



Code of Behaviour and Attendance Policy

Introductory Statement

This policy was drawn up in consultation with the staff, parents and Board of Management of St. John the Apostle, Knocknacarra NS. St John the Apostle, Knocknacarra NS is a 16 classroom Primary School which caters for boys and girls from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

Rationale

This policy was drawn up in order to promote a happy and a safe school environment for all pupils, teachers and parents in order to ensure optimal conditions for effective teaching and learning, as outlined in our school's mission statement. It reflects the Catholic Ethos of our school in line with the Schedule for Catholic Schools as set out in our School Plan.

Aims

This policy aims to articulate our vision for positive relationships and behaviour in the school:

- To promote and maintain a happy and a safe school environment for all pupils, teachers and parents in order to ensure optimal conditions for effective teaching and learning
- To provide clarity with regard to expectations about how each member of the school community will promote positive behaviour and learning environment in the school
- To focus on affirming good behaviour and setting high expectations for standards of behaviour throughout the school
- To foster the development of relationships of trust between children, teachers, parents and the wider school community
- To facilitate the education and development of every child
- To foster caring attitudes towards each member of the school community, to promote respect for diversity and allow for appropriate accommodation of difference in accordance with the equal status legislation

- To reflect that this school acknowledges that unacceptable behaviour may be linked to external factors. Positive support including active teaching of relevant skills will be provided for those children who are more vulnerable to behavioural problems
- To specify practical strategies to be employed within the school community to support high expectations of positive behaviour throughout the school, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference
- To ensure that the principle of fairness, consistency and natural justice are adhered to by all members of the school community towards each other
- To help each child to experience the value of being a responsible participating member of the school community
- To outline procedures to be followed where a child fails or refuses to observe standards of behaviour expected and set out in this code of behaviour.

Roles & Responsibilities

Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Behaviour:

This Code of Behaviour will provide a sound foundation for a whole-school approach to promoting good behaviour and for responding to unacceptable behaviour based on a shared understanding of what shapes the behaviour of children and positive strategies for affirming and promoting good behaviour.

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of this Code of Behaviour. Emphasis is on a holistic, preventative approach which involves all partners (BOM, Staff, Parents and Pupils) in the school community in understanding, drafting and implementing the school's Code of Behaviour.

The Student Council

The KNS Student Council was formed in 2012 in order to give the children a strong representative body and create a positive partnership. The functions of this council include: representing the students views, contributing to the development of policies, communicating with the students and wider school community, providing peer support, improving school atmosphere and teacher / student relationships, addressing school social and behavioural issues, school facilitates and learning environment.

The BOM will ensure that the entire school community is involved in the development, implementation and review of the school's Code of Behaviour. The BOM will provide a comfortable, safe learning environment conducive to supporting positive behaviour. It will support the Principal, staff and parents in implementing the Code of Behaviour by providing opportunities for

- staff to deepen their understanding of the factors that affect behaviour and help children to change behaviour
- dialogue among staff about the nature of behaviour, as the basis of a whole-school approach to promoting good behaviour and responding to unacceptable behaviour
- Exploring ways of helping parents to understand how they can help children to behave and learn well at school
- Finding ways of helping children to understand their own behaviour, the reasons for it and ways they can manage their behaviour and relationships.

The School's SPHE Curriculum is used to support the Code of Behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship.

Principal

Positive and supportive leadership from the Principal promotes successful implementation of the Code of Behaviour across the school community. The Principal will

- 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 required

Staff

Practical strategies for teachers to encourage and promote positive behaviour in the classroom:

- Be alert to what is going on in the classroom at all times
- Praise and reinforce positive behaviour e.g. by saying "I like the way you are/did/said ...", use appropriate reward systems such as star charts, allocate extra Golden Time, Weekly certificates for Good Behaviour etc.

