



Code of Positive Behaviour 2024

Introduction & Rationale

This policy was drawn up in consultation with pupils, staff, parents and the Board of Management of Scoil Cholmáin Tuairíní. The policy was drawn up to promote a happy and safe environment for all pupils, staff and parents in order to ensure optimal conditions for effective teaching and learning. The Code was revised to ensure compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in Developing a Code of Behaviour, Guidelines for schools, NEWB 2008.

The Code of Positive Behaviour places a greater emphasis on rewards rather than sanctions or punishments through implementing the principles of Restorative Practice and the Friends for Life programme throughout the school. The code of positive behaviour helps the school community to promote the school's ethos, relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour and minimise unacceptable behaviour. This policy also helps teachers, other members of staff, students and parents to work together to create a happy, caring, respectful and safe school environment.

The Code should be read with reference to:

- The Child Safeguarding Statement
- The Primary Curriculum
- The Health & Safety Statement
- The Anti-Bullying Policy
- The Admissions Policy
- The Dignity in the Workplace Policy

Aims

- To allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious environment.

- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline recognising the differences between pupils and the need to accommodate these differences.
- To enhance the learning environment where pupils can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community by encouraging an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- To enable parents/guardians and pupils to understand the systems and procedures that form our Code of Positive Behaviour and to ensure their co-operation and support in the application of these procedures.
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

Guiding Principles and Rules

This Code of Positive Behaviour is underpinned by the Catholic ethos of our patronage and is based on the guiding principles and rules as decided upon by the staff and pupils of our school.

Principles

- Treat others with respect and courtesy at all times respecting the rights of others to feel safe, learn and feel comfortable in the school environment
- Show respect for school property and the property of others and keep the school environment clean and litter free.
- Show readiness to use the principles of Restorative Practice to resolve difficulties and conflict.
- Pupils are expected to wear the school uniform and have the necessary books and materials to take part in their day to day activities.
- Pupils are expected to follow a teacher's instructions, to work to the best of their ability.
- Pupils are expected to attend school every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence.

School Rules

1. Respect

We respect ourselves, we respect others and we respect our school.

2. Kindness

We are kind to ourselves and others in our words and in our actions.

3. Listen

We listen to our teachers and to all of the adults in our school. We do what we are asked to do.

4. Best

We always do our best. Everybody's best is different.

5. Gaeilge

Bíonn muid ag labhairt Gaeilge gach lá.

All students are taught the School Rules when they start school and they are revised consistently throughout their remaining years in the school. Parents are encouraged and expected to talk to their children about the rules and to encourage their children to keep them. Individual rules will be highlighted at regular periods at assembly for special attention.

The School Rules are promoted through the entire school community as follows:

- **Noticeboards**

The School Rules are displayed prominently in each classroom, in the school library/hall and in the school yard.

- **Assembly**

Assembly takes place monthly and forms a valuable role in our whole school approach to developing self-esteem, promoting positive behaviour and effective discipline. Good work and achievements are highlighted, celebrated and rewarded. The school rules are emphasised and explained. Specific school routines for the classroom and yard are emphasised and explained.

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. This practice allows for building trust between and with people. It provides a structured approach in the form of a scaffold, which helps build and sustain relationships, and provides a focus which allows for the potential growth of

positive relationships to become established between people. The development of each relationship is based on a set of core values. These values include respect, and being respectful of everyone – even if you do not agree with or even like the person. When challenging behaviour occurs, 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 of harm.

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?

The Restorative Questions are displayed in classrooms and in the school yard for regular reference throughout the school day should the need arise.

Attendance

When a child is absent a note must be made on the Eolas App or given to the class teacher when the child returns to school. This note should include the date and the signature of the parent or guardian. The school is obliged to inform the Education Welfare Service of Tusla if a child is absent for 20 days or more. In the event of a child missing 20 days or more from school parents will be notified.

Classroom rules

Each class teacher is responsible for drawing up a list of class rules with his/her class which reflect the school rules and the general school guidelines. Each

teacher has the responsibility to manage his/her own class. The class teacher will take responsibility for an agreed set of sanctions for breaches of his/her own class rules. Serious incidents of misbehaviour will be recorded. This record will be available to the Principal on request. The incidents recorded will be used to inform parents/guardians of a child's behaviour record and parent-teacher meetings and filling the child's school report.

Break-times

Children are expected to behave in accordance with the guidelines set out above and also with the Yard Rules as drawn up between pupils and staff below. Responsibility for dealing with incidents of misbehaviour on yard rests with the supervising teacher who may refer incidents to the class teacher or principal should they deem it necessary. Any serious incidents of misbehaviour should be recorded in a hard-back copy available from the principal.

Our Yard Rules

- Be kind and play fair.
- Tidy the outdoor classroom. Listen to the garden monitors.
- No rough play on the astro.
- Always ask a teacher if you need to leave the yard.
- Line up on the footsteps as soon as the bell rings. No talking or ball bouncing.

