



Code of Behaviour Policy

Introductory Statement

The school has a central role in the children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. An effective code of behaviour is central to the proper running of any school. This policy is consistent with our vision for the school and that of an Edmund Rice School in particular. We at Scoil Íosagáin, believe that it is the right of every pupil and member of staff to be able to work in a safe and caring environment. We further believe that a school should be a place of learning and this learning should take place in a mutually respectful environment. In order to attain this, high standards of discipline are set and are expected to be adhered to by all. These rules are put into place to benefit both students and teachers alike and are an invaluable tool in creating and maintaining a positive atmosphere in the school.

Aims

- Encourage an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- Foster pride in our school and its community.
- Ensure that each student and staff member alike can work in a relatively disruption free, caring and safe environment.
- Develop an environment which is safe, supportive and conducive to learning.
- Ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement.
- Allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.

Golden Rules

1. We are kind and helpful.
2. We listen.
3. We are honest.
4. We work hard.
5. We look after property.
6. We respect ourselves and others.

Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour

We appreciate the importance each staff member, as well as parents, guardians and the Board of Management play in implementing and ensuring the effectiveness of this code of discipline and each of these parties were consulted in drawing up this code.

The staff are expected to:

- Treat all children, parents, the school community and the outside community with respect and dignity.
- Promote the use of positive behaviour which is considered a priority and this will do this by: modelling, recognising and reinforcing good behaviour.
- Positive everyday interactions between teachers and students.
- Good school and class routines.
- Clear boundaries and rules for children.
- Giving positive feedback about behaviour
- Involving the students in class rules.
- Sending home reports and making phone calls to report positive behaviours.

- Using positive reward systems in class, e.g. star charts, homework passes, Dojo points, student and group of the week, Informing the class each year of the school's golden rules.
- Give a student a daily/weekly report if warranted. This report will inform parents how their child is behaving in school on a daily/weekly basis.
- Devise if warranted a student behaviour plan in an effort to improve overall behaviour. Parents and the child (if deemed necessary) will be involved in devising this plan.
- Liaise with outside agencies e.g. Lucena Clinic, Enable Ireland, HSE in relation to specific children.
- Use circle time or another whole class method as a way of addressing a behavioural issue that arises within a class.
- Teach the Stay Safe and Walk Tall programmes.
- To monitor the behaviour of all children in the school and should respond accordingly to any incident of misbehaviour.

The Board of Management are expected to:

- Be consulted in reviewing, drafting and ratifying the Code of Behaviour.
- Support the principal and staff in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.
- Discuss serious breaches of behaviour (which may involve expulsion) brought to the attention of the Board by the principal.
- Provide the staff with a safe place to work.

Parents are expected to:

- Be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and support its implementation.
- Cooperate with the school's system of rewards and sanctions.
- Ensure their children are at school in time.
- Be courteous towards pupils and staff.
- To attend a meeting at the school when their child's behaviour is causing disruption/harm to their child and/or to other children. Initially, the meeting may be with the class teacher, but

the nature of the behaviour may warrant a meeting with a combination of the class teacher, HSCL and Principal. Strategies for modifying behaviour will be discussed and behaviour will be reviewed within an agreed timeframe.

- Be interested and support/encourage the child's school work.
- Support the use of the Class Dojo/ homework diary.
- Behave in a respectful manner towards all staff members.

Pupils are expected to:

- Contribute to devising classroom rules
 - Learn about taking personal responsibility for their behaviour, thus contributing to each other's wellbeing and the wellbeing of all members of the school community.
 - Appreciate the value of good behaviour to promote a positive learning atmosphere.
 - Learn how to express themselves at the junior level, e.g. "I didn't like it when..." in order to help them deal with various social situations that cause them distress.
 - Attending school regularly and punctually.
 - Do their best in class.
 - Help to create a positive and safe environment.
 - Respect staff.
 - Respect themselves and other students.
 - Allow other students to learn in a disruption free environment.
- Participate in all school activities.

Where does the policy apply?

The standards and rules contained in the Code of Behaviour policy apply before and after school on the school grounds, in the school and in any situation where the school, has duty of care to the pupils. Examples include school tours, games and extracurricular activities and attendance at events organised by the school as well as before and after school on school grounds. Where a student is alleged to have engaged in serious misbehaviour outside school, when not under the care or responsibility of the school, a judgement will be made if there is a clear connection with the school, or students from the school, and a demonstrable impact on its work, before the code of behaviour applies. The school authorities may need to get legal advice on this where the situation is complex.

