

Code of behaviour: Castletown Girls' School 14651U

Introductory Statement

This code of behaviour has been reviewed and amended by the staff, Board of Management and parents of Castletown Girls' National School in April 2021.

Rationale

The Board of Management of Castletown Girls' School decided to review the behaviour policy to ensure that it is in compliance with legal requirements and good practise as set out in *developing code 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's the code of behaviour shall specify:

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

The code of behaviour has been reviewed to ensure the safety of the entire school community at this particular time dealing with the Covid 19 pandemic.

Mission statement

Our school ethos reflects a safe and secure environment where children learn to be self confident and have a positive self-esteem. It aims to develop a sense of personal reasonability and help the children to understand their own personal humanity. It enables our pupils to develop and enhance the social skills of communication, co-operation and conflict resolution necessary for creating and maintaining supportive relationships both now and in the future. An understanding of healthy living, an ability to implement healthy behaviour and a willingness to participate in activities that promote and sustain health are essential parts of our philosophy. A child's sense of safety and an ability to protect themselves from danger and abuse is of paramount importance. We strive to enable the children to respect the environment and to develop a sense of responsibility for its long-term care. An appreciation of and respect for the social groups are essential ingredients of our thinking.

Relationship to characteristic ethos

Castletown Girls' School hope to enable each child to develop 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 teachers, is a significant influence on how a child acts. The code will be most effective where there is a high level of openness and co-operation between staff, parents and

pupils. A clear understanding among all of 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 this school. The aim is to create an ordered and orderly environment in which pupils can, though developing self-discipline, feel secure and make progress in all aspects of their development. This code of behaviour describes the schools expectations about how each member of the school community will help to make the school a good place for teaching and learning. Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of 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 recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences;
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration of others;
- To enhance the learning environment and 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 well being 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 systems of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school;

Guidelines for Behaviour in the School

The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to tolerate these differences. 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 order-riding principle governing this code is respect – respect for ourselves and others and their property. The school expects the highest standard of behaviour from its pupils including the following:

- Each pupil is expected to be well behaved and 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 her best both in school and for homework;

While the school has expanded on these principles to outline the “school rules” (see Appendix 1), each class is required to draft their own class rules or charter, through consultation and discussion within the class and they will reflect the age and maturity levels of the students in the class. These rules will be kept to a minimum, they will be recorded in simple language and they will be stated positively, telling students what to do as well as what not to do. The rules will be referred to regularly and will form part of SPHE lessons. (These specific classroom rules are only applicable to the teacher and class who drafted them. They will be used in addition to the designated school rules.)

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. The school values the support and co-operation of parents in the promotion of this strategy. The policy shall apply to all students during all school activities.

It is the policy of this school to actively promote good behaviour using aspects of I Y Programme. Children learn best by being rewarded. It is more positive to praise a child doing the proper thing than to constantly scold the child who misbehaves. As part of our on-going efforts to promote positive behaviour, time will be allocated at some staff meetings for discussion regarding the implementation of the code. Staff will be given opportunities to share their experience of both positive and negative behaviour and to learn from collective wisdom. Teachers will use various strategies to promote good behaviour including “Golden Time”, star/reward charts, weekly lottery, etc. The strategies used will be at the discretion of the class teacher. In addition the Principal will use her own strategies for rewarding positive behaviour.

To facilitate new members of staff to become familiar with practices within the school, a copy of the code will be included in all teachers’ documents. The code will also be available on our website for parents.

REWARDS AND SANCTIONS

The following strategies will be used by all teachers:

Rewards

Praise may be given by means of any one of the following:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval;
- A comment in a child’s homework diary;

- A visit to another class, to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation;
- A word of praise in front of a group or the class;
- A reward system – student of the week/occasional treats;
- Special mention at assembly;
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege;
- A mention to parents- either written or verbal communication;
- End of year awards ceremony.

Sanctions

The nature and context of the behaviour and the age of the child will determine the nature of the strategies employed. The following stages will be used to show disapproval of inappropriate behaviour:

- Reasoning with pupils including advising them about the consequences of their actions.
- Verbal or visual reprimand (including advice on how to improve).
- Time out (age appropriate including advising child about reflecting on their behaviour).
- Apology letter for offence committed.
- Uncompleted work to be sent home for completion.
- Referral to another teacher/classroom.
- Note in journal from class teacher to be signed by parent.
- Extra homework.
- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Referral to Principal.
- Formal meeting with parents/guardians.
- Referral to the Principal and the Chairperson or other member of the Board of Management.
- Suspension.
- Expulsions.

