



Cliffoney National School

Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement:

The policy was formulated in December 2009 in conjunction with staff, parents, Board of Management, pupils and a PPDS Advisor. The policy was reviewed in October 2003 and again in March 2010 to ensure that the policy is in keeping with the revised National Educational Welfare Board Guidelines 2008.

This policy reflects the school ethos of Cliffoney National School in fostering healthy respectful school relationships and promoting the positive self-esteem of pupils and staff.

Aims:

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement.
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community.
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation 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.

Guidelines for behaviour in our school:

- Each pupil is expected to be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults
- Each pupil is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own belongings
- Each pupil is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual
- Each pupil is expected to do his/her best both in school and for homework.

2. Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour.

We recognise the importance of taking a whole school approach to promotion of positive behaviour. Our staff adopt a team approach to the review and implementation of the Code of Behaviour in our school. We regularly address the Code at staff meetings and planning days to ensure consistency. Annual review of the Code is one of the duties of the Deputy Principal. The Code of Behaviour is reviewed by the Board of Management when deemed necessary. Parents have been consulted in the formulation of this Code of Behaviour and their suggestions have been taken into account.

Parents support the school in the promotion and maintenance of high standards of behaviour e.g.

- Parents ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually.
- Parents encourage their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work.
- Parents are aware of and cooperate with the school's rules and system of rewards and sanctions.
- Parents attend meetings at the school if requested.
- Parents help their children with homework and ensure that it is completed.
- Parents ensure their children have the necessary books and materials for school.

3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour

The pupils through Social Personal and Health Education programmes such as Walk Tall, Stay Safe, RSE and Grow in Love and Alive O Religious programmes are afforded opportunities to learn and develop good behaviour.

Some of the positive strategies we use to manage behaviour are:

- “Golden rules” and behavioural expectations in each class that are consistent with the ethos as expressed in the code of behaviour and which set a positive atmosphere for learning.
- Pupils have input in devising the class rules.
- Teachers ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave.
- A clear system of acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and sanctions for misbehaviour is in place. In the case of some pupils, specific strategies for addressing behaviour are outlined in Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) and in the continuum of support.
- Classroom management techniques that ensure a variety of activities and methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation are used.
- Timetabling and school/classroom management ensures routines and structures are in place for children and assists in fostering an orderly environment.
- Children have other opportunities to display good behaviour - school mass, concerts, sporting activities, Green School, jobs, tasks etc.

The “Golden Rules”.

- Be gentle
- Be kind and helpful
- Work hard
- Look after property
- Listen to others
- Be honest

4. Supervision

- In the morning, all pupils enter through the side doors. These doors are unlocked at 9:10am. The Board of Management does not accept responsibility for the pupils before 9:10am.
- There are designated areas for class groupings in the PLAY AREAS which are supervised at all times.
- After break/lunch, children line up in the yard and wait for their teacher to call them in from yard. Yard Duty teacher remains on the yard until teachers come for their classes.
- On wet days, children are supervised in their classrooms and they have access to games, drawing materials, whiteboards etc.

- If children are unwell, they should not be in school. On a rare occasion, a parent may send the teacher a note requesting their child remain indoors on that day. The child will be supervised.
- Children must ask for permission to go to the toilet during break times from the teacher on duty.
- Children are refreshed on the rules of the school on a regular basis.
- The Code of Behaviour applies to all school related activities e.g. school tours, sporting events etc.
- We recognise that factors influencing children's behaviour may sometimes need to be considered and accommodated. Through the Special Educational Needs Organiser, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Service Executive and NEPS.

5. Rewards and Sanctions

Rewards for good behaviour and effort displayed in school work and homework include: stars, stamps, stickers, homework vouchers, good behaviour charts etc. At other times children's good behaviour and effort is highlighted by their peers and teachers throughout the school by verbal praise, displaying good work and achievements.

Sanctions are applied to help pupils reflect on and change inappropriate behaviour. A staged approach is used. Initially, misbehaviour is dealt with by the class teacher by way of warning and/or advice and can include the following:

- Verbal reprimand
- Removal from the group (in class)
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Withdrawal from the particular lesson or peer group (for health and safety reasons).

