



Newtownmountkennedy Primary School

Code of Behaviour

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This policy is a collaboration between the Staff, Parents, Pupils and Board of Management of Newtownmountkennedy P.S. It follows a review of our previous Code of Behaviour and reflects the current approaches used by the staff of our school. This Code of Behaviour aims to ensure that Newtownmountkennedy P.S. provides a welcoming, safe and nurturing space for all pupils and staff.

RATIONALE

Newtownmountkennedy P.S. decided to review its Code of Behaviour at this time because

- Staff professional development has introduced new strategies in behaviour management
- The current code of behaviour does not reflect the procedures used in school currently
- It is a requirement of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000
- Requirement to update Code of Behaviour as a result of the publication of “Developing a Code of Behaviour, Guidelines for Schools” by National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) in 2008.

RELATIONSHIP TO CHARACTERISTIC ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

The purpose of this policy is to promote positive student behaviour and to allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious way. It is also to enhance the learning environment where children can make progress in all aspects of their development. It relates to the ethos of the school in that it nurtures each child to develop his/her potential in a caring and safe environment where the talents of each child are valued. This is achieved by a high level of respect and co-operation between staff, board of management, parents and pupils. All school staff will be made aware of the Code through email and/or hard copy. The Code takes into consideration the educational needs of the pupils, the environment of the school – i.e. the Catholic ethos and views of the Board of Management, Staff, Parents and pupils of all diversities. It is anticipated that everyone will commit to the code and while the school understands that families have their own parenting styles and values, the home and school are two different environments and the Code of Behaviour must be respected in the school environment

AIMS OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

- To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
- To foster the development of self-discipline and responsibility in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others.
- To facilitate the development and education of every child.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for all.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and the environment.
- To develop pupils' self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
- To provide guidance for teachers, pupils and parents on behavioural expectations.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.
- To ensure that behavioural expectations, rewards and consequences are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

IMPLEMENTATION

Every member of the school community has a role to play in implementing this Code of Behaviour. The number of rules will be kept to a minimum and positive behaviour will be emphasised. This code of behaviour will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupil and individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

SCHOOL RULES/BEHAVIOURAL EXPECTATIONS

Our code of behaviour focuses on promoting positive behaviour, which is built on respect – for oneself, for each other and for our school. The behavioural expectations of all students can be expressed simply as:

- Have respect for yourself
- Have respect for others
- Have respect for your school and community

Actions that do not conform to these expectations can be considered as unacceptable behaviour.

The expectations of students may vary slightly depending on age, context and arising needs of classes or individuals. School staff will use a variety of methods to ensure behavioural expectations are understood by all students and are implemented in a fair and consistent manner.

Strategies for promoting positive behaviour throughout the school

- developing clear and simple classroom rules in discussion with classes reflecting the 3 simple rules (see above).
- positive behaviour is recognised through use of
 - Dojo points
 - Praise of students
 - In-class reward systems
- Rewards include stars, stickers, certificates, homework passes, class privileges, Golden Time, additional activities.
- issues of behaviour are noticed and managed as early as possible through emphasising expectations of positive behaviour.
- Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is used as a structure within which to address the teaching of social skills.
- The Special Educational Teacher (SET) may provide support to the class teacher to address issues of behaviour in class.

- System of ongoing communication (e.g. phone calls, check-in meetings, written notes etc.) with parents when necessary/beneficial
- Unacceptable behaviour will result in consequences

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

A graded response to unacceptable behaviour will be decided by teachers on the basis of their professional judgement taking factors into consideration;

- individual needs of student
- age or stage of development of student
- is the student on a care plan?
- gravity/frequency of behaviour

Parents are encouraged to follow a “**ladder of referral**” when an issue of behaviour arises in school. The first point of contact on the ladder of referral is the class teacher. Should the issue not be resolved satisfactorily, then the Principal/Deputy Principal should be contacted.

Step 1: Class Teacher

Step 2: Principal/Deputy Principal

Step 3: Board of Management

Strategies to deal with unacceptable behaviour

Pathway of Interventions

- Reminders of behavioural expectations
- Verbal warning that actions are unacceptable or disruptive to teaching & learning
- Not earning Dojo points
- Loss/withdrawal of a class privilege
- Where incidents of unacceptable behaviour are repeated, a record of behaviours to be recorded by class teacher/SET
- Communication with parent
- Care plan - proactive & reactive strategies
- Temporary separation from peers and others (in class or yard)
- Referral to Principal/Deputy Principal
- Suspension
- Board of Management
- Expulsion

Examples of unacceptable behaviour

Unacceptable behaviour may be divided into three categories; minor, serious & gross.

