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Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. Code of Behaviour

Introduction

This policy has been formulated and published by the Board of Management of Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. in accordance with the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 (and in particular, section 23 thereof) in accordance with Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB).

The philosophy and ethos of Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. is to ensure that all pupils are equally valued and respected. The school policy on behaviour is to create a harmonious environment nurturing the potential of all pupils and accepting/embracing difference. It is based on reward as well as on compliance and sanction. The ethos promotes close and positive cooperation between staff, parents/guardians and pupils. Disruptive behaviour is contrary to this ethos and undermines the values held by the school. A school climate rewarding positive school behaviour will be fostered.

Aims

The aims of the Code of Behaviour are:

- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community.
- To allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious manner, without disruption.
- To enhance the learning environment where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for all others.
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline recognizing the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To assist parents/guardians and pupils in understanding the policies and procedures that form part of the Code of Behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.
- To ensure that the framework of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner.

A strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among the staff and between staff, pupils and parents are required to implement the code. Emphasis will be placed on rewarding good behaviour rather than focusing on shortcomings. Parents will be kept informed of the behaviour of their children.

The Role of the Board of Management

- To provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- To support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- To ratify the code.

The Role of the Staff

All members of staff are expected:

- To adopt a positive approach to behaviour.
- To model the behaviour expected from pupils.
- To compile a list of rules as they pertain to their own classroom.
- To discuss and explain the various rules and expectations as outlined in the school Code of Behaviour.
- To place emphasis on rewards rather than on sanctions.
- To recognize the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- To encourage each child to reach his or her full potential.
- To foster and encourage a strong sense of community and co-operation between staff, pupils and parents/guardians.
- To follow standards that are clear, consistent, widely understood and that set high expectations for student behaviour.

The Role of the Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians are expected:

- To familiarise themselves with the Code of Behaviour.
- To familiarise themselves with school policies pertaining to behaviour, in particular the Anti-Bullying Policy and Substance Use Policy.
- To explain the Code of Behaviour to their children.
- To support the school staff in implementing the Code of Behaviour.
- To support their child(ren) with their schoolwork and homework.
- To ensure punctuality and regular attendance.
- To promote respect for teachers, pupils and other school personnel.
- To keep in contact with teachers regarding their child(ren)'s progress.
- To make themselves available to discuss any problem(s).
- To communicate any concerns about their child(ren) to the Class Teacher.
- To share information with the Class Teacher/Principal about anything that they think might affect their child(ren)'s behaviour/progress in school.
- To speak to the Class Teacher, by appointment, if they wish to discuss something, raise a concern or make a complaint.

The Role of the Pupil

Pupils will be expected:

- To show courtesy and consideration at all times.
- To have respect for their own property and the property of others.
- To have respect for the school building and its environs.
- To attend school on a regular basis and be punctual.
- To do their best both in school and for homework.
- To adhere to school rules. (See list attached)

Notification of a child's absence from school

In accordance with the Education Welfare Act 2000 section 23(2) (e) & section 18 parents must notify the school of any child's absence from school. If a child wakes up feeling unwell and is unable to come to school that day parents are asked to telephone/email school that morning, explaining that their child won't be in school and giving the reason why. When a child returns to school after any period of absence he/she must bring a written note, if the information has not

already been provided, in accordance with the school's *Home School Communication Policy*, signed by his/her parents/guardians providing the following information:

- The child's name and class.
- The date(s) of the absence from school.
- The actual reason for the absence.

Parents are reminded that children should only be absent from school for illness or bereavement. If a child needs to leave school early on any given day, for exceptional circumstances an explanation must be given to the class teacher by telephone or in writing or in person. The child must be collected from the school building by the parent or an appointed person.

Schools are required to submit Student Absence Reports twice each year, Tusla, An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach Child and Family Agency, on those students with serious attendance issues that have been identified during the current academic year i.e. students that have been absent from school for a cumulative total of twenty days or more falling within the following categories:

- ♦ Illness
- ♦ Urgent Family Reason
- ♦ Holiday
- ♦ Suspended
- ♦ Other
- ♦ Unexplained

Affirming Positive Behaviour

In Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. good behaviour will be promoted and encouraged. A happy school atmosphere, conducive to learning, will be created through good relationships between teachers, parents and pupils.

