



Louisburgh NS

Scoil Náisiúnta Phádraig Naofa

Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement

It was agreed that a review of the Code of Behaviour of S.N. Phádraig Naofa would be carried out in the school year 2009 – 2010, to ensure existing policy is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008*.

Rationale It was necessary to review the Code of Behaviour at this particular time to ensure an orderly climate for learning in the school. 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:*

- The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
- The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
- The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
- The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student;
- The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

Louisburgh NS is a Catholic, co-educational school, which strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere in which the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral, social, emotional and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and nurtured. We endeavour to enhance self-esteem in the entire school community, to foster in the pupils respect for people and property and to encourage them to be thoughtful, responsible and caring. The Code of Behaviour intends to achieve these aims and all partners in the school are required to subscribe to it. A positive attitude permeates the code, which is based in respect, courtesy and self-discipline. The school rules are put in place to create a secure and harmonious environment for the pupils and staff. We recognise the uniqueness of each child and teach mutual respect for all people. Parents are recognised as the primary educators of their children. Teachers are recognised as professionals in education, and they work in partnership with parents. Louisburgh NS strives to foster a positive relationship between home and school.



Aims : The aims of implementing this policy are as follows;

- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school

Content of Policy

1. General Standards and Guidelines
2. Whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour involving Staff. Board of Management, Parents and Pupils
3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour in Classrooms, Playground and on other areas of the school and all school related activities.
4. Rewards and sanctions
 - Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour
 - Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour
 - Involving parents in management of problem behaviour
 - Managing aggressive or violent behaviour
5. Suspension / Expulsion
 - Suspension
 - Expulsion
 - Appeals
6. Keeping records
7. Procedure for notification of a pupil's absence from school
8. Reference to other policies



General Standards and Guidelines

Standards of Behaviour

Our Standards of Behaviour express the kind of behaviour and relationships that that will create a positive environment for teaching and learning. They reflect the following values;

- Respect for self and others
- Kindness and willingness to help others
- Courtesy and good manners
- Fairness
- Readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- Forgiveness

Factors influencing children's behaviour may sometimes need to be considered and accommodated.

Section 23 (4) of the Act further states that, prior to registering a pupil, the principal teacher shall provide the parents of the child with a copy of the school's code of behaviour. *More recently the Code of Behaviour will be published on school's website.*

General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour

- Pupils are expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable
- Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
- Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.
- Pupils are expected to obey a teacher's instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
- Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing, stating the reason for absence.



2. Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour

Staff

We recognise the importance of a strong sense of community within the school and the existence of a high level of co-operation among teachers, ancillary staff, pupils, parents, Board of Management and the Parents' Association. The overall responsibility for the behaviour within the school lies with the Principal. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour within his/ her class while sharing a common responsibility for good order on the school premises.

Approaches to Promoting Positive Behaviour

- Good Behaviour is modelled by staff
- Pupils are praised and rewarded for good behaviour individually and as a class
- Positive Behaviour incentives are established in each classroom
- Good behaviour is promoted at assemblies by school Principal
- This approach is maintained and improved from year to year.
- New parents/staff are given a copy of the Code of Behaviour or in more recent times it can be accessed on school's website.
- All parents are involved in the review of the Code of Behaviour
- All staff are involved in drawing up and reviews of Code of Behaviour
- Individual behavioural management programmes are set up for children with specific behavioural difficulties in conjunction with one or some of the following parents/ principal/class teacher / learning support teacher/ SNA's. These systems are reviewed regularly

The school's SPHE curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship.

The SPHE programme includes Circle time, Talk to me Tuesday, Anti-bullying lessons, Problem boxes in classes 2nd – 6th, self esteem classes, conflict resolution classes. Incidental issues are dealt with on a daily basis by staff.



Board of Management

The overall responsibility for ensuring that a code of behaviour is prepared rests with the Board of Management

- The Board of Management is consulted in reviewing/drafting of the code of behaviour regularly
- The Board of Management supports the code of behaviour in the school on an ongoing basis.
- The Board of Management supports the staff in implementing the code of behaviour e.g. provision of opportunities for staff development.
- Procedures are in place for the Board of Management to deal with serious breaches of behaviour.

Parents

- Co-operation between staff and parents is encouraged. The school operates an open door policy.
- Teachers and parents communicate through use of Parent/Teacher meetings, formal and informal, end of year reports and the homework diary/ folder /notes/phone calls and emails.
- Parents are invited to view a draft policy of the code of behaviour at review stage and to submit their ideas. *Please note final authority rests with the Board in accepting or rejecting such amendment*
- A copy of the code of behaviour is given to parents on the enrolment of their child or can be accessed on school's website.

