

Code of Behaviour

This Code of Behaviour is prepared in accordance with the NEWB guidelines

We, as a school community, believe that

- School is not just about children: it encompasses families, parents, community, stakeholders, the environment and the wider world
- All children can learn
- All children deserve a quality education in which individual needs are met, exceeded and supported
- All children benefit from developmentally appropriate materials, practices and strategies
- Children learn best in a safe, caring environment, one that values diversity, collaboration and risk-taking
- Children thrive when expectations are high and self-esteem higher
- The development of social and emotional skills deserve the same attention as academic ones and have a strong impact on academic learning

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-regulation 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 maximize the learning experience for all children
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy

Expected Behaviours

As a school community we regard the following behaviours as desirable.

- **Regular attendance and punctuality***
- **Respect for self and others**
- **Respect for other students and their learning**
- **Respect for the property of others**
- **Courtesy and good manners**
- **Kindness and willingness to help others**
- **Walking within the school building**
- **Indoor voice within the school building**
- **Readiness to use respectful age-appropriate means in resolving conflict**
- **Attention to school work**
- **Attention to home-work**

* Parent/Carer must make contact with the school re all absences.

These desirable behaviours are appropriate to all members of the school community and we acknowledge that modelling good behaviour is a powerful tool in promoting desirable outcomes.

Our School Rules arise from the above desirable behaviours.

Promoting Good Behaviour

As per the principles of the Incredible Years Classroom Management Training, we will employ the following strategies in promoting desirable behaviour.

- We acknowledge that the quality of relationships between teachers and students is a powerful influence on behaviour in school. We will place particular emphasis on building positive relationships with students, especially at the beginning of the academic year.
- We acknowledge that the skill of the teacher in managing the routine engagement with students is a critical factor in preventing problems. Therefore, we will place emphasis on proactive strategies in the classroom and the yard.
- We will use praise and encouragement as a means of affirming positive behaviour.
- We acknowledge the value of pro-social behaviour and this will be labelled and affirmed.
- We will use ignoring and redirecting as a strategy for dealing with low level inappropriate behaviour.
- We will routinely use incentive and reward schemes on individual, group and whole school basis.

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
- Damage to property

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

The following steps will be taken when the children behave inappropriately. 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;

1. Reasoning with pupil, including timely reminders
2. Verbal warning including advice on how to improve
3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class eg Time Out System
4. Loss of privileges

5. Detention during break
6. Communication with parents
7. Referral to Principal
8. Principal communicating with parents
9. 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, if a child misbehaves on the yard he/she may be detained at break time. Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health & safety.

Plan for Implementing the Code

- All teachers will make themselves aware of the Code of Behaviour
- The School Rules will be taught to each class at the beginning of each academic year in an age-appropriate context.
- Special attention will be paid to modelling and labelling pro-social behaviour i.e. Good manners.
 - v. This will be reinforced in a timely fashion e.g. before school outings and special events.
- Classroom rules will be devised by each class, in consultation with students, which will reflect the values of the general rules.
- The SEN Team will support this process where possible.
- Parents will be made aware of the schools expectations for behaviour and will receive a copy of the Code of Behaviour at Admission.

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.

School Procedure for Suspension and Expulsion

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

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 working towards a shared 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.

The following methods are to be used at all levels within the school:

- Informal parent/teacher meetings and Formal parent/teacher meetings
- Through children's homework journal (infants do not have a homework journal-check bags)
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school, including celebrations of good behaviour
- School Website
- Home School Community Liaison Teacher

Our policies on Bullying and Substance Use are also part of our Code of Behaviour.
This policy will be reviewed in September 2016.

Ratified by Board of Management on _____

Date

Signed _____