The examples of behaviour are viewed as a guide to teachers when dealing with unacceptable behaviour. Other factors lead to teacher actions being adapted to address an incident of unacceptable behaviour.

MINOR	
<p>Examples of behaviour;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● disrupting lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ talking, walking around class without permission, making noises, shouting out ● running in school building ● ignoring adult instruction ● eating at inappropriate time ● isolated incidents of rough play ● incomplete work 	<p>Possible teacher actions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● reminders of expected behaviour ● verbal warning ● no Dojo points earned ● loss of privilege or withdrawal from class reward for brief period after repeated minor incidents ● if persistent, notify parents ● record incidents in teacher diary

SERIOUS	
<p>Examples of behaviour;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● constant disruption to class ● intentional stealing ● endangering self or others ● damage to school property or peers ● throwing objects ● inappropriate comments to staff and peers ● leaving school grounds without permission ● unacceptable language ● deliberately hurting a pupil or staff member ● use of mobile phone in school or electronic device without permission ● threatening other pupils or staff ● 	<p>Possible teacher actions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● time out for student - child goes to designated area in class ● child is moved to safe area outside of classroom ● other children in class are moved to a safe area outside of the classroom ● loss of privileges or class rewards ● communication with parents. ● formal meeting of parent with class teacher. Principal or Deputy Principal may be present. ● care plan introduced when incidents of serious behaviour are repeated. ● SET teacher may be asked for support with incidents of serious unacceptable behaviour ● record incidents of serious misbehaviour and store in student's file

GROSS	
<p>Examples of behaviour;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Act of assault (verbal or physical) against pupils, staff member, parent etc. ● Setting fire to school property ● Intentional damage to school property ● Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards pupils, parents or staff member 	<p>Possible actions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Principal & Board of Management to be notified. ● Principal and Board of Management to examine issue and determine consequences. ● They may consider suspension of a pupil(s).

PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION

The Board of Management and Staff of Newtownmountkennedy P.S. will follow the procedures for suspension and expulsion outlined in the Guidelines for Schools on Developing a Code of Behaviour (Chapters 10 – 12).

Fair procedures (i.e. the right to be heard and the right to impartiality) will be applied at all times. Accordingly, pupils and their parents will be fully informed about an allegation and the processes that will be used to investigate and decide the matter and they will be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation before a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed. In exceptional circumstances, the Principal/Board may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary when the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff of the school, or any other person (p73).

The Board of Management will also follow the factors to consider before suspending a student (p.72) and the factors to consider before proposing to expel a student (p82).

In relation to suspension,

- Communication to parents regarding the suspension of a pupil or the possibility of suspension will be in writing and copies of all correspondence will be retained. In some circumstances it may be necessary to contact parents by phone.
- The parents/guardians and the pupil will be invited to meet with the Principal and/or Board of Management to discuss the proposed suspension.
- The Board of Management has delegated responsibility for suspension to the principal in the event that immediate suspension of a pupil is warranted (Guidelines p73). The parents/guardians and child will be invited to discuss the matter with the Principal and the procedures governing suspension will be applied.

A written statement of the terms and date of the termination of a suspension will be given to parents/guardians. A suspension will not be for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is necessary in order to achieve a particular objective. The letter will confirm;

- the period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
 - the reasons for the suspension
 - any programme of study to be followed
 - the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents (for example, the pupil and parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)
 - the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
 - the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 Section 29).
- The suspension will be recorded on the NEWB '*Student Absence Report Form*' (when applicable).
 - When a period of suspension ends, the pupil will be re-admitted formally 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 Principal and/or the chairperson of the Board of Management.
- If a pupil continues to misbehave he may be suspended for a major fixed period (up to ten days) to allow for consultation with both the pupil and the pupil's parents/guardians to address the issues.
- As outlined above, parents/guardians and pupil will be given the opportunity to discuss the issues with the Principal/Board of Management.
- The Education Welfare Officer will be informed when a student has been suspended for six days or more cumulatively.
- Section 29 Appeal – when the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days the parents may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act and will be given information about how to appeal.

