



Willow Park Junior School Park

Code of Behaviour Policy

September 2025

A Code that reflects our Ethos as a Spiritan School

Our aim in Willow Park Junior School is to generate and maintain an inclusive climate of learning within which every pupil is enabled to develop and fulfil his own unique potential. Care, courtesy and tolerance are at the heart of our Spiritan ethos.

'*Fides et Robur*' (Faith and Strength) is our motto and central to the Willow Park Junior School ethos. Our Catholic centrality fosters a tolerant climate within our school which allows pupils to develop in a caring and secure environment. Providing a stimulating education within a moral and supportive community requires a proactive and preventative approach towards bullying. The active essence of our Spiritan ethos promotes the positive reinforcement of civil and courteous behaviour.

1. Aims

The aims of the Code of Behaviour of Willow Park Junior School are:

- 1.1 To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
- 1.2 To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
- 1.3 To develop pupils' self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
- 1.4 To promote a Catholic ethos and to foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others.
- 1.5 To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- 1.6 To engender proper behaviour when engaged in or attending sporting activities.
- 1.7 To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- 1.8 To enable teachers to teach without disruption.
- 1.9 To support parents in raising their children to become Catholic, courteous, and civil young men.

2. Implementation

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Rules will be kept to a minimum, emphasising positive behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties persist, parents will be contacted.

3. General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour

- 3.1. Pupils are expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable.
- 3.2. Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.

3.3. Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.

3.4. Pupils are expected to follow a teacher's instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to complete assignments with care.

3.5. Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed, stating the reason for absence.

3.6. Pupils are expected to have the proper attire for school and sporting activities

Bullying

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

The definition of bullying behaviour includes, but is not limited to, the following types of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying and
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic and transphobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

The most common forms of bullying are name-calling, intimidation, isolation, exclusion, aggressive physical contact, taunting and cyber-bullying. Bullying (of any kind) will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to cooperate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and Cyber-bullying Policy.

Affirming Positive Behaviour (see *Guidelines for promoting positive Behaviour, Appendix 2*)

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and Willow Park Junior School places a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on consequences or sanctions. Families play a key role in influencing their child's behaviour. A courteous, structured and caring home is central to a child's civilized behaviour both in the home, at school and elsewhere. Responsible behaviour needs to be constantly affirmed.

Strategies/Incentives

Strategies may involve:

- ✓ A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- ✓ A comment on a child's exercise book/homework journal /record book.
- ✓ A visit to another class or to the Dean for commendation.
- ✓ Praise in front of class group/team.
- ✓ Individual class merit awards, points awards or advancement on positive behaviour charts (as designated by the class teacher).
- ✓ Delegating special responsibility or privileges.
- ✓ Written or verbal communication with parent/s.

4. Discouraging misbehaviour

It is important to recognise that all behaviours happen for a reason and that all actions have consequences. Through understanding the reasons for certain behaviours and allowing children to realise, accept and learn from the consequences of their actions, positive habits can form.

Consequences 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 (Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a curricular area, except on the grounds of Health and Safety).
- Prescribing extra work.
- Doing communal/social work within school.
- Loss of privileges.
- Detention during break-time.
- Teacher communicating with parents.
- Referral to the relevant Dean.
- Dean communicating with parents.
- Referral to Principal.
- Principal communicating with parents.
- 'Time' for reflection and family-discussion.
- Exclusion from school.

Upon completion of agreed consequences, teachers and parents are expected to discuss next steps with the child. This conversation should allow the child understand not only why their behaviour was inappropriate but, crucially, what they have learnt and how they can improve their behaviour in future.

Developing Codes of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (NEWB, 2008) has informed this Code of Behaviour. These Guidelines acknowledge a child's right to education, but also the occasional need for a school to suspend or expel pupils where serious misbehaviour occurs.

5. Fair Procedures

5.1. In the investigation of alleged misbehaviour, and in decision making around what, if any consequence should be imposed, it should be clear that fair procedures are adopted. These fair procedures have two essential parts:

- The right to be heard; and
- The right to impartiality.