The following strategies will be used to encourage and promote good behaviour:

- ✓ A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- ✓ A comment in a pupil's exercise book/homework diary.
- ✓ A visit to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation.
- ✓ A word of praise in front of a group or class.
- ✓ Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- ✓ A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.
- ✓ Teacher records improvement in the behaviour of a disruptive pupil.
- ✓ Positive everyday interaction between teachers and pupils.
- ✓ Display of pupils' work.
- ✓ Good school and class routines.
- ✓ Clear boundaries and rules for pupils.
- ✓ Helping pupils themselves to recognise and affirm good learning behaviour.
- ✓ Involving pupils in the preparation of school and classroom rules.
- ✓ Individual class merit awards, award stamps or other rewards system. The type of reward system to be used will be left to the discretion of each class teacher and will be used in a fair, consistent and meaningful manner.

Levels of Intervention

Some pupils need more active intervention to help them to manage their behaviour. Without additional help, they may be at risk of failing, behaviourally, socially and educationally.

Additional inputs or interventions might include:

- Referral to another teacher or adult who can work with the pupil.
- Setting targets for behaviour and monitoring them with the pupil in a supportive way.
- Behaviour contracts.

A small minority of pupils may show particularly challenging behaviour. These pupils will need a sustained and systematic response involving the important adults in their lives, in school and at home.

Unacceptable Behaviour

The following behaviours are unacceptable in school and on all school related activities:

- Disregard for school rules.
- Arriving late for school.
- Running in the school building.
- Leaving litter around the school.
- Being discourteous or unmannerly.
- Not listening, speaking out of turn and/or interrupting class.
- Failure to complete homework without a very good explanation from a parent.
- Leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission.
- Constantly disruptive behaviour in class.
- Cheek, disobedience, disrespect or sulking.
- Defying or back answering a teacher or other member of staff.
- Telling lies.
- Stealing, damaging or interfering with another person's property.
- Bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation.
- Using unacceptable language.
- Bringing chewing gum, glass bottles, correction fluids or other solvents to school.
- Bringing alcohol, drugs, aerosols, cigarettes, matches or cigarette lighters to school.
- Supplying alcohol, drugs, aerosols, cigarettes, matches or cigarette lighters to others in school.
- Deliberately injuring a fellow pupil or partaking in any activity which would put themselves or others in danger.
- Misuse of fire equipment.
- Using mobile phones while on the school premises.
- Use of the internet, digital media or mobile phone which intrudes on the privacy and dignity of staff, pupils or their families.
- Deliberately vandalizing school property.
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a pupil or member of staff.
- Sexual assault.

Disciplinary Actions and Sanctions to deal with Unacceptable Behaviour(s)

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development. These may include:

- Reasoning with pupils.
- Verbal reprimand (including advice on how to improve).
- Temporary separation from peers.
- Prescribing extra work.
- Temporary removal to another classroom.
- Loss of privileges.
- Detention during lunch-break(s) with extra work assigned.
- Referral to Principal.
- Communication/meeting with parents and Class Teacher and/or Principal to encourage a reformed approach by pupils who repeatedly misbehave. Joint strategies may be adopted by teachers and pupils to this end.
- Record on pupil's file.
- Psychological assessment: If a pupil displays a persistent pattern of disruptive misbehaviour psychological assessment may be appropriate. Referral for formal psychological assessment may be made after discussion between the teacher and parents, and with the permission of the parents/guardians.

- Suspension.
- Expulsion.

The school will engage the support of any local support services that may be available to assist in responding to the needs of a pupil with behavioural difficulties. Sources of support may include the National Educational Psychological Service, HSE Community Psychology Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, the National Council for Special Education and Child Guidance Services.

Students with special educational needs

Teachers will take particular care that they help any pupils with special educational needs to understand clearly the purpose of the sanction and the reason why their behaviour is unacceptable. The school and classroom practices that support good learning behaviour are valid for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

Applying sanctions in response to behaviour that takes place outside school

The standards and rules contained in the code of behaviour will usually apply in any situation where the pupil, although outside the school, is still the responsibility of the school. Examples include school tours, matches/games, swimming, visits to church, visits to St. Kieran's Hall, field trips, and attendance at any other events organised by the school.