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening time of 8.50 a.m. or after the official closing time of 2.30 p.m. (2nd-6th Class) 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.

Rewards and Sanctions

Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour

- The class teachers reward good behaviour in a class setting.
- Examples of recognition for positive behaviour and good work are verbal praise, points awarded on the Class Dojo, being sent to the Principal's office or positive note in the homework journal.

- At a class level, rewards are given at the discretion of the class teacher. Boy/group of the week/Golden time will be rewarded accordingly.
- There is a whole school approach to promoting good behaviour in a public setting. Eg. Points are given to all classes when lining up at the end of yard time. The class with the most points at the end of the month will be rewarded with a night off written homework.
- Good news is communicated to parents at parent teacher meetings (both formal and incidental), written comments in the Homework Journal/Class Dojo and end of year reports.

Parental Communication

Good and open communication is the cornerstone of a positive school atmosphere and culture. Teachers communicate with parents on a regular basis using a variety of means:

- School email
- Class Dojo/ School journal
- At home time at the school gate
- Phone calls

It is also emphasised with parents to let the relevant adult know of any concerns they may have with regard to their son in any aspect of their development.

There are two levels of inappropriate behaviours within our Code of Behaviour:

1. Mild/serious inappropriate behaviour
2. Gross problem behaviours : See appendix for examples of these behaviours.

Dealing with inappropriate behaviour:

Scoil Íosagáin operates a whole school discipline policy which is implemented by all classes. The Incredible Years' Show me/Give me 5 are the agreed school rules that the classes will follow. There is also an element of conflict resolution and reward rather than punishment being applied when dealing with challenging behaviour. Avoiding confrontations will be maintained at all times. Junior and senior classes have different reward systems coupled with the Class Dojo but all use the same traffic light system based around three stages.

A consistent approach employed by all staff are:

- Adults remain calm – important not to escalate the situation
- Child and behaviour are not one and the same
- All behaviours are a communication. Children do not often have the language required to express themselves properly.
- Children have the opportunity to calm down and once calm and health and safety of all is in place, the incident is addressed, in a calm, fair but firm manner.
- All will be familiar with the sanctions of the code of behaviour and these will be applied consistently.
- A restorative approach is also key to the process of addressing problem behaviours coming full circle. Discussing the incident, choices and actions taken and alternative approaches is required – this makes the connection between problem behaviours and

- expected behaviours and brings the matter to a close for all pupils involved.



The staged approach involves:

- Stage 1 (Yellow) warning given- reasoning with the pupil and advice on how to improve.
- Stage 2 (Orange) sanction given- extra work prescribed/loss of privileges. Pupil apologises sincerely (in writing where appropriate).
- Stage 3 (Red) sanction may include changing the environment- separation from peers/class. Detention during break if necessary. Parent informed and class record kept. Referral to the Principal, leading to implementation of more severe sanctions.
- Stage 4 : If consistent misbehaviour continues, a behaviour contract may need to be drawn up together with teachers and pupil. Serious problem behaviours are brought to the attention of the principal immediately (the Deputy Principal in the absence of the Principal). These problem behaviours can be a one-off incident of serious behaviours that affect the health and safety of others, and the effective teaching and learning of the class, impacting well-being. It can also be a build-up of both mild and moderate problem behaviours. Sanctions and adjustments, recording charts/ other necessary implementations can be utilised.

Yard incidents:

Incidents on the yard will be dealt with as follows

1. The pupil will be spoken to and reasoned with.
2. If necessary the pupil will accompany the teacher for the remainder of the yard or go to Time Out at a designated space.

3. The class teacher will be informed and the incident will be recorded in the yard book located in the office.
4. If a more serious incident occurred, a detailed record can be written into the Critical Incident Book located in the Principal's office.

Mobile Phone Usage

The use of camera phones or smart/gaming devices are not permitted in school. This policy includes school trips and tours. Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office remains the first point of contact and can ensure that children can be reached quickly.

