

Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement

The preceding policy has been drafted/updated by the Principal, Deputy Principal, members of the teaching staff, parents and B.O.M. of Holy Family N.S. in April 2005. This policy was formulated in accordance with The Education Welfare Act 2000 and in accordance with Circular 20/90 of The Department of Education and Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools of the Republic of Ireland especially section 3. The policy was updated to reflect the NEWB "Guidelines for Schools - Developing a Code of Behaviour"

Rationale

In devising this code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. Our aim is to encourage and create an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning

Relationship to the Characteristic Ethos and Spirit of the School

Holy Family NS is Catholic Primary School. It was founded by the Marist Order and is part of the Diocese of Achonry. In keeping with our ethos in Holy Family N.S. all children are cherished equally. The school seeks to create a happy, tolerant, safe environment in which each child is encouraged to strive towards his/her unique potential. The code offers a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are utilised by the staff.

Our expectations about standards of behaviour:

Standards should reflect the following values:

- A respect for self and others
- Kindness and a willingness to help others
- Courtesy and good manners
- Fairness towards others
- Readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- Forgiveness

In Holy Family NS we expect the following commitments from children towards their own learning and the learning of others

- Attending school regularly and punctually (School starts at 9.20 and finishes at 2pm for infant classes and 3pm for all other pupils)
When a child is absent a written note should be sent to the class teacher explaining the absence.
- Children should come to school prepared for work - with the books and materials for learning.
During class time children should undertake to do the work allocated to them and endeavour to work to the best of their ability.
- Mobile phones and other digital devices should not be brought to school.
- Holy Family NS has a school uniform. Children should wear the full school uniform every day and the school tracksuit on PE days.
Wearing of jewellery is not encouraged.
- Doing one's best in class to add to a learning environment that is conducive to teaching and learning
- Children should take responsibility for their own work

Homework should be completed every night.

- Children and parents should work to support the school by keeping class and school rules.
- Children should help to create a safe and positive environment through their behaviour and attitude towards others

Children should walk in the school building. They should be able to remain seated in class unless directed by staff.

Children must remain on the school premises during school hours. Children should not go outside the school boundaries for their own safety.

- Children should be respectful towards staff
- Children should show respect towards other children and be respectful of their learning
- Children should use respectful language in the school environment.
- School lunches are provided in Holy Family NS to encourage and foster Healthy Eating. Children bringing their own lunches should bring healthy food. Fizzy drinks, chewing gum and junk food should not be brought to school.
- In Holy Family NS we follow the curriculum guidelines as devised by the Department of Education and Science. Children are expected to engage and participate in the curricular activities
- To enhance learning we may provide opportunities to engage in activities to compliment the curriculum. Children are expected to participate in these activities

In Class

Pupils should:

- Have all necessary books and materials
- Remain seated in class and while eating lunch
- Adhere to class and school rules
- Do their homework carefully and completely
- Pupils should do their best in school by listening carefully and working as hard as they can

Recreation

Pupils should

- Follow all instructions given by teacher on supervision duty
- Stay in the allocated yard area at all time (unless they have permission to be in another area of the yard)
- Be kind and respectful to staff and fellow pupils by being mannerly and polite, by taking turns and remaining orderly in class line.

Children have a right to enjoy a safe playtime and to go home safely from school. Dangerous or threatening behaviour is not acceptable. This type of behaviour should be reported to the class teacher or teacher on yard.

While setting these standards of good behaviour, we recognise the following types of behaviour that are not acceptable

- Behaviour that is hurtful towards others
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Refusing to do work or activities
- Using inappropriate and hurtful language
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft

Standards are learning goals. Class rules help staff to discuss and implement standards.

Adults in the school help children to understand standards by modelling and discussing standards.

Parents are also asked to support the school's Code of Behaviour by modelling appropriate behaviour and encouraging children to support the Code.

Parents should sign homework and any notes sent home from school.

If a parent wants to meet with a teacher or the principal they should arrange an appointment through the school office - being mindful of a teacher's responsibility to their class and/or timetable.

Support staff may work with Children with extra needs to help them understand the behaviours that are expected of them.

The schools Code of Behaviour pertains to all school activities and trips.

Strategies to affirm and promote good behaviour

Teachers and staff will use a wide range of strategies to produce good behaviour at class and school level.

- Classroom rules and routines to give clear guidelines of acceptable behaviour
- Positive interactions between teachers and students
- Affirmation of good behaviour through use of praise, stickers, certificates and treats.
- Weekly assembly to reflect on positive elements of school and class life and where necessary to reinforce and remind children of rules.
- School certificates to promote good behaviour and attendance.
- School medals to encourage good attendance
- School notice board displaying Student of Week photos.
- Trips and activities to encourage participation and to encourage appropriate behaviour.
- Circle time and Restorative Practice Techniques.
- Given responsibilities - jobs within the class and in the school
- Membership of committees and teams
- SPHE curriculum

Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour

The BOM takes responsibility for maintaining classroom and school environment which is supportive of children's learning and ensures continuity of curriculum.

