

# **Scoil Angela Ursuline Primary School**

## **Thurles**

### **Code of Behaviour**

#### **Introductory Statement:**

The Code of Behaviour has been reviewed and amended by the staff of Scoil Angela, Ursuline Primary School, Thurles in consultation with the members of the Board of Management, and the parents committee. This policy was reviewed in light of new Admissions Policy guidelines, effective from 2020.

#### **Rationale:**

The Board of Management of Scoil Angela Ursuline Primary School decided to review the Code of Behaviour to ensure that it is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB , 2008

It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) which refers to the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in Section 23(2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:

- The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
- The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
- The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
- The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student;
- The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

#### **Relationship to Characteristic Ethos:**

Scoil Angela Ursuline Primary School is a Catholic school with a Catholic ethos. However, it also has due recognition for all other religions. It seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are nurtured and valued. The school climate and atmosphere are created by the actions and behaviour of everyone in the school. The behaviour of adults in a child's life, including parents and school staff, is a significant influence on how a child acts. The code will be most effective where there is a high level of transparency and co-operation between staff, parents and pupils. A clear understanding among all the partners of the standards of behaviour required and the procedures to be adopted where there are breaches of the code also helps ensure a harmonious environment where all can work effectively.

## **Aims :**

In devising this code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of our school. The aim is to create an ordered and orderly environment in which pupils can, through developing self-discipline, feel secure and make progress in all aspects of their development. Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach regarding behaviour in the school and the over-riding aims will be –

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement;
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline;
- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on kindness, respect, consideration and tolerance of others;
- To enhance the learning environment and to allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development;
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community;
- To assist the parents and children in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the Code 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.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.

## **Guidelines for Behaviour in the School:**

It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, parents and pupils. Every effort will be made to ensure that the code of behaviour is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner. The limits of behaviour are clearly defined and children become familiar with the consequences of behaviour beyond these limits. The over-riding principle governing this code is **show respect expect respect**.

## **Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Behaviour:**

The Board of Management and the Principal have overall responsibility for the implementation and on-going monitoring of this policy. However, all staff members have responsibility for their own classes and for the general school population when on yard duty or on any organised out-of-school activity. Parents or other members of the school community may make comments or suggestions through their representatives on the Board of Management or directly to the Principal. The school values the support and co-operation of parents in the promotion of this strategy. It is the policy of this school to actively promote good behaviour.

Teachers will use various strategies to promote good behaviour including star charts, tokens, stickers, dojo points, and extra responsibilities in class and in the school. Shout outs for good behaviour are always welcome in our Junior and Senior assemblies.

The implementation of the code will always form part of the first staff meeting held each September. This ensures that new members of staff become familiar with practices within the school. A copy of the code is available to both parents and teachers in the school office. The child friendly copy (noting the standards of behaviour that are expected) is on the school website and in the Homework Diary.

The code will be forwarded to all parents who are offered a place for their child in this school. As part of the enrolment process, parents will be required to confirm that the Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the code by their child.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

#### **Board of Management:**

##### **The Board of Management is expected to:**

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment;
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code;
- Ratify the code;
- Ensure the code is communicated to the whole school community.

#### **The Principal:**

##### **The Principal is expected to:**

- Promote a positive climate in the school
- Ensure that the code of behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Arrange for a review of the code as required.

#### **Staff:**

##### **Staff can expect to:**

- be treated with respect
- teach in a well maintained physical environment relatively free from disruption;
- get support and co-operation from colleagues and parents in order to achieve the school's aims and objectives;
- be listened to and participate in decision making which affects their own work and that of the school in general;
- work in an atmosphere that encourages professional development;
- get support and professional advice from the Board of Management, Department of Education and Skills, the National Education Welfare Board, the National Council for Special Education and the National Educational Psychological Services to help to cater for the psychological, emotional and physical needs of their pupils;

- have grievances dealt with according to agreed procedures as set out in the CPSMA (Catholic Primary School Manager's Association) handbook.

**Staff are expected to:**

- support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour;
- be aware of their duty of care;
- create a safe, welcoming atmosphere for their pupils;
- praise desirable behaviour;
- facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential;
- be courteous, consistent and fair;
- keep opportunities for disruption to a minimum;
- keep record of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour;
- provide support for colleagues.

**Parents:**

Parental support is vital for the promotion of positive behaviour and the maintenance of high standards of behaviour. Parents are required as a condition of enrolment to confirm their acceptance of the code and to support its implementation.

**Parents can expect to:**

- be treated with respect;
- have a safe and welcoming environment for their child;
- obtain recognition for individual differences among pupils having due regard for the resources that are available;
- have fair and consistent procedures applied to the school's dealings with pupils;
- receive progress reports in accordance with agreed school policy (Parent / Teacher meetings and end of year reports)
- receive information on school's policies and procedures.

**Parents are expected to:**

- ensure their children attend school regularly and on time and that they are collected from school on time;
- encourage their children to follow the school's Code of Behaviour;
- ensure their children wear the school uniform;
- ensure their children have the correct books and materials;
- read written communication received from the school and respond appropriately;
- report to the office if calling to the school during the day for any reason;
- make an appointment beforehand if they need to see a teacher;
- treat all members of the school community with respect;
- provide an explanation for all absenteeism ;
- inform class teacher of any change to collection procedure for their children;
- co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulty to others;

- communicate to the school problems which may affect their child's behaviour;
- attend meetings at the school if requested;
- help their children with their homework and ensure it is completed.

### **School Rules:**

In order to achieve a happy, healthy and safe working environment, where a sense of mutual respect is fostered, every pupil is expected to keep the rules of the school.