Responsibilities of the Board of Management

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

Responsibilities of the Principal

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the code of positive behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner and arrange for review of the Code, as required.

Responsibilities of Teachers

- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.
- Create a safe working environment for each student and affirm good work.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.

- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

Schools need the support of parents with regard to good behaviour and discipline. Parents can help their children in the following ways:

- Parents should provide their children with positive models of behaviour.
- Children need boundaries and rules about behaviour. Talk to your child about school rules. They help make the school a safe place where everyone can learn and nobody feels left out or threatened.
- Be interested in, support and encourage your child's school work.
- Cooperate with teachers in instances where your child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Answer any phone calls from school promptly.
- Ensure that there is always someone available to collect child from school promptly at school's request.
- Attend meetings at the school as requested.
- Check your child has all their needs for class i.e. books, copies, headphones pens, pencils, rubber, ruler, raingear etc.
- Share information with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress / behaviour.
- Behave in a respectful manner to all members of the school community.
- Ensure that your child attends school regularly and on time.
- Children are supervised in the mornings from 8:50am. It is parents'/guardians' responsibility to ensure their child is not on school grounds before this time.
- Children must be collected promptly at 1.40pm (Infants) & 2:40pm (1st – 6th Class)
- Inform the school if an unknown adult will be collecting their child.
- Parents must give permission on the Eolas App for any off-site school events/activities.
- Ensure the school has up to date contact information for parents/guardians.

Responsibilities of Students

The school rules were devised by the staff and pupils of our school. Behaviour that does not conform to one or more of these rules can be considered unacceptable. For each rule we have certain expectations, and these are explained and taught to all students.

The success of the school's code of behaviour depends on consistency in the implementation of these rules. This will be achieved as follows:

- School rules are brought to the attention of the children through class teachers on a regular basis
- Behaviour that does not conform to one or more of these rules can be considered unacceptable. For each rule we have certain expectations, and these are explained and taught to all students.
- School rules apply throughout the school day and are especially important on school tours/outings/sports days

The success of the school's code of behaviour depends on consistency in the implementation of these rules. This will be achieved as follows:

- Teaching of the School Rules
- Modelling the standards
- Rewards and Incentives for keeping the rules
- Prevention Strategies
- Sanctions For Breaking the Rules

Rewards and Sanctions

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions.

Incentives may include:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment/sticker on a child's work
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation
- Praise in front of class group or assembly
- Individual class awards
- Leadership responsibilities throughout the school

Prevention strategies used in the school may include:

- Restorative Practice
- Circle time
- Organised activities at break time
- Carrying out useful tasks
- Helping in Gairdín na Scoil
- Sensory Breaks/Movement Breaks
- Structured lunchtime activities e.g. chess
- Use of individual behaviour systems
- School Support Plans and SET support

Misbehaviour

Three levels of unacceptable behaviour are recognised by Scoil Cholmáin. They are:

1. Minor misbehaviours.
2. Serious misbehaviours.
3. Gross misbehaviours.

It is important to note that the lists below are not exhaustive and that other unacceptable behaviours may be added or included at the school's discretion.

Examples of Minor Misbehaviour

Disrupting class work by:

- Talking when teacher or another pupil is talking, interrupting the teacher, shouting out answers, talking over another pupil, talking out of turn.
- Pupil not listening to instructions, fiddling with stationery etc.
- Laughing "giddiness" and giggling during work time.
- Throwing objects, making noise, swinging on chairs.
- Getting out of seat or moving around the room without permission.
- Disobeying teacher's instructions.

- Carelessness with books and stationery, scribbling/drawing on school books.
- Drawing on tables, being careless with another pupil's property.
- Commenting negatively on another pupil's work.
- Excluding others.
- Leaving litter in and around the school.
- Lack of compliance with school policy on uniform.
- Being discourteous or unmannerly.
- Name calling.
- Gestures of defiance and using bad language.
- Unruliness in the classrooms or in the corridor.
- Deliberately not abiding by social distancing rules.
- Deliberately not following respiratory and cough etiquette.
- Deliberate misuse of sanitiser, wipes, soap, hand towels etc.

Examples of Serious Misbehaviour

- Negative physical contact e.g. pushing, hitting, biting, kicking, tripping up, pulling hair etc.
- Deliberately coughing, sneezing on another child or member of staff.
- Being disrespectful to the teacher/ ignoring the teacher.
- Stealing from classmates/teacher.
- Screaming/ shouting at another child/teacher.
- Deliberate exclusion of peers.
- Threatening/ intimidating peers.
- Throwing objects.
- Telling lies.
- Bullying - physical, verbal, cyber (Ref: Anti-Bullying Policy)
- Consistently interrupting/distracting others in the class.
- Consistently not doing homework.
- Refusal to do work assigned.
- Refusal to co-operate with the teacher.
- Damaging school property.
- Leaving school grounds without permission during school day.