Suspension

The Board of Management of Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. has the authority to suspend a pupil. The different forms of suspension that may be used are:

- **Immediate Suspension:** In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time represents a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff of the school, or any other person. Fair procedures must still be applied.
- **Automatic Suspension** may be imposed for the following misbehaviours:
 - Verbal or physical assault on any member of staff or another pupil.
 - Direct refusal to carry out a legitimate instruction of a staff member.
 - Leaving the school without permission.
 - Substance abuse.

Due process and fair procedures will be followed in each case of automatic suspension.

- **Rolling Suspension** – A pupil should not be suspended again shortly after they return to school unless they engage in serious misbehaviour that warrants suspension, fair procedures are observed in full and the standard applied to judging the behaviour is the same as the standard applied to judging the behaviour of any other pupil.

The decision to suspend a pupil requires serious grounds such as that:

- The pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils.
- The pupil's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.

One single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension. Suspension will be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing the concern. Fair procedures will be followed when proposing to suspend a pupil, including the right to be heard and the right to impartiality.

Procedures in Respect of Suspension

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will observe the following procedures:

- A record will be kept in the school of all instances of serious misbehaviour by pupils.
- Parents/Guardians will be invited to meet the class teacher, the Principal and/or the Chairperson to discuss serious incidents of misbehaviour.
- Communications to parents regarding the suspension of a pupil or the possibility of suspension will be in writing from the Principal.
- Copies of all correspondence will be retained in school by the Principal.
- A written explanation from the Principal explaining the reason(s) for the suspension will be given to the parents.
- A written statement from the Principal, of the terms and date of termination of a suspension will be given to the parents.
- Details of any study programme to be followed during the suspension will be given to the parents.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and parents will be notified in writing to the parents. Parents will be asked to reaffirm in writing their commitment to the school's Code of Behaviour before a pupil is re-admitted to school following a suspension.
- When a period of suspension ends the pupil and parents will be required to attend a post suspension meeting with the class teacher, the Principal and/or the Chairperson of the Board of Management before the pupil is re-admitted to school.
- When a period of suspension ends, the pupil will be formally re-admitted to the class by the Principal.
- Where a satisfactory resolution of a problem is achieved, a pupil may be re-admitted to school within a suspension period at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Board and the Principal.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of staff and 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 at the earliest opportunity. When the Chairman of the Board is unavailable, another member of the Board shall be called on by the Principal to deputise for the Chairman. In the absence of the Principal the Deputy Principal shall deputise for the Principal. In the case of immediate suspension, parents will be notified and arrangements made with them for the pupil to be collected. A preliminary investigation will be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. The formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension.

- In the event of the Chairperson and the Principal deciding to suspend a pupil, the parents have a right of appeal to the full Board of Management.

In exceptional circumstances a period of suspension longer than three days may be needed in order to achieve a particular objective. A suspension longer than three days will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes. The Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, may impose a suspension of up to five days, in circumstances where a meeting of the Board of Management cannot be convened in a timely fashion. The Board places a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. The Board will formally review any proposal to suspend a pupil, where the suspension brings the number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more.

Section 29 Appeals

Where the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007. When parents are being formally notified of such a suspension, they and the pupil will be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, and will be given information about how to appeal. Section 29 of the Education Act provides that the following decisions may be appealed to the Secretary General:

- Permanent exclusion from a school.
- Suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year; or
- Refusal to enrol.

Records and Reports

A record will be kept in the school of all instances of serious misbehaviour by pupils.

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 condition(s) attached to the suspension.
- The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reason(s) for and the duration of each suspension. The Principal will report suspensions in accordance with the Tusla reporting guidelines (Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 Section 21(4)(a) i.e. if a pupil is suspended for six school days or more.
- Meetings with parents and the pupil to try to find ways of helping the pupil to change their behaviour.
- Meetings to make sure that the pupil understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist.
- Efforts made to ensure that all other possible options have been tried.
- Efforts made to seek the assistance of support agencies (e.g. National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education)

Expulsion

The Board of Management of Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. has the authority to expel a pupil. This will be in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour and when all other avenues have been exhausted. The Board of Management will seek legal advice before expelling any pupil.

