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Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement

This Code of Behaviour has been devised by the staff of Scoil Cholmcille in consultation with the members of the Board of Management, and the Parents Association.

Rationale

- The Board of Management of Scoil Cholmcille decided to review the Behaviour Policy to ensure that it is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008.
- It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) which refers to the obligation on schools to prepare a Code of Behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in Section 23(2), that the Code of Behaviour shall specify:
 1. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
 2. The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
 3. The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
 4. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and
 5. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

Relationship to Characteristic Ethos

Scoil Cholmcille seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are nurtured and valued. The school climate and atmosphere are created by the actions and behaviour of everyone in the school. The behaviour of adults in a child's life, including parents and teachers, is a significant influence on how a child acts. The code will be most effective where there is a high level of openness and cooperation between staff, parents and pupils. A clear understanding among all the partners of the standards of behaviour required and the procedures to be adopted where there are breaches of the code also helps ensure a harmonious environment where all can work effectively.

Aims

In devising this code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. The aim is to create an ordered and orderly environment in which pupils can, through developing self-discipline, feel secure and make progress in all aspects of their development. This code of behaviour describes the school's expectations about how each member of the school community will help to make the

school a good place for teaching and learning. Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school and the over-riding aims will be –

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement;
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline;
- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others;
- To enhance the learning environment and allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development;
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community;
- To assist parents and children in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the Code and to seek their cooperation in the application of these procedures;
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school;
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.

Guidelines for Behaviour in the School

It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of cooperation among staff and between staff, parents and pupils. Every effort will be made to ensure that the code of behaviour is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner. The limits of behaviour are clearly defined and children become familiar with the consequences of behaviour beyond these limits. The over-riding principle governing this code is respect - respect for ourselves and others; our own and others' property and the environment.

Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Behaviour

The Board of Management and the Principal has overall responsibility for the implementation and on-going monitoring of this policy. However, all staff members have responsibility for their own classes and for the general school population when on yard duty or on any organised out-of-school activity. Senior students have a role to play and parents or other members of the school community may make comments or suggestions directly to the Principal. The school values the support and cooperation of parents in the promotion of this strategy. It is the policy of this school to actively promote good behaviour.

Teachers will use various strategies to promote good behaviour including star/reward charts, stickers, homework passes, group competition (groups compete, if someone misbehaves other groups get extra point), extra responsibilities in class and in the school, singling out for exceptional worthwhile achievements and efforts, and other incidental means of praise or reward.

Some teachers have training in Incredible Years and use this classroom management programme within their classrooms.

To facilitate new members of staff become familiar with practices within the school, discussion regarding the implementation of the code will always form part of the first staff meeting held each September. A copy of the code will be available to both parents and teachers on the school website.

The code will also be given to parents whenever they enrol a child in the school.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management

The Board of Management is expected to:

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment;
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code;
- Ratify the code;
- Ensure the code is communicated to the whole school community.

The Principal

The Principal is expected to:

- Promote a positive climate in the school;
- Ensure that the code of behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner;
- Arrange for a review of the code as required.

Teachers

Teachers can expect to:

- Be treated with respect;
- Teach in a well maintained physical environment relatively free from disruption;
- Get support and cooperation from colleagues and parents in order to achieve the school's aims and objectives;
- Be listened to and participate in decision making which affects their own work and that of the school in general;
- Work in an atmosphere that encourages professional development;
- Get support and professional advice from the Board of Management, Department of Education and Skills, the national Education Welfare Board, the National Council for Special Education and the National Educational Psychological Services to help to cater for the psychological, emotional and physical needs of their pupils;
- Have grievances dealt with according to agreed procedures as set out in the CPSMA handbook.

Teachers are expected to:

- Support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour;
- Be cognisant of their duty of care;
- Create a safe, welcoming atmosphere for their pupils;
- Praise desirable behaviour;
- Facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential;
- Be courteous, consistent and fair;
- Keep opportunities for disruption to a minimum;
- Keep record of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour;
- Provide support for colleagues.

Pupils

Pupils can expect to:

- Be treated fairly, consistently and with respect;
- To feel safe, respected and secure;
- Have positive behaviour reaffirmed;
- Have misbehaviour dealt with appropriately.