Examples of Gross Misbehaviour

- Deliberate spitting on another child or staff member.
- Serious assault on another pupil/staff member e.g. physical, verbal.
- Serious damage to school property.
- Serious theft of school/staff property.
- Consistent bullying of another pupil e.g. emotional, physical, cyber.

Procedures for Dealing with Misbehaviour

The Education (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'.

Teachers will use their professional judgement and their knowledge of the child (with due regard to age and emotional development) and the particular circumstances of the behaviour or incident in responding to unacceptable behaviour and in selecting the appropriate sanction. The sanction will be proportionate to the behaviour or incident in question. It may include:

1. Reasoning with pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class
4. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened
5. Loss of privileges
6. Loss of playtime in yard
7. Time out time, either in the classroom or in another room
8. Teacher communicating with parents
9. Referral to Principal
10. Principal communicating with parents
11. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular22/02 and Education Welfare Act 2000)

Bullying

Bullying is repeated verbal, psychological or physical aggression by an individual or group against others. The school's Anti-Bullying policy outlines the practices and procedures to be followed around suspected cases of bullying as well as best practice in encouraging positive behaviour. Any instances of bullying will be treated as serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour. In cases where bullying is reported or suspected

- The principal/class teacher will be notified
- An appropriate investigation into the events will be conducted
- Parents will be notified and consulted
- Sanctions will be agreed upon reflecting the seriousness of the misbehaviour and the circumstances involved.

Pupils with Special Needs

All pupils are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However, the school recognises that pupils with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Planning to encourage positive behaviour will be included in the pupil's Support Plan, which is drawn up in consultation with parents/guardians and the class teacher, special education teacher and/or the Principal. Staff will work closely with parents/guardians to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be considered at all times.

Professional advice from psychological assessments will be taken into consideration. The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs to 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.

Suspension and Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents/guardians will be utilised. Communication with parents/guardians may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances. Pupils and their parents will be invited to come

to the school to discuss their child's case before a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed. At all times the principles of fair procedures (i.e. the right to be heard and the right to impartiality) will apply.

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal/Board may consider and immediate suspension to be necessary when the continued presence of the pupil would present a serious threat to the safety or wellbeing of pupils or staff of the school, or any other person. In this case, the Chairperson or Principal may sanction immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with parents.

Suspension Procedures

- Communication to parents regarding the possibility of suspension will be in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal and copies of all correspondence will be retained. In some circumstances it may be necessary to contact parents by phone. If this is the case a record of same will be retained.
- The Board of Management has delegated responsibility for suspension to the Principal in the event that immediate suspension is warranted. The parents/guardians and child will be invited discuss the matter with the Principal and the procedures governing suspension will be applied.
- Where parents do not agree to meet with the Principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension
- A suspension will not be for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is necessary to in order to achieve a particular objective.
- A written statement of the terms and date of the termination of a suspension will be given to parents and guardians. The letter will confirm:
 - the period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
 - the reasons for the suspension
 - any programme of study to be followed
 - the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents (e.g. the pupil and parents may be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)

- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- The suspension will be recorded on the NEWB 'Student Absence Report Form' (when applicable)
 - When a period of suspension ends, the pupil will be re-admitted formally to the class by the Principal.
 - The school will help the pupil catch up on work missed and the pupil will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start.
 - Where a satisfactory resolution of a problem is achieved, a pupil may be re-admitted to school within a suspension period at the discretion of the Principal and/or the Chairperson of the Board of Management.
 - If a pupil continues to misbehave he may be suspended for a major fixed period (up to ten days) to allow for consultation with both the pupil and the pupil's parents/guardians to address the issues.
 - As outlined above, parents/guardians and pupil will be given the opportunity to discuss the issues with the Principal/Board of Management.
 - The Education Welfare Officer will be informed when a student has been suspended for six days or more cumulatively.
 - Section 29 Appeal — when the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days the parents may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act and will be given information about how to appeal. Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents/guardians may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007.

Expulsion

Subsequent to the above suspension procedure and meetings with parents/guardians, if serious/gross incident of misbehaviour continue, the pupil will be recommended for permanent expulsion by the Board of Management. In exceptional circumstances, pupils may be expelled for a first offence. The following procedures apply in the case of expulsion:

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
- A recommendation to the Board of Management
- Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing.
- Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing
- Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer
- Confirmation of the decision to expel

Record Keeping


- Breaches of behaviour will be recorded in writing by the class teacher and if necessary by the Principal.
- A record will be kept in the school of all instances of serious misbehaviour by pupils.
- All records in relation to suspension and expulsion will be carefully recorded and reported.
- All interventions aimed at helping the student deal with inappropriate behaviour will be recorded including use of sanctions.
- Records will be kept in accordance with current Data Protection guidelines (GDPR) and the school's policy on record keeping.

Appeals

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act, 1998 Section 29). An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a student.

Ratification and Review

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management in March 2024 and will be reviewed annually. The policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent's Association.

Signed:  19th March 2024
Michael Lee, Chairperson, BOM

Signed:  19th March 2024

Aideen Molloy, School Principal