Children with additional needs:

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. The school will ensure that expectations match pupils' capabilities, especially their understanding of same. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place where deemed necessary. These will involve consultation with parents and relevant school personnel under the guidance of the NEPS psychologist if and as appropriate. The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs to adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals. The pupils of AS classes have a specific psychological recommendation to require the support of a special class setting, and therefore require a differentiated approach to their learning and behavioural needs. Continuums of support are necessary to support the progress and development of the pupils, often outlining individual approaches to problem behaviours. These will require frequent review and adapting, especially if the problem behaviours persist.

Suspension

Process Leading to Suspension/Expulsion

The power of suspension is delegated to the principal by the school Board of Management. The delegation of such authority reflects the provisions of the Guidelines for Schools (NEWB), and any legal requirements, as directed by the Dept. of Education and Science.

The school will record incidences of consistent misbehaviour and serious misbehaviour. In the event of consistent or serious misbehaviour being recorded in the office file the following steps will be taken:

1. For gross/serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards any member of the school community will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour. In the case of gross misbehaviour by a pupil, the Principal may implement an immediate suspension of that pupil. This may be done when such a course of action is deemed necessary to secure the safety of any person in the school community and may be done even when the Board's approval may only be given subsequently.
2. Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, and where this involves a child who has been previously suspended, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed.

Parents/Guardians will be requested in writing to attend the school to meet with the Chairperson or Principal, or both. If the parents/Guardians do not give a clear and acceptable undertaking as to the future conduct of their child, then the child may be suspended for a period. All suspensions will be in accordance with the Rules for National schools and Education Welfare Act 2000.

The school will follow a fair process before they suspend any child. This process involves the parents/guardians right to be heard and to respond and to have the reason for the proposed suspension fully explained.

Immediate Suspension

- In the event of a once-off incident of serious misbehaviour, which in the opinion of the Principal or Chairperson of the Board of Management is deemed serious enough, the student may be immediately suspended (pending fair process). If the school principal deems it necessary, the school may require the parent to collect their child as soon as possible from the school. A phone call will also be made to ensure the parent(s)/Guardian(s) are aware of the situation.

Post Suspension

- The parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student (if deemed necessary) will be required to attend a meeting in the school to discuss the inappropriate behaviour and give assurances that this behaviour will not continue. The student will be re-admitted only when these assurances are given.
- If the misbehaviour continues after the suspension, the student may be immediately suspended but may be for a longer period (at the discretion of the Principal). If deemed necessary, a meeting with the principal, Chairperson of the Board of Management, teacher and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be required before a child will be re-admitted.
- Where allegations of criminal behaviour are made about a student, these will be referred to the Gardaí who have responsibility for investigating criminal matters.

Note:

- Parents of a pupil who has been suspended for 20 school days or more are entitled under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 to Appeal such a suspension.

Expulsion

Expulsion of a student, in extreme cases, will be in accordance with section 24 of the Education Welfare Act 2000 and will only be considered when:

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

Automatic Expulsion

The Board of Management may sanction automatic expulsion for the following prescribed behaviours:

1. Sexual Assault
2. Possession of illegal drugs in the school
3. Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
4. Actual violence or physical assault
5. Serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff
6. Any other serious misbehaviour that the Board of Management deem to warrant expulsion

In imposing expulsion as a sanction, due regard will be given to the following factors:

1. The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
2. The context of the behaviour
3. The impact of the behaviour
4. The interventions already implemented
5. Whether expulsion is an appropriate response
6. The possible impact of expulsion

Procedures to be followed in relation to expulsion

Investigation

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include the following.

Step 1

A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal in line with fair procedures. Inform student and their parents about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and the possibility that this investigation might lead to an expulsion. Parents and student will have an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed.

Parents will be informed in writing of the alleged misbehaviour and the proposed investigation. Parents will be given every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour.

Step 2

A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.

Step 3

Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.

Step 4

Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.

Step 5

Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.

Step 6

Confirmation of the decision to expel. In the event that the Board of Management of Scoil Íosagáin invokes its right to expel a student, the steps listed above will be followed, as detailed in the National Educational Welfare Board publication "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools".

Appeals Process

A decision to expel may be overturned if directed by the Department of Education and Science (following a Section 29 Appeal). Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education 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 parents/guardians. (Circular 22/02)

The parents/guardians will be informed of their right to appeal the decision in writing at the time suspension/expulsion. They will be supplied with the Appeals Application form (Circular 22/02)

The appeal must be made to Secretary General, Section 29 Appeals Unit, c/o Department of Education and Skills, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co Westmeath.