General school rules are discussed at Junior and Senior Assemblies and teachers may introduce other rules for their own classrooms.

- **Pupils:**
  - Please see Appendix 1(Standards of Behaviour expected)

### **System for acknowledging good behaviour, progress and effort:**

Good behaviour is praised in a number of ways.

#### **a) For Individuals, good behaviour may be acknowledged as follows:**

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval;
- A word of praise in front of group/class
- A mention to the principal;
- A comment/smiley/merit in the exercise book;
- A mention to parents(verbal or written);
- A treat e.g. if terms of a behaviour contract are fulfilled.
- Certificate of Achievement (Star of the Week, Writer of the Week, Reader of the Week)

#### **b) Group/Class:**

1. A Group/Class treat such as:

- Homework Pass
- Dojo Fun Day
- Time given to preferred activity
- Merit for all children in group/class
- A mention to the principal
- A mention to parents

## **Consequences of unacceptable behaviour:**

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 23, states that a school must outline “the measures that may be taken if a student fails to observe the standards of behaviour that the school has outlined”. Teachers will use their professional judgement and their knowledge of the child and the particular circumstances of the behaviour or incident in responding to unacceptable behaviour and in selecting an appropriate sanction. The sanction will be proportionate to the behaviour or incident in question. It may include:

1. Reprimand and Reasoning (making clear what behaviour was unacceptable);
2. Loss of privilege to fun activities
3. Referral to Principal/Deputy Principal
4. Communication with parent
5. Withdrawal from class temporarily to ‘time out’ area
6. Losses and damage caused must be made good in all cases;
8. Suspension/expulsion.

The nature and context of the unacceptable behaviour will determine the consequence used in response even minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour can be disruptive particularly if they are persistent. The purpose of a sanction is to help children learn that their unacceptable behaviour may have a negative effect on themselves, on others and on their learning. Sanctions aim to help them make better choices in the future.

## **Anti-Bullying**

Scoil Angela has a separate and comprehensive Bí Cinéalta Policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour. The policy fully complies with the requirements of Bí Cinéalta; Procedures to Prevent and address bullying behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary schools 2024.

Bullying is defined as targeted behaviour online or offline that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social, and /or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.

## **Procedures for notifying the school about absences:**

In accordance with the Education Welfare Act 2000, if a child is absent from school, Parents/ Guardians are expected to communicate the reasons for the non-attendance by recording absences on the school administration system, Aladdin. The school is obliged to report absences of more than twenty days to NEWB.

## **When and where will behaviour be subjected to the Code of Behaviour?**

Standards and rules in the Code of Behaviour will apply to all situations where the pupils are the responsibility of the school. This includes activities not within the school grounds.

### **Procedures for raising a concern or bringing a complaint about a behaviour matter.**

If a parent has a concern he/she should

- write a note to the teacher/phone the teacher
- arrange an appointment to meet with the teacher to discuss the issue
- arrange an appointment to meet with the principal if necessary

If a teacher has a concern he/she should

- Inform the Principal
- Write a note to the Parent outlining the behaviour
- Speak with the Parent in a phone call or a meeting

### **Policy and Procedures for Suspension:**

Suspension is defined as requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified limited period of school days. The Board of Management of Scoil Angela has delegated the authority to suspend a student, to the Principal, for suspensions of up to three days. Suspension will only be used where all other sanctions have failed, or in instances of very serious mis-behaviour.

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 misbehaviour may be grounds for suspension.

Teachers shall keep a written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour. Before resorting to Suspension, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Parents will be involved at an early stage, rather than a last resort. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

### **Immediate suspension**

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the health and safety of pupils and teachers, the Board has deferred responsibility to the Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

### **Further Suspensions**

Further suspensions will require Board of Management approval. This approval may be obtained at a regular meeting of the Board or at an emergency meeting at which the Chairperson and Principal have outlined for the Board the reasons why they feel it is necessary to impose a further suspension.

The Board of Management will normally place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. The Board will formally review any proposal to suspend the student where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1988.

### **Appeals**

The Board of Management will offer an opportunity to appeal a Principal's decision to suspend a student. In the case of decisions to suspend made by the Board of Management, an appeals process may be provided by the Patron.

### **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 (and pupil) 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 and will not have a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils. 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 in an extreme case e.g. where repeated incidents of serious misbehaviour interfere with the educational opportunities of fellow students or where there is a threat to the health and safety of either students or staff. Where expulsion is considered the school authorities will have tried a range of other interventions and will have formed the opinion that they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour. This sanction would be imposed under the terms of the Education Welfare Act (2000). Suspension/expulsion procedures are in accordance with the Education Act (1998).

### **Before/After School**

School gate opens at **8.35a.m.**

"Greeter" on duty at **8.45a.m.**

School doors open at **8.55a.m.**

School starts at **9.00.a.m.**

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils that arrive before the greeter is on duty @ **8.45a.m.**

School staff does not accept responsibility for pupils after the official closing time of **1.45p.m.(infants) 2.45p.m.(other classes)** except 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 school behaviour policy during these times.

## **Reference to other Policies**

Other school policies that have a bearing on the code of behaviour include

- SPHE plan, Bí Cinéalta, Admissions Policy, Tours Policy, ICT Policy, and Special Educational Needs Policy.

## **Success Criteria:**

This policy will be deemed to be successful when the following are observed:

- Positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.

**The code will be discussed at staff meetings and reviewed periodically.**

## **Ratification and Communication:**

Chairperson: Mrs. Catherine Reynolds

Updated:               October 2020

Reviewed:             October 2023