



## **Carns National School Code of Behaviour**

### **Introduction**

This document has been drawn up by the Staff, pupils, parents and Board of Management of Scoil Bríde, Carns in accordance with the guidelines set out in Department of Education circular 20/90, and with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools (as amended by Circular 8/88), having regard to the needs of the school and of the wider community. The purpose of the Code of Behaviour is to enable our staff, pupils and parents to work together to maintain a happy, effective and safe school. The Carns NS code of behaviour places emphasis on the encouragement of positive behaviour and on respecting all members of the school community and the school environment. Within the school, the overall day-to-day responsibility for behaviour rests with the principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.

### **Aims of the code**

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others
- To facilitate the education and development of every child
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption
- To promote respect for the property of others
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the availability of this policy and an ethos of open communication
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy
- To encourage the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community, as well as caring for the school and its environment
- To provide a framework for dealing with behaviour in the school.

### **Guidelines for Behaviour**

- All members of the school community have a responsibility to model high standards of behaviour in their interaction with students and each other. The expected standards of behaviour should reflect positive values such as:
  - Respect for self and others
  - Kindness and willingness to help others
  - Courtesy and good manners
  - Fairness
  - Willingness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
  - Forgiveness
  - Consideration and respect of school property

### **Expectations and Responsibilities of Members of our School Community**

Students can expect to:

- Be treated fairly and with respect
- Have their individual differences recognised and respected
- Feel safe
- Have positive behaviour affirmed
- Have misbehaviour dealt with appropriately

**Students are expected to:**

- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Avoid subtle, hidden behaviours intended to hurt other pupils
- Avoid any behaviour in class that disrupts learning or endanger others.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow school and class rules.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- Participate positively in school activities
- Play fairly, respectfully and safely
- Respect all members of our school community, Respect other students and their learning
- Respect school property, the property of others, their own belongings and the school environment
- Speak to a teacher if they feel anything is wrong
- Take responsibility for their class work and homework

**Staff members can expect to:**

- Be treated with respect
- Receive support from colleagues and the Board of Management.
- Have grievances dealt with according to the agreed procedures as set out in the CPSMA handbook.

**Staff members are expected to:**

- Support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour as outlined below.
- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability. However, for children who may present with behavioural difficulties arising from their needs, all staff, professionals and parents/guardians will liaise regularly to develop behavioural targets for such children
- Create a safe working environment for all members of the school community
- Recognise and affirm good work.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils
- Be courteous, consistent and fair
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of concern.

**Board of Management's Responsibilities**

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the Code of Behaviour
- Ratify & review the code.

**Parents can expect to:**

- Be treated with respect
- Have a safe and welcoming environment for their child
- Receive progress reports in accordance with whole school procedures (P.T. meetings and end of year reports)

**Parents are expected to:**

- Encourage their children to follow the school's Code of Behaviour
- Ensure their children wear the school uniform and complete homework
- Make an appointment beforehand if they wish to see a teacher.
- Encourage a positive attitude in their children to school and all members of the school community.
- Cooperate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulty to others or interfering with teaching and learning.
- Communicate to the school changes in practice, issues or problems which may affect their child's behaviour at school.
- Attend meetings at the school if requested, and support recommendations made by school.
- Be courteous and reasonable when dealing with the school staff in matters regarding behaviour.
- Show an understanding that behaviour investigations and interventions by teachers need to take all parties into account. and recognise that teachers use their professional judgement in making decisions regarding behaviour.

**In addition:**

- Parents should provide the school with all necessary background information regarding their children. It is important that any concerns about school be communicated to the class teacher as promptly as possible. Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to the class teacher and/ or principal about any significant changes in the child's life or home circumstances.

**School drop offs**

- Ensure their children attend school regularly and on time
- Parents should collect children at either 1:40 (infants) or 2:40 (1st to 6th) each afternoon.
- Parents should not leave their children unsupervised on the school grounds before 9am.
- Recognise that teachers in Carns N.S. are teaching full time and priority is given to teaching and learning in their classroom during school hours.
- Parents are reminded that the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening and after official closing. The official school day in Carns NS is from 9:00 am to 1:40 pm for children in Infants and from 9:00 a.m. to 2:40 pm for children in 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Class
- Parents should not be present on school grounds or in the school building during school hours without a prior appointment. Provide notes to explain absences, lateness, early collection
- Inform the class teacher of any change to collection procedure for their children.