- 5.2. The principles of fair procedure always apply, but the degree of formality required will depend on the gravity of the alleged misbehaviour and the seriousness of the possible consequence. Procedures in Willow Park Junior School Park must be fair and be seen to be fair. The need for confidentiality and timeliness in dealing with suspension or expulsion is of the essence.
- 5.3. Before serious consequences such as detention, time for reflection, 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 during school-time (break) for more than two consecutive days, the parents or guardians will be notified by the class-teacher or relevant Dean.
- 5.4. Communication with parents may be verbal, by email or in person depending on the circumstances.
- 5.5. For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, time for reflection and family discussion or (more seriously) 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.
- 5.6. 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.
- 5.7. 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, other interventions used, their outcomes and any relevant medical information.
- 5.8. 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.
- 5.9. Suspension- the Willow Park Junior School Park Board of Management has the authority to suspend. Where this authority is delegated to the principal it should be done formally and in writing. Suspension will always be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally other interventions will have been tried before suspension and the school staff should have reviewed why these interventions have not worked. However, a single incident of misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

A decision to suspend a pupil requires that:

- The pupil and parents are informed of the complaint; and
- Parents and pupils are given an opportunity to respond.

A student will not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances, where the Principal considers that it is warranted to achieve a particular objective. Where a suspension longer than three days is being proposed by the Principal, the matter will be referred to the Board. Pupils will not be suspended for an indefinite period.

- 6.10 The Principal will notify the parents and the pupil of a decision to suspend in writing. Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil re-instated 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.

- **Expulsion** - The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil. Expulsion will be proportionate to the pupil's behaviour and will only be invoked in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and will be satisfied that it has exhausted all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour. There may exceptional circumstances where the Board forms the opinion that the pupil should be expelled for a first offence, e.g. actual violence or physical assault.

Decisions to expel will follow fair procedures including:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing (including *informing the Education Welfare Board of its opinion -the student cannot be expelled before the passage of 20 days from the date that the NEWB receives this written notification*)
5. *Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.*
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

Decisions to expel are subject to appeal.

6. School Rules

School rules (*See Appendix 1*) 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.

7. Before/After School

Parents are reminded that the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening time of 8.30 a.m. or after the official closing time of

2.00 p.m. -Junior Infants

2.20 pm - Senior Infants

2.20pm. – 1st Form

2.20pm - 2nd Form

2.40 p.m. – 3rd Form

2.40 p.m. – 4th Form

3.00 p.m. – 5th Form

3.00 p.m. – 6th Form

Where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management. Pupils involved in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with the school behaviour policy during these times.

The School provides a 'staff presence' in the school yard from 7.45am (Monday-Friday) during term-time to oversee the 'drop-off' of children.

The Board of Management reserves the right to amend the above times, where necessary.

8. Board of Management's Responsibilities

- Provide a comfortable, safe and stimulating environment.
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- Ratify the code.
- Review the code.

9. Principal's Responsibilities

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school community.
- Arrange for review of the Code, as required.

10. Teachers' Responsibilities

- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.
- Abide by the Staff Professional Ethics document as outlined in the Staff handbook.
- Create a safe learning environment for each pupil.
- Recognise and affirm good work.
- Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with inappropriate behaviour.
- Keep a record of instances of serious behaviours or repeated instances of inappropriate behaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

11. Pupils' Responsibilities

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow school and class rules.

12. Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
- Ensure that children attend 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.

- All communications between parents and teachers should be respectful.

13. Code Review

This Code of Behaviour will be reviewed in Spring 2028 and on a three yearly basis thereafter (or sooner if deemed necessary).

Ratified by Board of Management on _____ (Date) _____

Signed _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Appendix 1 - Willow Park Junior School

Basic school rules

The following school rules promote a positive attitude to everyday life in school. They endeavour to create a civilised and responsible climate for learning and living together in school.

General Rules

1. Be prepared.

Arrive at school every day full school uniform with your schoolbag organised. Books, homework, lunch and sports gear should be packed in advance.

2. Be kind and courteous.

Show kindness to your classmates and teachers, through your actions and words. Willow Park Junior School is a Spiritan school where good manners are expected and where we learn to care for others. Play fairly and safely during break times.

3. Be curious and get involved

Allow yourself to be open to the many opportunities Willow Park Junior School Park has to offer. Challenge yourself in the classroom and try new extra-curricular activities. Learning new skills and committing to new clubs will help you develop and grow.