A proposal to expel a pupil requires serious grounds such as that:

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

Fair procedures will be followed when proposing to expel a pupil, including the right to be heard and the right to impartiality. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps which will be followed are:

- 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.
- 5) Notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing of the Board's opinion and the reasons therefor.
- 6) The Education Welfare Officer shall, as soon as may be after receiving a notification under subsection (1), make all reasonable efforts to ensure that provision is made for the continued education of the student to whom the notification relates.
- 7) For the purposes of subsection (2), the Education Welfare Officer shall, as soon as may be after receiving the said notification:
 - Make all reasonable efforts to consult with the Principal, or a person nominated by the Principal, the pupil concerned and his/her parents, and such other persons as the Education Welfare Officer considers appropriate, and
 - Convene a meeting with all necessary people.
- 8) Confirmation of the decision to expel.
- 9) A pupil shall not be expelled from a school before the passing of 20 school days following the receipt of a notification under this section by the Education Welfare Officer.

The Board of Management will decide which of the tasks involved in these procedural steps require separate meetings and which tasks can be accomplished together in a single meeting. Parents will be given due notice of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for a Board hearing.

In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Management may decide that a pupil should be expelled for a first offence. The kinds of behaviours that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the code could include:

- A serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff.
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school.
- Sexual assault.

Review

The Code of Behaviour was reviewed by the Board of Management at Board meetings on: 25th March 2009, 8th June 2011, 9th April 2013, 10th March 2014, 10th March 2015, 14th May 2018, 9th March 2020, 9th March 2022, 13th June 2023 and 7th May 2024.

Ratification

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management of Cloughjordan No.1 N.S.

*Signed: Lesley Sandes
(Chairperson of Board of Management)*

*Signed: Ivor Hayes
(Principal)*

Date: 7th May 2024

Date: 7th May 2024

Date of next review: May 2025

School Rules

Pupils must show respect for their teachers by:

- Being punctual for school each day.
- Greeting their teacher each morning.
- Presenting homework completed to the best of their ability and checked by a parent/guardian each day.
- Bringing books, pencil-cases and any other necessary equipment to school each day.
- Opening doors for teachers, S.N.A.'s or other adults, standing back and allowing them to pass through.
- Sitting up straight in class and paying attention at all times.
- Returning to the classroom promptly at the end of each break when the bell rings.
- Listening to the teacher and not interrupting or being disruptive in class.
- Bidding farewell to the teacher at the end of each day.

Pupils must show respect for fellow pupils by:

- Being friendly and polite to all fellow pupils.
- Putting up their hand when they want to speak in class.
- Listening while others are speaking in class.
- Playing fairly in the playground – punching, shoving, kicking, fighting, spitting, excluding or other inappropriate behaviour(s) are not allowed.
- Being courteous and kind to others – name-calling and/or hurtful comments to/about others will not be tolerated.
- Cursing, swearing and foul language are strictly forbidden in the school building, playground or at the school gates.
- Senior pupils must show a good example to younger children at all times.
- Not taking or damaging other pupils' belongings.
- Not taking anything from school that does not belong to them.
- Not throwing other pupils' property around.
- Not tearing or harming other pupils' clothes.

Pupils must show respect for property by:

- Keeping classrooms neat and tidy with everything in its proper place.
- Picking up any rubbish/personal belongings dropped on the floor before they go home.
- Keeping cloakrooms neat and tidy-hanging up coats on the hooks provided and keeping boots/other footwear in their proper place. Lunch must not be eaten/left in the cloakrooms.
- Walking inside the school building at all times, running is not allowed inside.
- Not scribbling, drawing or writing on the walls of the school building (inside or outside).
- Playing board games, with school toys etc. in their classrooms on wet days. Playing on computers is strictly forbidden during lunch breaks unless under the supervision of a teacher.
- Knocking on the kitchen/staffroom door before entering. Pupils are only allowed to enter the kitchen/staffroom with the permission of a member of staff.

While outside:

- All pupils must play in the large play area behind the school during lunch breaks – pupils are not allowed to play at the front of the school.
- Pupils are not allowed to climb on/over the gates or wall at the front of the school.
- Pupils may not leave the playground under any circumstances without the permission of a teacher.