If it is more serious or persistent, the Principal will be informed. Parents will be informed if deemed appropriate to ensure a holistic approach to addressing the behaviour. We encourage open communication with parents and early intervention with regard to any issues around behaviour. Communication with parents can be verbal or written. We also, when necessary, seek advice from NEPS and other professionals (H.S.E.) in regard to an individual child's behaviour and appropriate behaviour management.

6. Suspension / Expulsion:

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.
(Ref: NEWB Guidelines for Codes of Behaviour p.71)

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

Where expulsion is considered, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

(Ref: NEWB Guidelines for Codes of Behaviour p.71)

Before serious sanctions such as 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 Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act. (With regard to suspension the Principal shall inform the Education Welfare Officer, by notice in writing, when a student is suspended from a recognized school for a period of not less than 6 days. (sections 21 (4) a).

Appeals

Under section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and 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 one school year.

All schools in Ireland must abide by the procedures for suspension and expulsion as laid down in the National Education Welfare Guidelines and in accordance with the Education Welfare Act 2008.

7. Keeping records:

- Teachers keep a record of behaviour of pupils in an incident book in class.

- Class teachers will maintain a record of any incidents on yard in the yard duty book located in the staffroom. Serious incidents will be recorded by the Principal in an Incident Book kept in the office.
- All records relating to individual pupils are kept in secure files.

8. Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school

Children must provide written notification of absences and reason for the absence. If the number of days of absences reaches more than 20, the standard form from the Tusla (Formerly NEWB) will be used and submitted to same. (Form may be downloaded from Tusla website).

9. Reference to other Policies

Other school plans and policies that support the Code of Behaviour are:

- SPHE
- Anti-bullying
- Enrolment
- Record keeping
- Supervision
- Homework
- Health & Safety
- Special Educational Needs

Success Criteria

The success of this policy will be effective:

- When positive behaviours are observed in classrooms, playground and school environment.
- When practices and procedures listed in this policy are consistently implemented by teachers.
- When there is positive feedback from parents, teachers and pupils that good positive behaviour is observed throughout the school.

Roles and Responsibility:

- The Deputy Principal has responsibility for annually reviewing this policy.
- It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to help review aspects of the policy from time to time.
- School staff are made aware of this policy and will implement it.
- The teachers will discuss this policy with their class. A set of Class Rules will be devised. The Deputy Principal will monitor this.
- The Principal will provide new parents of children in the school with a hard copy of the Code of Behaviour. In addition, at the beginning of each school year, the principal will draw every parent's attention to the Code which can be found on the school's website.

Ratification & Communication

This policy was ratified by the BOM in: October 2008

This policy was reviewed by the BOM on: 23rd March 2010

This policy was reviewed by the BOM on: 15th June 2016

Signed : _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Reference Section

- Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008
- Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2007 - provides for certain changes in the hearing of Appeals under S29 of the Education Act, 1998
- Education (Welfare) Act, 2000
- Education Act, 1998
- Circular 22/02 Appeals Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998. (DES website).
- Department of Education and Science Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post Primary Schools (1993) available on DES website
- Report to the Minister of Education Niamh Breathnach, T.D. on Discipline in Schools. Maeve Martin, 1997. Ch. 4 p.56-61 Recommendations for Schools
- Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes
- Management Board Members' Handbook. Revised 2007. CPSMA: A suggested Code of Behaviour & Discipline for National Schools
- INTO (2004) Managing Challenging Behaviour: Guidelines for Teachers
- INTO (2006) Towards Positive Behaviour in Primary Schools
- INTO (1995) Enhancing Self Esteem
- The Education Act 1998. The Education Welfare Act 2000. Questions and Answers, INTO
- The Principal's Legal Handbook Oliver Mahon B.L. IVEA 2002 Ch. 2 School Discipline
- Responding to Bullying. First Steps for Teachers. The Cool School Programme. NE Health Board
- Investigating and Resolving Bullying in Schools. The Cool School Programme. NE Health Board
- Stop it! Steps to Address Bullying. Wexford Education Network. Wexford Area Partnership.
- Working Together – to promote positive behaviour in classrooms, CEDR, Mary Immaculate College of Education
- Achieving Positive Behaviour. A Practical Guide. Patricia Dwyer. Marino