after signing the child out. If parents are not collecting the child, they must have notified the school office (please contact the school office as teachers cannot always check emails during the school day) beforehand, instructing the school to allow their child to leave with designated adult. Adults not known to the school must have recognised photo identification with them. This also applies to children leaving in emergency situations or bus emergencies.
- 10) As the Board of Management is 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. Please report any unacceptable behaviours to the class teacher or principal.

Affirming Positive Behaviour

To further develop our positive school culture and to promote positive mental health in our classrooms and in our whole school environment, we encourage and reward positive behaviours by the children. Members of staff will drop into class to pass on compliments to children who have shown respect, kindness, manners or citizenship. Our aim is to encourage children to make small gestures which include others, reassure others, befriend others, show initiative and awareness of others' safety, happiness and inclusion.

The following strategies will be used by teachers:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a child's exercise book
- A visit to another class, to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or the class
- Individual/ class merit awards, point awards, award stickers, homework passes or student of week certs.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege e.g. Gardening Club, Student Council, Green School
- A mention to parents – either written or verbal communication
- Good attendance will be rewarded on a class and individual basis.
- School Rules stated in positive format, setting out expected standard of behaviour.

Parents/guardians are valued as partners in the school community and as such will be invited to participate in promoting positive behaviour both in school and in the wider community.

Discouraging misbehaviour

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 the age and emotional development of the child. Any incident that happens on yard and on entry and dismissal from school or on any school excursion, including games, will be reported to the class teacher and they will adhere to the following procedure. Teachers are reminded to be vigilant at all times and remind children of school rules before behaviours escalate, if possible. (Please refer to our Supervision Policy)

Misbehaviour on yard

Children will be made aware in the classroom of the rules of the yard and the standard of behaviour expected of them on a regular basis. Children will also be made aware of the yard timetable and activities allowed on yard on different days. Children will be given 1 verbal warning, identifying the unwanted behaviour and advice on how to behave, if they persist in the unacceptable behaviour, they will be given an age appropriate time out and this will be reported to the class teacher. Depending on the severity of the yard incident, the level of roughness involved or the harm caused to another child, an immediate time out may be given by the supervising teacher. This will enable the teacher to deal with an injury or investigate an incident to avoid using class time to investigate. Serious or repeated misbehaviours on yard will be dealt with by the class teacher using the steps in this Code of Behaviour.

The following sanctions are listed in order of increasing severity **but serious incidents may skip stages.**

1. Reasoning with pupils, identifying the unwanted behaviour and advising them about the consequences of their actions
2. Verbal reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
3. Temporary removal from group (within the class or in the yard).
4. Note in journal from class teacher referring to repeated episodes of minor misbehaviour in the pupil's homework journal to be signed by parents. Record kept by teacher.
5. Referral to another teacher/classroom. Parents/guardians will be informed by teacher by phone. Message will be left if contact cannot be made.
6. Child will be asked to visit the principal to discuss their unacceptable behaviour. Children will receive a consequence sheet, which they will be asked to fill in at home and return to principal the following school day. Consequences sheets will be kept in the principal's office but the child may request a copy.
7. If the behaviours persist, the principal will contact parents to inform them that their child will receive a supervised detention during lunch break with prescribed work, which may need to be completed at home and signed by parents. Parents will return completed work and signed consequence sheet following detention.
8. Principal holds formal meeting with parents/guardians, in which an agreement is reached between parents, student, teacher and principal about desired improvements in behaviour. Behaviour plan drawn up using SMART (Specific, Measured, Attainable, Realistic and Timed) targets and review date within 2/3 weeks. This will be reviewed as necessary until student behaviour is meeting expectations.
9. Principal sends formal written communication to parents/guardians outlining the withdrawal of privileges and responsibilities (including exclusion from school outings/ playing on school, teams, etc.) or assignment of extra duties, schoolwork or work to be completed at home.
10. Pre-Suspension Meeting: Further meeting with parents if improvements to behaviour have not occurred.
11. Suspension (See below)
12. Expulsion (See below)

Timelines for Stages

Teachers will monitor and record student's behaviour for 1 month after student reaches Step 5. If student improves, their record is reset. If the teachers have not noticed an improvement in their behaviour, they advance to the next step.

From Step 5 onwards there will be monthly reviews of student behaviour. If the student makes the effort to improve their behaviour and achieves their targets, their record is reset to 0. If they have made some effort but have not yet achieved the desired behaviour, they will be given an extra month to achieve their goal. If the student has made no effort to improve their behaviour, they will move on to the next stage.

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 text/ email 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. The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend 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 the 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 Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

Expulsion

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil in an extreme case e.g. where repeated incidences 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. 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).

References to other Policies

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

- SPHE plan
- BÍ Cineálta Policy
- Health and Safety
- Enrolment
- Tours
- Special Educational Needs

Success Criteria

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

- Positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.

Review

The code will be discussed at staff meetings and reviewed annually.

Ratification and Communication

The policy will be shared with parents and posted on the school website.

Ratified by the Board of Management on: 22-3-2011, 24/10/2016, 19/09/2022

Signed _____

Date _____

Consequence sheet – Behaviour Report 1

What happened? (Specific example of behaviour)

What did you do?

What happened then?

How did you feel in the middle of all this?

What events may have led up to or contributed to this event?

What might have happened if you did nothing?

Looking back, What else could you have done?

Signed (Pupil) _____

Date _____

Signed (Parent/Guardian) _____

Date _____