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school regularly and punctually;
- Wear a neat school uniform;
- Work quietly and safely to the best of their ability at all times;
- Respect the right of others pupils to learn;
- Show respect for all members of the school community;
- Respect school property, the property of others and their own belongings;
- Keep the school environment clean and tidy;
- Have the correct books and materials in school;
- Follow class rules;
- Move quietly and carefully around the school;
- Line up in an orderly manner before and after break;
- Stay on the premises and within designated areas during school times;
- Do their homework to the best of their ability.

Parents

Parents can expect to:

- Be treated with respect;
- Have a safe and welcoming environment for their child;
- Obtain recognition for individual differences among pupils having due regard for the resources that are available;
- Have fair and consistent procedures applied to the school's dealings with pupils;
- Receive progress reports in accordance with agreed school policy (P.T. meetings and end of year reports);
- Receive information on school's policies and procedures.

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their children attend school regularly and on time and that they are collected from school on time;
- Encourage their children to follow the school's Code of Behaviour;
- Ensure their children wear the school uniform;
- Ensure their children have the correct books and materials;
- Read written communication received from the school and respond appropriately;
- Report to the office if calling to the school during the day for any reason;
- Make an appointment beforehand if they need to see a teacher;
- Treat all members of the school community with respect;
- Provide a letter for all absenteeism;
- Inform the class teacher of any change to collection procedure for their children;
- Cooperate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulty to others;
- Communicate to the school problems which may affect their child's behaviour;

- Attend meetings at the school if requested;
- Help their children with their homework and ensure it is completed.

School Rules

In order to achieve a happy, healthy and safe working environment, where a sense of mutual respect is fostered, every pupil is expected to keep the following rules.

a. **Respect and Courtesy**

All pupils are expected to treat staff and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy. Inappropriate behaviour i.e. rough play, bad language, fighting, personal remarks, pushing, kicking, and spitting will not be tolerated.

School property and the property of others should be respected.

b. **Dress Code**

Pupils are required to wear the complete uniform every day except on the designated P.E. day.

Girls: Grey pinafore /skirt/ tailored trousers, blue shirt, (not polo shirt) navy cardigan/jumper and navy tie.

Boys: Grey trousers, blue shirt, grey jumper and navy tie.

The school track suit is worn on P.E. days.

P.E. Requirements: School tracksuit, white polo shirt and runners.

Please note:

- Inappropriate footwear, long earrings or expensive jewellery are not allowed.
- Facial and/or body piercings are not allowed
- Hairstyles should be neat and tidy and not impede schoolwork.
- Regular uniform inspections will be made.

c. **Healthy Lunches**

See Healthy Eating Policy which is available from the school office.

d. **Homework**

- Homework is expected to be well done, clean and neat.
- Checking and signing by parents/guardians on a daily basis is recommended.
- Incomplete homework must be explained in writing by a parent/guardian.

e. **Attendance**

- Each child is expected to be in school at 9.30a.m., when the bell rings. Children need to be collected promptly at home time.
- Pupils are expected to be present every day.
- A written note is expected to explain all absences.
- Pupils leaving school early must be collected from the school office.

f. **Movement throughout the school / school grounds**

- Entering and leaving the school must be done in an orderly manner.
- Pupils are asked to stand back and allow adults to pass.
- Running is strictly forbidden in classrooms and on corridors.

g. **Break-times**

- Classroom / corridor / yard supervisors are to be obeyed at all times.
- No re-entering the school building during the breaks without permission of teacher.
- During inclement weather pupils remain indoors in their classrooms and may play with the games provided or may watch a programme as selected by the teacher.

h. **Mobile Phones**

The school has a policy on the use of mobile phones. A copy of the policy may be collected from the office.

System for acknowledging good behaviour, progress and effort

Good behaviour is praised in a number of ways.

a. **For individuals, good behaviour may be acknowledged as follows:**

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval;
- A word of praise in front of group/class;
- A mention to the principal;
- A comment/smiley/sticker in the exercise book;
- A mention to parents (verbal or written);
- A mention at assembly;
- A treat e.g. if terms of a behaviour contract are fulfilled;
- A Pupil of the Week certificate.

b. **Group / Class**

1. A Group / Class treat such as:
 - Reduction in homework
 - Edible treat
 - DVD
 - Time given to preferred activity
 - Extra playtime
 - Additional technology time
2. For groups within a class a system of merit marks
3. A mention to the principal
4. A mention at assembly
5. A mention to parents

Consequences of unacceptable behaviour

Disapproval of unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with as follows:

1. Reprimand
2. Reasoning (making clear what behaviour was unacceptable);
3. Loss of privilege / weekend homework;
4. Withdrawal from class temporarily to 'time out' area of classroom;
5. Withdrawal from class temporarily to another classroom;
6. Withdrawal from yard temporarily to 'time out' area in yard/corridor;
7. Referral to Principal/Deputy;
8. Communication with parent; Losses and damage caused must be made good in all cases;
9. Suspension / expulsion.