### **Communicating with the school:**

The accepted means of communicating with the school are:

- An email to the school to request a meeting
- A phone call to the school to request a meeting (Please remember that the office is often unattended).
- A note in the child's homework journal requesting a meeting
- A note in the child's lunch box in the case of the Infants who do not have a Homework journal
- *Should a parent/guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed with a teacher, all staff members are more than willing to facilitate a meeting, made through the proper channels i.e. a phone call to the office, or a note to the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties. **The first person to be informed should be the class teacher.** The Principal may become involved if the situation is not resolved.* This arrangement ensures that all concerns are dealt with, without infringing on valuable teaching time.

### **Strategies to Affirm Positive Behaviour**

The delivery of a broad curriculum by quality teachers using varied teaching approaches contributes to a safe and stimulating learning environment. Positive behaviour is fostered and promoted by strategies that include:

- Individual class merit awards such as points systems
- Class rules collaboratively drawn up at the start of each school year
- Delegating special responsibility or privilege
- Written or verbal communication with parent
- Praise is given for maintaining good standards and personal achievements.
- Good behavior is commended regularly
- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal
- 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 Class Dojo reward point
- A mention to parent/guardian, written or verbal communication
- 'Bualadh Bos' in class or special mention at assembly.
- Individual class reward system
- Awards at assembly.

## **Keeping records**

### **Class level -**

- Where there are concerns arising regarding pupils' behaviour, class teachers may keep notes on such behaviour. The homework journal and or electronic means may be used to communicate with parents for both positive and negative behaviour. Each teacher will use her/his professional judgement in deciding if a record should be made of a particular misbehaviour.
- Teachers communicate with the Principal where there are concerns regarding behaviour or a pattern is emerging. The end of year report includes a reference to behaviour. The staff has a consistent understanding of what constitutes positive behaviour. Parents are kept up to date during the year regarding issues around behaviour.
- When the need arises, supervising staff send pupils to the Principal or communicate with the Principal regarding behavioural issues and records of these incidents are kept by the Principal.
- In the case of yard breaks, the teacher on supervision duty at break time will report any major incidents to the class teacher/principal. The teacher on supervision will report any minor misbehaviours to class teachers if they are not resolvable on the yard.
- Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying. Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same manner as breaches of discipline. Our school Anti-Bullying Policy deals with these matters in greater detail

**School records** These records are kept confidentially in the office in either hard copy or electronically. Certain formal records are maintained in the school including factual reports of particular incidents, communication between school and home, with outside agencies e.g. NEPs, HSE, Board of Management. (where applicable.)

## **Communication with Parents**

Where pupil's behaviour is a cause for concern parents are notified by a note in the journal or an informal chat.

### **Stages of Parental Involvement**

- When a pupil's behaviour is a source of concern parents are contacted and invited to a meeting with the class teacher
- If the behaviour continues to be a problem with, for example, the issuing of behaviour cards, parents may be requested to a further meeting with the class teacher and principal. Emphases will be placed on the co-operation of all parties involved and may include the presence of the pupil at part of this meeting.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the class teacher directly if they have any concerns.

## **School Rules for all School Related Activities**

School rules 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. The following Rules have been formulated to ensure the well-being and safety of children in our school and around the school environment.

1. We take care of each other
2. We share and take turns
3. We invite children on their own to join in
4. We always play fairly
5. We are always honest and tell the truth
6. We never say or do anything unkind
7. We show respect for our own property and the property of others
8. We show respect, courtesy and good manners
9. We listen to the teacher and each other
10. We try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
11. We do our best in class
12. We wear the appropriate uniform
13. We follow our Healthy Eating Policy & Acceptable Use Policy
14. We are calm and walk inside
15. We follow instructions from staff

These can be summed up as 6 Golden Rules:

1. Listen to the teacher and each other
2. Put your hand up to speak
3. Do your best work
4. Be kind to your friends
5. Keep your hands to yourself
6. Walk inside

These 6 “Golden Rules” will be the main ones used for infant classes. School Rules 1-15 above will be put in the homework diaries for First to Sixth classes, to be signed by the children and their parents each year. Rules apply during school-time and during all school related activities.

## **Class Rules**

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher may draft a list of class rules with the children, based closely on the “Golden Rules”. Class rules will be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents/guardians will be contacted at an early stage. The school and classroom rules translate standards into practical guidance about the behaviour expected of students.