4. Be respectful.

Show respect to others, as well as yourself. Respect your classroom, equipment and surroundings in the school. Property should not defaced or intentionally damages. Respect your uniform. Efforts should be made to understand the value of school clothing. When you wear the school crest you are a representative of Willow Park Junior School Park and your behaviour should reflect this, especially on the dart or during sporting events.

5. Be honest.

Honesty is highly valued in Willow Park Junior School Park. Always tell the truth, even if this is hard. If you are worried, talk to a teacher or trusted adult.

6. Do your best!

Whether you are in class, a music lesson, an extra-curricular activity or a sporting event, it is expected that you try your best.

Specific Rules

☑ **Break-time / Yard behaviour:** Pupils must **play safely** at all times. Anti-social, dangerous or hurtful behaviour is not allowed, (e.g. wrestling, headlocks, jockey -backs, bullying, intimidation, teasing, jeering, fighting, spitting, kicking, charging in groups, bad language, exclusion etc.). Property belonging to others (such as bikes or scooters in the bike shed) must not be damaged.

☑ **Mobile phones** Willow Park Junior School Park is a smartphone and smart device free zone. They are not allowed on campus.

☑ **Pupils may not leave the school campus at any time** during the school day without the express knowledge of the class teacher, the Office and the parents of the child.

☑ All clothes should have clear name-tags and are the responsibility of the individual pupil.

☑ Willow Park Junior School promotes a 'healthy food' policy and expects all parents to provide a nutritious lunch box for their son/sons. We ask Parents to make sure food is 'nut-free' as a number of Willow Park Junior School pupils have nut allergies.

The above rules are reviewed on a regular basis. They are not exhaustive. Rather, allied to the vigilance and common-sense of Staff, pupils and parents, their implementation will make Willow Park Junior School Park Junior School Junior a civilised and safe school for all of us.

Failure to abide by the rules will have inevitable consequences and will be addressed by the relevant authorities.

C McAleer, Principal

Appendix 2

Guidelines for Promoting Positive Behaviour in Willow Park Junior School

The Mission of Willow Park Junior School Park Junior School Park Junior School is to:

- *Create an environment that is conducive to learning and fosters the development of pupils in a caring, courteous and Christian manner.*
- *Provide an environment in which each pupil can develop his human potential.*
- *Deliver a broad based curriculum that includes a wide and varied range of extracurricular activities.*
- *Foster an environment that nurtures Faith; that gives pupils an informed understanding of the Catholic faith and motivates them to live their lives in accordance with the values of the Gospel.*
- *Provide enriching learning experience for the whole school community.*
- *Promote parental collaboration in the educational programme of the school.*

The most effective methodology that teachers develop when attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place. To this end, many schools have developed strategies to promote positive behaviour. This is based on the assumption that all behaviour (negative and positive) is learned and, therefore, that acceptable behaviour can be learned. It is also predicated on the belief that behaviour is contextual, so children can be taught to behave in a certain way in the school context. Acceptable behaviour is then reinforced in a school and classroom climate which is supportive of positive behaviour. Promoting positive behaviour is not simply a way of getting children to behave well at school. It should also encourage children to be 'good citizens' at school, out of school and throughout their lives. Promoting positive behaviour encourages children: to treat others with respect, kindness, courtesy and consideration.

To treat belongings and property with respect.

To be aware of the consequences of their actions upon themselves and upon others.

To take responsibility for their own actions.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

Practical ways to create a positive culture

- Personal acknowledgement
- Moments of sincere, private verbal praise
- More reflective comments, written and verbal
- Catching students doing the right thing
- Subtle, discreet praise
- Class display that reflects success
- Agreed rewards structure, class rewards

Using Praise

- Praise should be appropriate to the circumstances and age.
- Praise should be timely.
- Praise should be perceived by the receiver as sincere.
- Praise should be clearly linked to the reason it is given.
- Praise should be dignified and respectful.
- Praise can be public or private.
- Gratuitous praise should be avoided.
- Praise must be plausible and specific or it will appear false.
- Spoken praise can be accompanied by other forms of rewards.
- Praise should be an expected and enjoyed part of the life of the class.

- Rewards may be provided where targets have been met (individual and group).
- Rewards may be extrinsic – tangibles, tokens, opportunities.
- Rewards may be intrinsic – status, recognition, acknowledgement, validation.
- Praise and rewards should be understood and valued by all.

Peter M. C. P. C.

Chairperson.

10/11/2025