- Establish and clearly communicate expectations for behaviour, class routines and boundaries
- Explain the connection between a child's behaviour and its consequences e.g. removal from disruption if distracting others to appropriate time-out space
- Use strategies to help children maintain these routines and boundaries e.g. using prompt card systems for keeping children on task, use of visual time-tables,
- Keep children actively involved in their learning, vary teaching methodologies e.g. mixture of whole class collaboration, group work, pair work and individual work.
- Ensure smooth transition between subjects and classrooms
- Enforce classroom rules promptly, consistently and equitably

Example of classroom rules:

- Be polite, stand back, say excuse me and thank you
- Show kindness and respect, share, help others, take turns
- Listen and put up your hand to talk out
- Keep your place tidy, respect school property
- Be safe, walk while indoors

A warm and accepting classroom climate is one where children feel cared about and are encouraged to care about each other.

Practical strategies for teachers to encourage and promote positive behaviour in the yard/toilet area:

- Teachers will establish and maintain consistency in terms of expectations for behaviour, routines and boundaries for children in the yard or toilet area
- Teachers will enforce rules promptly, consistently and equitably
 - Children line up and walk to and from the yard
 - At the end of break children 'freeze' after the first whistle and quietly walk to their line on hearing the second whistle
 - Children will play gently with regard to the safety of everyone in the yard.

Sanctions: Children are removed to time-out space if behaviour is deemed to be unsafe or inappropriate.

Parental involvement in encouraging and promoting positive behaviour in school:

The Parents Association Committee as a representative group are consulted and involved in drafting and reviewing the school's Code of Behaviour. The Code of Behaviour is clearly communicated to all parents. At enrolment each parent receives a copy of the Code of

Behaviour and is requested to sign to show that they have read the code and accept and support its implementation.

There are a number of training programmes being held throughout the year on the issue of cyber bullying. These are being organised by Knocknacarra Parents Association.

As part of the preventative nature of the school's approach to positive behaviour, parents are informed at the earliest opportunity where their child's behaviour is deemed to be unsafe and inappropriate.

Parents are encouraged to support children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property and to

- Ensure that children attend school 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.

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before **official opening time of 8.50 a.m. or after the official Infants closing time of 1.30 p.m. and First to Sixth classes closing time of 2.30pm.**

The BOM and school community will ensure that systems are in place to acknowledge behaviour, progress and effort, through reward systems as outlined previously, under positive strategies for promoting positive behaviour in the school.

Most children behave appropriately, with the help of consistent and clear rules and routines in class and in school. Occasional minor misbehaviour will be attended to routinely and effectively through the skill of the classroom teacher.

Some children need more active intervention to help them to manage their behaviour.

Without additional help, they may be at risk of failing, behaviourally, socially and educationally. Additional inputs or interventions might include:

- referral to another teacher or adult who can work with the child
- setting targets for behaviour and monitoring them with the child in a supportive way
- Behaviour Contracts (see appendix)

Where a child's behaviour is particularly challenging the school and parents together may engage the support of local support services such as NEPS, HSE, NCSE agencies etc.

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

These may include:

- 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
- 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).

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

Suspension/Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as detention, suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. 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 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 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.

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.

Removal of 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.

School Rules

School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly.

Record Keeping:

In situations which require active intervention to assist children to improve their behaviour the class teacher will record observations on a Behaviour Record Sheet (see appendix). Each teacher electronically records any form of bullying behaviour on individual class incident sheets. Monthly analysis of these documents will be carried out and reported to all staff.

Where incidences of misbehaviour occur in the school yard the misbehaviour will be recorded in the Yard Incidence Report Book and stored in the Principal's office. Where there is any allegation of bullying this will be recorded and kept in the Principal's office.

All such records will be kept on file and stored securely.

Attendance Policy

Procedure for notification of a child's absence from school:

Parents are required to inform the school of the reason for a child's absence in writing. The school is required under the obligations of the Education Welfare Act 2000 to record and report children's absences to the National Education Welfare Board. The school is obliged to report to the NEWB when a student has reached 20 days absence cumulatively.

Success Criteria

Identify some practical indicators of the success of the policy

Timetable for Review

This policy will be reviewed each year.

Ratification & Communication

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management of St. John the Apostle, Knocknacarra NS, on 13th June 2013 and subsequently communicated to the school community via the school's website.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Frank Laffey, Chairperson,
Board of Management