## **Unacceptable Behaviour**

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised:

- Level 1, General Misbehaviour
- Level 2 Serious Misbehaviour
- Level 3 Gross Misbehaviour

All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher, or the supervising teacher at break-times. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour parents/guardians will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour. Responses to the daily behaviours, which occur in school, will be developmentally appropriate, instructive and positive. Children will be taught what is expected and how they should behave

**EXAMPLES OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR-** Please note the list is not exhaustive.

### **Level 1: General misbehaviour in class**

Continuously talking, disruption of class work, shouting answers/comments out of turn, disrespect, distracting others, out of seat without permission, ignoring teacher instructions, ignoring class rules, being unmannerly, discourteous, disturbing the work or play of others, disrespectful language, tone, or manner, ignoring staff requests, negative body language & facial expression, unnecessary commentary about another child, whispering about others, cheating e.g on spelling test.

### **Level 1-General misbehaviour in the playground**

Fighting, kicking, climbing, rough play, foul language, name-calling, entering the school building during break times without permission, entering prohibited areas of the playground, ignoring teacher instructions, excluding other children, shouting, disrespecting others, disrespecting school grounds & school property, spitting, being mean, being rude, being insensitive to others, subtle & hidden behaviours intended to hurt other pupils.

**Level 1: Disciplinary Actions** Consequences for Level 1 behaviour are dependent upon the age of the pupil and severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Some examples of Level 1 responses are:

- Verbal reprimand/reminder(s)
- Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
- Prescribing additional work
- Loss of privileges
- Parent contact
- Behaviour contract
- Student Teacher conferencing
- Temporary separation from group or temporary placing in another class
- On some occasions writing out the narrative of the events leading to the misbehaviour
- Card system

### **Level 1 Supportive Interventions**

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

- Classroom-based interventions, such as SPHE lessons, Circle time or class meetings, with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members)
- Discussion of behaviour with the child
- Informal notes regarding incident/intervention/date.

## **White & Yellow Card System**

In Carns National School we will pilot a card system Sep to Dec 2024.

1. A white card **may** be given to a pupil in the case of a Level 1 behaviour or for continuous minor misbehaviours.
2. A yellow card may be given to the pupil in the case of Level 2 behaviour. If a pupil has received 3 white cards they will then receive a yellow card.

A list of misbehaviours is printed on the card and the relevant one will be marked by the teacher. An account of what happened may also be written on the card. This card will be signed by the teacher and parent and will then be retained in the school. The parent(s) will be asked for their co-operation in helping the pupil to improve their behaviour at school.

### **Level 2 Serious misbehaviour** - Please note the list is not exhaustive.

Serious behaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and well being of the students and staff and include:

Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention, Bullying, truancy, stealing, aggressive/threatening or violent behaviour towards another pupil or member of staff, defiant behaviour towards a teacher, Use of mobile phones on the school premises, inappropriate use of internet in school, Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, leaving the school without permission during the school day or leaving the care of school staff during school outings

### **Level 2: Disciplinary Actions**

Actions taken are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour and developmentally appropriate levels. The disciplinary actions at Level 2 are relayed to the principal and may be administered by the Principal, including the formal notification of parents, with written documentation. Some examples of Level 2 responses are:

- In school supervised detention
- Meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Report may be submitted to the Board of Management. The principal will use his/her professional judgement in regard to making a Formal Report to the Board of Mana
- Suspension from school of one to five days, depending on the severity of the behaviour
- Implementation of extensive behaviour management plan

### **Level 2: Supportive Interventions**

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

- Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Assistant Principal or Principal.
- Request for assistance from external agencies such as the 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.
- Referral of a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent)



### **Level 3 Gross misbehaviour-** Please note the list is not exhaustive.

Gross misbehaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal well being of the pupils and staff of the school. They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment. Situations, which include illegal activity, may result in contact with the Garda. Please note that the following list is not exhaustive:

Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention, Persistent and deliberate defiance, continuing to fight when asked to stop, deliberate damage to school property, breaking the law, continued bullying.

### **Level 3: Disciplinary Actions**

Behaviour at Level 3 may involve suspension from school. The length of the suspension will depend upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension is contained in this document.