The BOM will intervene when children's behaviour does not meet the standards expected in the school.

Whole School Strategies towards dealing with Inappropriate Behaviour

Communication with home -

A template letter has been devised to communicate with parents when a child:

- Has to be removed from the yard for inappropriate behaviour
- Has to be removed from the class group due to inappropriate behaviour
- Has not completed homework on a regular basis
- IS not wearing the school uniform on a regular basis

Staff may alternatively meet and talk with a parent re inappropriate behaviour and/or phone the parents to discuss a relevant issue.

Parents are asked to sign these letters and return them to the school. Parents should support the schools standards of good behaviour by encouraging improvement in behaviour with their child.

Recording of Information

Letters re inappropriate behaviour will be kept in the child's school file

Teachers are encouraged to record repetitive types of inappropriate behaviour.

The principal may record records of interventions with pupils and behaviour plans/records used

When behaviour continues to interrupt learning a behaviour record may be kept

The use of Sanctions

Sanctions are used to deter a child from using inappropriate behaviour

Types of sanctions which may be used in the school are:

- Verbal Reprimand
- Removal from the group within the class (seating arrangements)
- Withdrawal of privileges (this can include trips, events and tours)
- Withdrawal from the particular class or peer group
- Communication with home
- Referral to the Principal
- Formal report to the BOM
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Procedures for Suspension and Expulsion are in keeping with the Code of Behaviour Guidelines devised by NEWB

The BOM has the authority to suspend a child when the child's behaviour when the child's behaviour is causing concern.

In Holy Family NS the BOM allows the principal responsibility to suspend a child. The principal will communicate with the Chairperson of the BOM about suspensions and suspensions will also be reported to the BOM

The decision to suspend a child will be considered when

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

It should be noted that a single serious incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

Procedures

- The principal and/or the chairperson will communicate with the parent to discuss the reason for suspension
- Communication will generally be done in person or on the phone
- A letter stating the reason for the suspension will be given to the parent. The letter will also state the duration of the suspension
- Suspension will generally not be longer than 3 days but the BOM may authorise the principal to suspend a child for up to 5 days.
- Suspensions of over 20 days in the school year may be subject to appeal under Section 20 of the Education Welfare Act.

Expulsion

Definition of Expulsion

A student is expelled from a school when the BOM makes a decision to permanently exclude the child from the school having complied with the provisions of Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000

(Developing a Code of Behaviour for Schools, NEWB)

Authority to Expel

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the BOM.

Expulsion will be an appropriate response to the child's behaviour. This is a serious step and will be taken by the BOM in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.

The decision to expel is a serious decision and will be considered when

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

There may be certain circumstances when the BOM forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence. These types of behaviour could include:

- A serious threat of violence against another student or staff member
- Actual physical violence or physical assault
- Supplying illegal substances to other students
- Sexual assault

Procedures adopted

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal
- Informing the student and the parent of details of the students alleged misbehaviour, that it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion
- A recommendation to the BOM by the principal.
Inform the parents that the BOM will be asked to consider expulsion. Records and reports of behaviour to the BOM and parents.
- Consideration by the BOM of the recommendation of the principal and review of the documentation
- The BOM calls a hearing.
- BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing
- Consultation with the Education Welfare Officer. If the BOM decides that expulsion is the appropriate sanction the BOM will inform the Education Welfare Officer, in writing, of the decision to expel. The student cannot be expelled until 20 days after the EWO receives the written notification. The BOM will also inform the parent of its decision and communication with EWO.
- Pending consultation with the EWO the BOM must take good steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of staff and pupils is secured. The BOM may consider it appropriate to suspend the student during this time. The suspension will be considered when the presence of the student at this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others or represent a threat to safety of the other students or staff.
- Following the 20 days period and if the BOM remains of the view that the child should be expelled formal confirmation of the decision to expel should be communicated to the parents. The standard form on which to appeal should also be given to the parents. A formal record should be made of the decision to expel the student.

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)

Other Related Policies

- Enrolment
- Anti Bullying
- Substance Misuse
- SPHE
- RSE
- Healthy Eating
- Child Safeguarding Statement

Monitoring/Evaluating/Review

The staff will revisit the Code of Behaviour annually to ensure the Code reflects the school's current needs. The staff will present any revisions to the Code to the Board of Management for ratification.

The Code will be communicated to parents at enrolment and through the website.

Signature of Chairperson: Fr Martin Jennings

Signature of Principal: Bernadette Ryan