Ladder of Referral

Serious misbehaviour may result in a jump to a higher step on ladder immediately.

Step 1: Verbal/Visual Warnings/Reprimands.

Step 2: Time out to another area within the classroom.

Step 3: Time out in another class with work to complete.

Or

Step 4: Loss of privilege for a period of time. A note will also be written in the homework journal to inform the parent of their child's misbehaviour.

Step 5: Class teacher will communicate with parents to inform them of their child's misbehaviour.

Step 6: Child is referred to principals' Office.

Step 7: Principal will contact parent re; behaviour.

Step 8: Parents will be asked to have a meeting with the Principal and the Class Teacher to discuss their child's behaviour.

Step 9: The Board of Management will be informed of the persistent misbehaviour. At this stage both suspension and/or expulsion may be considered.

The nature of the behaviour and the age of the child will determine the nature of the strategies employed. The following stages will be used to show disapproval of inappropriate behaviour: Initially instances of misbehaviour will be dealt with by the class teacher. This will include children being advised about their behaviour and how about to improve. Discussion about behaviour and its consequences will form part of SPHE lessons at all class levels. Teachers will actively promote good behaviour and aim to "catch" repeated offenders at activities where they can give positive feedback, thus promoting better behaviour.

However, where these strategies have failed and where misbehaviour is more serious or persistent it will be necessary to involve other staff including the Principal, Deputy principal, parents/guardians and the Board of Management. The Principal and staff may also seek assistance from NEPS, SESS, HSE or other agencies.

Classification of Misbehaviours

Misbehaviour falls into one of three categories - minor, serious or gross. Teachers and/or the Principal will make judgements based on a common sense approach having regard to the age or vulnerability of the child and gravity and frequency of some misbehaviour as follows:

Minor Misbehaviour (This list is not exhaustive)

The following are some examples of minor misbehaviour:

Interrupting class work/ Running in the school building/ Littering around the school/ Not completing Homework without good reason (to include a note from a parent/guardian)/ Inappropriate behaviour or gestures/ Name calling/ Minor infringement of the school rules/ Talking out of turn.

Regular occurrences of Minor Misbehaviour will automatically commence on a higher step on the ladder of referral.

Serious Misbehaviour (this list is not exhaustive)

The following are possible examples of serious misbehaviour:

Constantly disruptive in class/ Telling lies/ Stealing/ Damaging others' property/ bullying/ Answering back a teacher/ Endangering self or fellow pupils in the class or the yard/ Verbal Abuse/ Deliberate, continual disobedience/ Disregarding teachers instructions on a regular basis/ Leaving school premises without permission/ Deliberately leaving taps turned on/ Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff or a pupil; (e.g. physical violence, striking, nipping, biting, spitting).

All incidents of bullying will be dealt with as outlined in the school's Anti-bullying policy. (See separate policy)

Regular occurrences of Serious Misbehaviour will automatically commence on a higher step on the ladder of referral.

Gross Misbehaviour (this list is not exhaustive)

The following are examples of gross misbehaviour:

Bringing weapons or dangerous substances to school/ Persistently engaging in activities which have been identified by members of staff as dangerous or inappropriate/ Deliberately injuring any member of the school community/ Setting fire to school property/ Deliberately leaving taps (fire hose) etc. turned on/ Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff or a pupil where the safety of the person injured is questioned; Persistent incidents of serious misbehaviour will be classified as gross misbehaviour.

An offence of gross misbehaviour will automatically commence on a higher step on the ladder of referral.

***** Please note that generally each pupil will start at the bottom of the ladder on a daily basis.**

Occasionally however pupils will commence on a higher step if misbehaviour is persistent or if an incident of gross misbehaviour has taken place ***

Suspension

- Suspension will be used as a sanction where all attempts at reasoning with the pupil have failed and where all other efforts of the school in consultation with the parents or guardians of the pupil have failed to achieve a satisfactory conclusion. It will also be used where there are concerns about Health & Safety of other students or for a serious incident of violence or gross misbehaviour. Communications to parents regarding the suspension of a pupil, or the possibility of considering suspension as a sanction, will be in writing. (Copies of all correspondence will be retained.) The Board of Management has deferred responsibility to the Principal to impose an initial sanction of up to three days. 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. In line with the requirements of the Education Welfare Act (2000), the Board of Management will inform the Education Welfare Board when any pupil's period of suspension equals or exceeds six school days.

- When a student is suspended, the parents/guardians will be requested to remove the student from the school. The Principal will meet with the parents/guardians to outline the decision to implement the suspension and will present the parents/guardians with a written statement of the terms, duration and date of the termination of the suspension.