The school must be informed in writing of the decision to appeal. It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to prepare a response if and when an appeal is being investigated by the Department of Education and Skills.

Notification of a child's absence from school

When a child is absent, the parents/guardians are required to notify the school (contact office or teacher on Dojo) as to the reason. This is important as the school needs this to fill out their records at the end of the school year.

Incident occurring outside the school's grounds or school hours

Incidents occurring either outside the school grounds or school hours, that either directly or adversely affect any member of the staff or the reputation of the school, may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Code of Behaviour. This may include, but is not limited to cyber bullying (see Anti-Bullying Policy). If deemed necessary, suspension, or in extreme cases expulsion may occur.

Child Protection

Some inappropriate behaviours (e.g. Sexual, Bullying) may result in advice being sought of a referral being made to TUSLA on the grounds of child protection (See Child Protection Safety Statement).

Admissions Policy

The school Code of Behaviour is appended to the admission and participation policy for parental information. The full version of the Code of Behaviour will be given to parents of new children admitted to the school. Copies of the Code of Behaviour are available to all parents, at any stage upon request. Children enrolled in our school are required to cooperate with and support the school / Board of Management's Code of Behaviour. The BOM places Parents/Guardians responsible for ensuring that their children cooperate with said policies. Parents/guardians must sign and accept the school Code of Behaviour as a mandatory condition of enrolment in the school.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying behaviour will not be tolerated in Scoil Íosagáin. Behaviour of this nature will be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour. Please refer to our Anti-Bullying Policy for more details.

Review: This policy will be reviewed as necessary.

Ratification: This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____.

This school policy has been made available to school personnel and is readily accessible to parents on request.

Procedures for Notification of Student Absences from School:

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 18 stipulates that parents / guardians must notify the school of a student's absence and the reason for this absence.

Our school's policy in relation to explanation of student absences is that parents/guardians must send in a note informing teachers of their child's absence from school and the reason for this absence. The written notes must be signed and dated. (Verbal/email notification is insufficient.)

- Scoil Íosagáin will send an email/letter to parents/guardians if a child has missed 15 days and will be contacted when 20 days have been missed.
- Scoil Íosagáin uses the standard forms to report on student absences over 20 days to the Child and Family Agency (TUSLA).
- Scoil Íosagáin will inform the parents/guardians when they have notified the Child and Family Agency (TUSLA) that their child has been absent for 20 days or more.

See **Education Welfare Act 2000** for more details on reporting absence within Primary Schools

Appendix

Examples of Mild/Serious Misbehaviour

- Distracting or interrupting others/ the teacher.
- Wandering around the classroom or school
- Fidgeting or inattention
- Deliberately wasting time
- Careless or untidy work.
- Name calling/teasing
- Fighting: kicking, punching, pushing, pinching, hitting, throwing
- Rough play
- Threatening others
- Bad language
- Using a mobile phone on yard/in school building without permission

Examples of Serious/Gross Misbehaviours

- Constantly breaking mild misbehaviours (as stated above)
- Refusing to follow instruction or back-answering adults
- Using foul language Teasing/Bullying
- Any behaviour that interferes with other students 'learning.
- Abusing and vandalising property
- Defiant behaviour.
- Spitting
- Fighting or causing injury to others:
- Inappropriate sexual language, behaviour or gestures/touches.
- Aggressive or threatening behaviour towards a pupil or staff member.
- Bringing weapons to school or using objects as weapons in school e.g. knives of any form, catapults, guns of any form.
- Bringing harmful substances to school e.g. solvents, alcohol etc.
- Using technology in an inappropriate manner:
- Leaving the school grounds without permission: as above.
- Cyber Bullying (see Anti-Bullying Policy)
- Any act of assault against any pupil/staff member/parent/visitor.
- Wilful damage to property

Note:

- Any of the sanctions listed in “sanctions for minor misbehaviours” may be used for any of the behaviours listed above in the “Examples of minor misbehaviours.” And likewise, for the serious misbehaviours.
- The above lists are not exhaustive and therefore any misdemeanours that occur but are not mentioned above will be categorised into the above two categories.

- It is at the teachers' or principal's discretion to make a judgement in relation to which misdemeanour they consider the behaviour to fall within.
- Behaviours will be recorded in file if warranted.
- For pupils who manifest persistently serious misbehaviour, it might be necessary to involve outside agencies.

-