PROCEDURES FOR EXPULSION – The procedures outlined on pages 83 – 86 of the guidelines will be followed (see steps 1-6 below):

- Subsequent to the above suspension procedures and meetings with parents/guardians, if serious/gross incidents of misbehaviour continue, the pupil will be recommended for permanent exclusion (expulsion) by the Board of Management. This excludes expulsion for a first offence - see p. 81
- Step 1 – A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
- Step 2 – A recommendation to the Board of Management
- 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

UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIOUR

Staff are aware that there are a variety of factors that can affect behaviour. These factors include external and interpersonal factors such as; parent & family relationships, peer groups, community factors. Personal factors have an impact on the behaviour of an individual student such as; age, stage of development, temperament, physical & medical characteristics and ability to learn.

Pupils who show challenging behaviour repeatedly and require interventions to be put in place in school will be placed on a Care Plan.

Dealing with continuously disruptive pupils/serious incidents of Misbehaviour

The staff of Newtownmountkennedy PS will intervene early and positively when student behaviour does not meet the standards of behaviour expected in the school. Early involvement of parents is considered important. A problem-solving approach will be engaged to enable staff respond to unwanted behaviour (Guidelines p.46-47- N.E.W.B.). This may involve the following steps:

1. Gather information – understand the context and the factors that may be affecting behaviour.
2. Generate ideas about possible solutions that take account of the reasons why it may be happening.
3. Decide and agree on specific strategies.

4. Implement the agreed strategy consistently.
5. Review progress – evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the intervention.
6. Throughout, keep the relationship with the student as positive as possible - involve the student and parent.

Strategies to deal with continuously disruptive pupils and/or serious incidents of misbehaviour are as follows -

- The pupil will be warned officially to stop offending.
- The parents/guardians will be informed.
- Loss of Privileges
- The parents will be invited to meet either the class teacher, the Principal and/or the chairperson to discuss serious incidents of misbehaviour.
- The Board of Management may exclude the pupil from the school premises at break and/or lunch times.
- The Board of Management may arrange for the pupil to be accompanied by an adult from the classroom to the gate at assembly and dismissal times.
- In the event of a serious incident of misbehaviour or where a pupil is continuously disruptive the Board of Management may suspend him/her for a minor fixed period (one to three school days).
- A programme of intervention may also be formulated, in cooperation with the parents, to enable the child to manage and change his/her behaviour.

Care Plans

Care plans are individual plans aimed at supporting pupils to address issues of behaviour. Parents, staff and other relevant parties play a role in formulating a plan of action to support pupils to participate fully in school life.

Home School Community Liaison Co-Ordinator (HSCL)

When the need arises, the Home School Community Liaison Co-Ordinator (HSCL) can support parents in promoting positive behaviour of their child/children. The HSCL can be a vital link between parents and school when incidents of repeated misbehaviour occur. Some actions the HSCL may take to support parents are; facilitating meetings, communicating between school and home, sharing information on behaviour to families.

PUPILS WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Pupils with additional needs will be required to follow the school's 'Code of Behaviour' but teachers will use their professional judgement in relation to regularity and level of sanctions/consequences. While teachers must be seen to be fair in the eyes of other children who may have exhibited the same type of misdemeanours, they will also show leniency and understanding in relation to children with specific learning/behavioural difficulties. Parents of these children will be kept informed of their child's behaviour on a regular basis and may be requested to work with the school in devising effective strategies to help the child to manage his/her behaviour. This may involve working and co-operating with a Special Needs Assistant (SNA), if an SNA is deployed to assist a pupil/class. The devising of such strategies may also entail contacting and meeting with relevant out of school agencies. It should be noted that in certain incidents where pupils with special needs pose a threat to the safety of others in the class, the child or class will be removed from the room until the situation has been rectified.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

Practical indicators of the success of the policy include:

- Observation of behaviour in classrooms, corridors and the yard.

- A happy and caring school environment with teaching and learning taking place
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY

The people who have particular responsibility for aspects of the policy are

- Board of Management
- Principal
- All teachers & HSC
- Parents
- Pupils

The overall responsibility for behaviour within the school rests with the Principal.

However, the Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for behaviour under its management and a duty to ensure that a fair code of behaviour applies therein.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

This policy will apply from 1st September 2022

Teachers will discuss the code with the pupils in the school and formally teach/revise the expectations for behaviour each term so that pupils are aware of what is expected of them. Each teacher will ensure that their class develops classroom rules and that children agree to follow these.

Parents will also be informed of the code by Aladdin. Parents may request a copy of the Code sent to their homes.

TIMETABLE FOR REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed and, if necessary, amended each year or as and when the needs arises

RATIFICATION & COMMUNICATION

The Board of Management officially ratified this policy in June 2022.

The policy will be circulated to parents/guardians of applicants on enrolment.

Signed: Hugh McDaid, Chairperson

Signed: Deirdre Lennon, School Principal