Removal of suspension (Reinstatement)

During a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated 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 in consultation with the parents, the class teacher and the student (if appropriate) will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil, if required, and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class. Where a satisfactory resolution of a problem is achieved, a pupil may be readmitted to school within a suspension period at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Board and the Principal.

Expulsion

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a student in an extreme case or where repeated incidents of gross 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. 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).

Misbehaviour on the Yard

Incidents of yard misbehaviour will be dealt with in accordance with the ladder of referral. (See above)

Involving Parents/Guardians in Managing Behaviour

Parents/guardians are valued as partners in the school community and as such will be invited to participate in promoting and demonstrating positive behaviour both in school and in the wider community. Class teachers will refer to repeated episodes of minor misbehaviour in the pupil's Homework journal which parents/guardians are requested to sign each evening. In cases where pupils are required to complete some extra work as a sanction, parents/guardians will again be requested to sign the relevant work. Class teachers may occasionally request parents/guardians to visit them in school to discuss some aspect of a pupil's behaviour. The Principal will be informed of these meetings and may be invited to attend. Parents/guardians are encouraged to make

appointments to meet with class teachers and/or the Principal at the earliest opportunity in an effort to prevent any escalation of inappropriate behaviour. The school will remind parents/guardians of the procedures for contacting the school at every opportunity. Parents are requested to keep their child's business to themselves and communicate with the school in a confidential manner.

Where pupils are found to be involved in more serious misbehaviour the Principal may telephone or write to parents/guardians to request them to attend an informal/formal meeting at the school. Class teachers, or teachers who witness misbehaviour while supervising on yard duty, the Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management may also attend these meetings. The pupil may also attend all or part of these meetings if deemed appropriate.

Managing aggressive or violent behaviour

The school recognises that occasionally students may not respond positively to the usual interventions and that they may require extra support in an effort to manage aggressive or violent behaviour. The staff involved will work closely with outside agencies to support behavioural issues and needs.

Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) 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 any one school year. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student. (See Circular 22/02)

Keeping records

In line with the school's policy on record keeping, and data protection legislation, records in relation to pupils' behaviour are kept in a secure filing cabinet. Copies of all communications with parents/guardians will be retained in the school.

Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school

Parents must notify the school of a student's absence and the reason for this absence.

Special Considerations during the Covid 19 Pandemic

Note to parents:

Parents/ guardians are required to observe and respect all social distancing protocols in relation to any contact with the school. This includes maintaining a two metre distance from other families and staff when dropping off or collecting their children from school and any contact with the school.

Masks must be worn. All visits to the school are required to be made by appointment only through the school office.

Students must not attend school if they are unwell and must be kept home for the period of time as recommended by HSE.

Behaviour expectations:

Our school requires every member of the school community to observe and respect the principles of social distancing, cough and sneeze etiquette and make every effort to minimise risk to oneself and others.

This requires us to modify some of our behaviours which include:

- amended expectations about breaks or playtimes, including where students may play.
- clear rules for arriving and leaving school
- clear rules about coughing or spitting at or on any other person.
- clear rules about hand hygiene
- clear rules for students at home about conduct in relations to remote education (See ICT and AUP policies)

School Routines and Procedures:

All members of the school community have to be mindful of the following;

- following any altered routines for arrival or departure
- following instructions on who students can socialise with at school; pods and class bubbles
- moving around the school as per specific instructions (for example, one - way systems, out of bounds areas, queuing)
- rules about sharing any equipment or other items including drinking bottles
- use of toilet

Hygiene and Health Expectations

- following school instructions on hygiene, such as handwashing and sanitising
- expectations about sneezing, coughing, tissues and disposal ('catch it, bin it, kill it') and avoiding touching your mouth, nose and eyes with hands
- telling an adult if experiencing symptoms of coronavirus

Students are expected to:

- Arrive to and depart from school premises at the agreed time

- Proceed to the designated classroom without delay
- Follow instructions from staff members on movement throughout the school campus
- Ask for permission to use the toilet
- Sanitise or wash hands before entering school and while in school as requested
- Remain in their designated seating within the classroom
- Maintain healthy practise when coughing or sneezing
- Refrain from spitting or coughing at or towards other students or members of staff
- Maintain responsibility for their own equipment e.g. stationery and water bottles and ensure they are not shared with others
- Tell a member of staff if they are unwell and are exhibiting symptoms of Coronavirus

Sanctions for unsafe behaviour during the Covid - 19 pandemic

Incidents which involve students who deliberately fail to comply with instructions will be addressed in line with sanctions of our current Code of Behaviour policy.

Any breaches of discipline related to the Covid 19 Response Plan will be taken very seriously. Deliberate coughing or spitting at any pupil / staff member or Covid related taunting will be dealt with as a serious breach of discipline and may result in parents being asked to collect their child from school. Other breaches of the regulations will be dealt with appropriate to the behaviour risk. Such conduct threatens the health and safety of the entire school community.

Success Criteria

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

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

This Code of Behaviour was ratified by the Board of Management and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Signed _____
 Chairperson Dr Tony Hanna

Date _____

Appendix 1

Classroom Rules

1. Follow instruction straight away.

- Prompt attention
- Listen at all times
- No comments about instructions, just follow them immediately
- Instructions should only have to be given once

2. Complete work in set time and do it well

- Class work to be done to the best of your ability
- Neat and tidy work
- No copying
- Margins
- Layout
- Standard of writing
- Clean copy
- All homework to be attempted
- Homework to be written down in homework journal, checked and signed by parents
- Work to be carried out without delay
- Parental explanation must be given why work is not completed
- Take pride in work
- Your work will be acknowledged

3. Pay attention and work quietly allowing others to work uninterrupted

- Speak quietly during all non silent activities including lunch time if classes have to remain indoors due to bad weather
- Allow pupils to work, no elbowing, pushing, invading others space
- Listen silently when teacher/another pupil speaks
- Focus on the teacher/task
- Don't allow yourself to be distracted
- Be silent if teacher is speaking to another teacher/visitor
- Ask teacher for help if required

4. Have all necessary equipment

- Textbooks and copies named
- Full uniform to be worn (+tie). (except P.E. & school matches when designated uniform is worn)
- Have no need to borrow
- Leave all toys at home
- Homework book – usage for notes/reminders

5. Raise your hand, wait and then speak quietly.

6. Use only acceptable language; back chat is not allowed

- Think before you speak
- Speak politely to adults/children
- Call children by proper names
- Address adult by Mr., Miss or Mrs. or appropriate title
- No heated aggressive debate
- Watch personal time when speaking
- No teasing
- Do not interrupt
- Say please/ thank you
- Look at the person you are speaking to
- Knock, enter, address the teacher
- No answering back
- Only answer if asked, and for yourself

This covers tone of voice, nicknames, bad language, teasing, politeness and respect for others.

7. Stay in your place and keep it tidy

- No walking around even when work is finished
- Pick up litter, don't litter
- Only 1 or 2 at bin at the one time

- Place rubbish in the right bin whether it be refuse or recycling
- Clean desks out regularly- hygiene
- Keep bags under seat or table – health and safety
- Clean up after lunch
- Walk straight to seat on entering classroom
- No writing or defacing furniture or other people’s property
- Ask permission to leave the room. Please raise hand and wait for your teacher to respond to you

School rules

1. Do as you are told by all staff straight away

- Staff = teachers, ancillary staff and visiting tutors
- School premises and other facilities used by school
- Prompt response
- Inform you teacher if being sent on a message

2. Keep unhelpful hands, feet, objects and comments to yourself. Let people around you feel comfortable. Play safe.

- No Bullying physical/verbal
- “Only messing” is not an acceptable explanation
- No pushing in lines
- Negative name calling, teasing or put-downs is not acceptable
- No invading of personal space
- Always include others in games
- No fidgeting
- Always care for the younger pupil
- Always welcome visitors

3. Be in the right place on time

- Line up in a straight line in the yard in the mornings and after each break after the bell rings; never leave the line unless permission has been granted
- No loitering on the corridors

4. Walk quietly in and around the building

- No running, i.e. walk at all times on corridors, going up and down stairs, in and out of lines
- Hold banisters going up and down stairs
- Stay in sight of teacher

- Knock when entering classroom
- Stand back for adult at door
- Walking to teacher/adult when you want to speak

5. Always be truthful and honest

- When asked a question or giving an explanation always be honest and truthful in your reply.

6. Never leave the school grounds without permission. Pupils must always be accompanied by a responsible adult.

- Pupils cannot leave the school grounds under any circumstances, retrieval of the ball outside the school grounds will not be permitted.

7. Put all litter in the bins; respect property

- Never throw rubbish on the ground, always put it in the correct bin whether it be refuse or recycling
- No spitting

8. Always be neat and presentable

- Wear a full school uniform
- On a designated P.E. days and activities the school tracksuit must be worn