#### **Level 3 responses:**

- Suspension from school for one to five days: This response may occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour or Level 2 behaviour of significant severity. The Principal following due process and procedure, can issue a suspension.
- Suspension from school for five to ten days: This response will occur with the repeated incidence of Level 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this Behaviour. A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management.
- Expulsion: Repeated incidents of Level 3 behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school in accordance with the procedures in the *NEWB Developing a Code of Behaviour Guidelines, 2008 10.3 and 10.4 and Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act.*

### **Managing Aggressive Or Violent Misbehaviour**

The school has a range of supports and tools available to help manage aggressive or violent misbehaviour such as:

- Children who are identified as having emotional or behavioural needs may be placed on a classroom support plan and subsequently this may develop into a class or school support plan.
- Parents are involved with these plans
- Parents may be encouraged to seek referrals from their GP to the Child and Adult Mental Health Services
- If necessary contact will be made with the National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS) psychologist assigned to the school
- Through the Special Educational Needs Organiser, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Service Executive, NEPS, etc.
- SEN personnel may facilitate teachers in sharing practice and support in the management of challenging behaviour as required .
- NCSE, Colleges of Education, Education Centres and other continuous professional development (CPD) courses are available for staff development .

In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil himself/herself or the safety of other pupils or staff:

1. The pupil will be immediately removed from the situation.
2. Parents are immediately contacted and alerted to the situation.
3. Parents may be asked to remove the pupil from the school for a period of time (depending on the severity of the incident).

## **Assault of a Staff Member**

In the event that a pupil assaults a staff member:

1. The pupil will be immediately removed from the situation.
2. Parents are immediately contacted and alerted to the situation.
3. Parents will be asked to remove the pupil from the school for the remainder of the day.
4. The pupil may be suspended for up to one week.
5. The Board of Management will be informed of the incident.
6. A meeting with parents must take place within three days.

## **Suspension/ Expulsion**

The Board of Management has devolved authority for suspension to a joint decision by the Principal and Chairperson of the Board. This decision will only be taken after exhausting all other possible options and following fair procedures.

The decision to suspend a pupil 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 constitute a threat to safety
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property
- A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension. (Reference page 71 of NEWB guidelines for Codes of Behaviour.)
- For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, suspension may be considered. The school will ensure that it follows fair procedures when proposing to suspend or expel a student. The school will inform the student and their parents about the complaint and the parents and pupils will be given an opportunity to respond before any sanction is imposed. A meeting with the student and their parents provides an opportunity to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour.
- In exceptional circumstances the principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff or any other persons. Where an immediate suspension is considered to be warranted by the Principal, a preliminary investigation will be conducted and a formal investigation will follow the imposition of the suspension. All of the conditions for suspension apply to immediate suspension. No suspension including an immediate suspension should be open-ended
- Procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion will be in accordance with the *NEWB Developing a Code of Behaviour Guidelines, 2008*.
- Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with *Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000*. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with *Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act*. Suspension allows the pupil time with her/his parent/guardian, to reflect on the behaviour, to acknowledge and accept responsibility for the behaviour and to address what needs to happen in order to change the behaviour. It affords the staff time to plan and seek appropriate support for the pupil. Depending on the nature and extent of the misbehaviour, support will be sought from other agencies e.g. National Council for Special Education, National Education Welfare Board, the National Educational Psychological Service, HSE Community Services and Child Guidance Services or Adolescent Mental Health Services

## **Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)**

- A suspension may be removed if the Board of Management decides to remove the suspension for any reason
- Following or 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 will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class

- *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 Dept. of Education and Skills 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.*

## **Roles and Responsibility**

The Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Behaviour, which falls to the Principal on a daily basis. The staff, parents, pupils and school community also play their part as detailed throughout this policy

## **Attendance/Education Welfare Act**

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (2)(e) states that the code of behaviour must specify, "the procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school." Section 18 stipulates that parents must notify the school of a student's absence and the reason for this absence.

In the case of a child being absent, a message should be sent to the class teacher or school's office email explaining the child's absence from school. There is a statutory obligation to notify the Education Welfare Board of absences of 20 days or more. Daily attendance and punctuality are required from pupils. Any child wishing to leave school early must have a note signed/email sent to the school by the parent/guardian. The Education Welfare Officer is available to support parents with attendance issues.

## **Success Criteria**

- Pupils will be happy and feel safe in school.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils
- Parents and visitors observation of positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment
- Pupils will be punctual and their attendance will be exemplary.

## **Related Policies**

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Health and Safety Statement
- Enrolment Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- SEN Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy