

# Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa Junior School

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## CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

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Positive Behaviour Policy



## **Vision and Mission Statement**

Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa is a Catholic primary school where our Catholic ethos forms the cornerstone of school life.

The staff and principal seek at all times to create a school environment which promotes the self-esteem of everyone in an atmosphere of respect, care and trust.

We are committed to encouraging all pupils to develop to their full potential in a happy, secure working environment where a sense of order and a reasonable approach to discipline are promoted.

## **Aims**

The aims of a Code of Conduct/Positive Behaviour Policy are:

To help create a positive learning environment in which every pupil can benefit from school.

To encourage good standards of behaviour and enable the students to self-evaluate and enjoy the satisfaction of appropriate behaviour.

To help organise a large group so that school can operate smoothly for the benefit of all.

To care in a practical way for pupils, staff, the school and its environment.

## **Promoting a Happy School**

A whole school approach is required to encourage high standards of behaviour in an orderly atmosphere for learning in school. Teachers explain the Code of Conduct/Positive Behaviour Policy to the pupils on a regular basis, teaching them the importance of respect for self and others. This creates sound relationships among teachers and pupils and leads to effective teaching and learning. We hold a “Friendship Week” early in the year to encourage positive friendly behaviour.

## **Responsibility of Adults**

All of the adults encountered by the children at school have the duty to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other as their behaviour sets an example and influences the children.

## **Roles & Responsibilities of all Staff, Members of the Board of Management and Visitors**

- Show courtesy towards each other, pupils and parents
- Communicate in a positive and appropriate manner
- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment

- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all

### **Roles & Responsibilities of Parents**

- Be courteous towards pupils, staff and other parents
- Equip pupils with appropriate school materials, a healthy lunch and full uniform
- Respect school property and encourage their children to do likewise
- Label pupils' clothes and other items of property
- Make an appointment through the school office to meet with the Principal
- Refrain from bringing family pets/dogs onto school premises (even on a lead)
- Supervise their young children on school premises when dropping off or collecting another child or children

### **Codes of Conduct/Positive Behaviour Policies**

At all times we endeavour to adopt a positive approach to behaviour. Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, taking into consideration the age of the pupils and the uniqueness of each child.

1. *Behaviour in Class*
2. *Behaviour in the Playground*
3. *Behaviour in the School Environment*
4. *Behaviour on School Trips/Outings*
5. *Attendance at School*
6. *Homework*
7. *School Uniform*

#### **1. Behaviour in Class**

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children. These reflect and support the school rules, but are presented in a way that the children can relate to them easily. They will be positive in nature, kept to a minimum and will deal with issues regarding health, safety and welfare of the school community. They will be based on the following and parents will be provided with the list of rules specific to their child's class early in the first term.

- Pupils are expected to show courtesy and respect for others and the property of others at all times.

- Pupils are expected to respect the right of other pupils to learn and so avoid unnecessary disruption in class.
- Pupils are expected to have respect for teachers and follow instructions from them.
- Pupils will go to and from their classroom in an orderly manner.
- Running is not allowed at any time in the classrooms, corridors nor on the stairs.

## 2. Behaviour in the Playground

There are designated play areas for each year group, each of which will be supervised by a teacher. Special Needs Assistants will also be on duty during yard time. Some of the Second Class children also help out as yard buddies in the Junior Infant yard, the Senior Infant yard, First Class yard and Loughcrew.

When the weather conditions do not allow for outdoor play, children remain in their classrooms. They play with toys, board games or engage in other activities as designated by the class teacher. The teachers and SNAs on duty walk between the classrooms on each corridor. Yard buddies are assigned to the different classrooms.

- Pupils are expected to show courtesy and respect for others at all times.
- Pupils must remain in their designated area and are only permitted to leave the school yard with the teacher's permission.
- Rough play and bullying (both verbal and physical) are not permitted.
- Pupils are forbidden to climb school walls or fences.
- Bad language will not be tolerated.
- Pupils are expected to obey signals at the end of break.
- Toys, trading cards, Gameboys, iPods etc. are not permitted in school.

Monitoring of behaviours on yard, positive and negative, is conducted daily and a written record kept on file in the principal's office. The principal will speak to children individually in relation to unacceptable behaviour on yard. Parents will be contacted by class teacher/principal if there appears to be little/no improvement with a view to developing an Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP).

## 3. Behaviour in the School Environment

- Pupils are expected to show courtesy and respect for others at all times.
- Pupils are expected to move about the school in an orderly manner.
- Pupils are expected to show respect for school property.
- Running is not permitted in the corridors nor on the stairs.

#### 4. Behaviour on School Trips/Outings

School tours and outings present particular challenges for the school. As well as the normal standard of behaviour expected from all our pupils the following should also be noted.

- Permission slips must be returned to the class teacher, completed and signed by parents/guardians before their child can take part in a school trip/outing.
- Pupils must wear their school uniform on all school tours and outings.
- Pupils must obey the instructions of teachers, drivers, tour guides or any other person designated to be in charge of them during the school outing.
- Pupils are not permitted to leave the group.

#### 5. Attendance at School

- Pupils are required to be regular in their school attendance.
- All absences must be explained to the class teacher in writing. The Principal is required by law to report absenteeism which has reached 20 days to the National Educational Welfare Board.
- As a positive strategy to improve attendance, parents/guardians will be notified in writing when their child has missed school for 15 days.
- Pupils are expected to be on time for school each day and, in the event of late arrival, bring a note to the class teacher.
- Parents are reminded that there is no supervision on the school grounds before 09.00 and after 13.40 for Infants; 14.40 for First and Second classes. Parents are responsible for their children at these times.
- Pupils are not permitted to leave the school premises for any reason during the school day, unless collected by a parent or guardian. The collecting adult must sign the child out at the office.

#### 6. Homework

- Homework is set for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.
- Pupils are expected to complete it neatly and to the best of their ability.
- Parents/Guardians are required to make sure that all homework, both written and oral is completed to a high standard.
- If for some reason homework cannot be completed then a signed note must be sent to the class teacher.
- Time to be spent: 10 minutes for Junior & Senior Infants, 20 minutes for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class.

#### 7. School Uniform

- Pupils are expected to wear the uniform to school each day.
- Tracksuits and runners are essential for Physical Education (PE).

- Jewellery, apart from watches and small stud earrings, is not permitted in school.

### **Reward Systems**

In Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa we adopt a positive approach to behaviour. Each child is unique with his or her own strengths and abilities. We cherish all our pupils and endeavour to help each of them grow and mature both socially and academically. All children deserve encouragement and recognition of good efforts. We have many rewards in place for appropriate behaviour. These include:

- ✓ A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- ✓ Praise in front of a group or class.
- ✓ Merit sticker or stamp.
- ✓ Written comment in copybook or on worksheet.
- ✓ A visit to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation.
- ✓ Written note or phone call to parents/guardians.
- ✓ Group of the week.
- ✓ Golden time.
- ✓ Certificate to recognise effort made or work accomplished.

### **Inappropriate Behaviour**

Parents will be kept informed by the Class Teacher of any problems their child may be experiencing in their work or general behaviour. The Class Teacher will also discuss any problems of a serious nature with the Principal. The following are some examples of inappropriate behaviour. Other examples could arise.

#### **Minor Inappropriate Behaviours**

Incomplete homework without a written explanation from parents, rudeness, interfering with others, taking items without permission, not paying attention, shouting out in class, not respecting turn-taking, not wearing uniform, swinging on chairs, running in the classroom or in the corridor.

#### **Serious Inappropriate Behaviours**

Repeated incidences of minor inappropriate behaviours, fighting, bullying, bad language, bad attitude, name-calling, exclusion of others, rough behaviour, lack of respect for others, racist/discriminatory comments, hitting, back-talking, belittling or offensive personal comments, damaging school property or the property of others, stealing, leaving the school premises or the school yard without permission, climbing on the sculpture at the front of the building or climbing on fences/walls.

#### **Gross Inappropriate Behaviour**

This is behaviour which has a serious detrimental effect on the safe operation of the school. Examples include:

- Serious damage to school property
- Striking a member of staff
- Serious physical violence which threatens the safety of others

A single incident of gross inappropriate behaviour may be grounds for suspension.

### **Sanctions/ Consequences for Inappropriate Behaviour**

- The use of sanctions or consequences should be characterised by certain features:
- It must be clear why the sanction is being imposed.
- The sanction must relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.
- It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions.
- It should be the behaviour rather than the pupil that is the focus.

The following steps will be taken when the pupils behave inappropriately. They are listed in order of severity with one being for a minor offence and ten for gross misbehaviour. The list is by no means exhaustive. The aim of any sanction is to prevent a reoccurrence of the behaviour and where necessary the pupil will be assisted in devising strategies to improve his or her performance. The particular stage used will depend on the seriousness of the misbehaviour.

1. Reasoning with the pupil and advising on how to improve
2. Reprimand or warning
3. Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
4. Time out or in another class
5. Loss of privileges
6. Teacher communicates with parents/guardians: solutions and strategies outlined (An Individual Behaviour Plan may be drawn up at this stage)
7. Referral to the Principal
8. Exclusion from school outings
9. Temporary suspension
10. Expulsion

Communication with parents/guardians through letters, phone calls or meetings will occur where necessary so that they are involved at an early stage rather than as a last resort.

### **Suspension**

While the Board of Management has the authority to suspend, they have delegated this authority to the Principal together with either the Chairperson of the Board of Management or the Deputy Principal for suspensions of periods of up to three days.

**In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person. Fair procedures will still apply.**

#### **Procedures in respect of suspension (as per pages 70-77 of the NEWB Guidelines)**

- Investigation of the facts to confirm that the misbehaviour warrants suspension.
- Parents will be informed by phone or in writing about the seriousness of the matter.
- Parents will be given an opportunity to respond.

#### **Implementing the Suspension**

The Principal will notify the parents in writing of the decision to suspend. 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 study programme to be followed.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents.
- The provision for appeal to the Board of Management.
- The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science.

#### **Records and Reports**

Formal written records will be kept of:

- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held).
- The decision-making process.
- The decision and the rationale for the decision.
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

#### **Expulsion**

The expulsion of a student is a very serious step and will only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. A preliminary assessment of the facts confirming that the misbehaviour warrants expulsion will be carried out.



**Procedures in respect of Expulsion (as per pages 80-87 of the NEWB Guidelines)**

- A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal. The parents will be informed about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion. The parents will be given every opportunity to respond before a decision is made.
- The Principal will make 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.  
Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Officer in writing of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. The intention to expel a student does not take effect until 20 school days have elapsed after the NEWB have received written notification. The NEWB should be notified using a **Notice of Intention to Expel** form which is available on [www.schoolreturn.ie](http://www.schoolreturn.ie) or from their helpline (1890 363666). The completed form should be sent to School Return Section, National Educational Welfare Board, 16-22 Green St, Dublin 7.
- Consultations arranged by the Educational Officer.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

**Appeals**

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 section 29).

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on .....

Signed: .....

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date.....

Signed:.....

Principal

Date: .....