Procedures for notifying the school about absences

Parents / Guardians are expected to communicate the reasons for the non-attendance of their child in Scoil Cholmcille by:

1. Notifying the school (e.g. phone call to Secretary / Principal) of the cause of the absence not later than the end of the third day of absence;
2. Sending in a signed dated explanation of absence when the pupil returns to school. Such notes are an important part of the record keeping done to fulfil the requirements of reporting to the NEWB.

When and where will behaviour be subjected to the Code of Behaviour?

Standards and rules in the Code of Behaviour will apply to all situations where the pupils are the responsibility of the school. This includes activities not within the school grounds.

Suspension

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the teacher, the Principal, and in some instances the Chairperson. If the parents (and the pupil) do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In some, exceptional circumstances, the Board of Management may authorise a reduced timetable for a pupil.

A reduced timetable (meaning a shorter day) is an exceptional measure used as an intervention strategy. It is most likely to be used in the event of a child; exhibiting behavioural issues which are causing repeated disruption to a class, where a child seems unable to cope with school or where a child's ongoing behaviour poses a threat to themselves or others. In these circumstances the principal will contact both the chairperson of the BoM for approval and the child's parents for consent. This reduced timetable will be reviewed at agreed intervals with an overall objective of a full school day for the pupil.

In cases where the school has serious concerns in relation to the managing of consistent/aggressive/dangerous behaviour, the principal may seek the advice of the appropriate external agencies (NEPS, SENO, EWO, SESS, Tusla, CAMHS) with the aim to manage the behaviour more effectively.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the health and safety of pupils and teachers, the Board has deferred responsibility to the Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Further suspensions will require Board of Management approval. This approval may be obtained at a regular meeting of the Board or at an emergency meeting at which the Chairperson and Principal have outlined for the Board the reasons why they feel it is necessary to impose a further suspension. In line with the requirements of the Education Welfare Act (2000), the Board of Management will inform the Education Welfare Board when any pupil's period of suspension equals or exceeds six school days.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following, or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s (and pupil) 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 and will not have a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils. 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.

Expulsion

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil in an extreme case e.g. where repeated incidents of serious misbehaviour interfere with the educational opportunities of fellow students or where there is a threat to the health and safety of either students or staff. Where expulsion is considered the school authorities will have tried a range of other interventions and will have formed the opinion that they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour. This sanction would be imposed under the terms of the Education Welfare Act (2000). Suspension/expulsion procedures are in accordance with the Education Act (1998).

Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science against some decisions of the Board of Management, including (1) permanent exclusion from a school and (2) suspension for a period which

would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student. (See Circular 22/02)

Before / After School

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening time of 9.20am. or after the official closing time of 2.10pm. (Infants) 3.10pm. (other classes) 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.

Reference to other Policies

Other school policies that have a bearing on the Code of Behaviour include:

- SPHE plan
- Anti-bullying
- Enrolment
- Tours
- Healthy Eating
- Special Educational Needs.

Success Criteria

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

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

Review

The code will be discussed at staff meetings and reviewed periodically.

Ratification and Communication

The policy will be posted on the school website and all parents notified by letter and by text message. Any parent who does not have access to the internet will be advised to call to the school to obtain a hard copy. As is evident from our 'School Ethos', all at Scoil Cholmcille are committed to the creation of a happy, secure and safe learning environment. These codes therefore are designed to direct behaviour for the common good and must be signed up to by parents/guardians before a child may be validly enrolled.

These codes were drawn up by the Board of Management in consultation with the School Staff and Parents' Association and reviewed and ratified on 20.01.2020.

Signed: Francis Conaghan
Chairperson to Board of Management

Signed: Nicola Mc Carthy
Principal

Appendix 1 -

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR DECLARATION

- I/WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I/WE HAVE READ SCOIL CHOLMCILLE'S CODE OF BEHAVIOUR ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE WWW.SCOILCHOLMCILLENEWTON.IE . WE ARE FAMILIAR WITH AND AGREE WITH ITS CONTENTS.

I/WE WISH TO ENROL MY/OUR CHILD IN SCOIL CHOLMCILLE.

SIGNED:

PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S)

DATE: _____