It is expected that parents:

- ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually
- encourage their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work
- are aware of and co-operate with the school's rules and system of rewards and sanctions
- attend meetings at the school if requested
- help their children with homework if necessary and ensure that it is completed
- ensure their children have the necessary books and materials for school.
- share information with the principal/ teacher on issues that might affect a student's behaviour in school
- be aware of early warning systems e.g. note in homework diary/ phone call are employed to alert them of concerns regarding a child's behaviour, so that ways of helping a student can be discussed and agreed.



Pupils

Students are more likely to support a code of behaviour when they have helped to develop it.

- Code of Behaviour committee – 2 pupils from each room. This committee meets regularly with the principal and reports back to the class and visa versa. The purpose of this committee is to give the pupils a voice in the promotion of positive behaviour in the school.
- Pupils play an active role in the ongoing implementation of the code of behaviour by
 - Drafting rules for the classroom
 - Taking part in assemblies
 - Working on the Behaviour committee
 - Buddy systems for younger children and newcomers.
 - Referring to the code in class on a regular basis and applying the values in every class.
 - Discussing appropriate/inappropriate behaviour in class

Each pupil is expected to:

- Be well-behaved and to show respect for other children and adults
- Show respect for the property of the school and that of other children.
- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Do his/her best both in school and for homework.
- Help create a safe, positive school environment.

Behaviours that are not acceptable in S.N. Phádraig Naofa include:

- That which is hurtful – including bullying/ cyber bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation.
- That which interferes with teaching and learning.
- Threats or physical harm to another person.
- Theft or damage to property.



Positive strategies for managing behaviour

Classroom

Positive strategies which staff use to effectively manage behaviour in the classroom.

- Ground rules or behavioural expectations in each class are consistent with the ethos as expressed in the code of behaviour and which set a positive atmosphere for learning
- Pupil input in devising the class rules
- Teachers ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave
- A clear system of acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and sanctions for misbehaviour
- Classroom management techniques that ensure a variety of activities and methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation
- Regular rewards for good behaviour, e.g, stars, stickers, behaviour charts
- Praise for good behaviour.
- Principal visits to classroom to praise good behaviour.

Playground(s)

Positive strategies are implemented to promote good behaviour, to prevent behavioural difficulties and to deal with incidences of unacceptable behaviour.

- A concise set of playground rules which emphasise positive behaviour and make it clear what activities are permitted.
- Two teachers are responsible for yard supervision every day. SNA's assist the supervisors in the school yard and have responsibility for integrating special needs pupils in playground games. See Supervision Policy.
- Classes have designated areas of the playground on which to play. Infants – third class play in one yard. Fourth – sixth play on the other yard. Grass areas are allocated on rotation. (Changes have been made due to Covid 19 September 21.)
- Activities are organised in ways that will minimise misbehaviour. Lunchtimes leagues are organised from time to time. Children have access to specified equipment.
- Any misbehaviour is brought to the attention of the supervising teacher.
- Board games, jigsaws etc. are available in all classes on a wet day.
- Children go to and from the playground in organised lines
- Children who leave the playground to use the toilets must ask for permission.
- Children may only stay indoors during break time with written permission from parents. Class teacher must inform teacher on duty.



- Incidents of misbehaviour may be noted in incident book, child may be given 'time out' in designated area in school yard.

Other areas in the school

Positive strategies are implemented by the staff to prevent behavioural problems outside the classrooms. Children are expected to walk calmly in hallways at all times. They form an orderly line when leaving or re-entering classroom/school. Teachers ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave. Children are praised for their behaviour, corrected when behaving badly and encouraged to consider the effects of their behaviour on their own safety/happiness and that of others.

School related activities

Standards and rules contained in the code of behaviour apply in any situation where pupils are still the responsibility of the school. During school tours, trips, games and extra curricular activities children are expected to behave respectfully to teachers, supervisors, classmates and the general public and to obey those in charge of them.

Rewards and Sanctions

Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour

- Children are praised verbally by the class teacher - individually, in groups, whole class
- Positive behaviour systems are in place in individual classes e.g. stars, behaviour charts, star of the week, group achievement targets etc.
- Good behaviour is publicly recognised and acknowledged in the school at assemblies, principal visits to classrooms, in the yard, on trips.
- Pupil achievement is acknowledged and encouraged at assemblies, and incidentally throughout the year.
- 'Good news' is communicated to parents at parent teacher meetings, through homework diary, on 'end of year' report and incidentally throughout the year.
- Golden Ticket award system introduced in 2016.

Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour

These strategies are used in response to incidents of inappropriate behaviour in the following order:

- Verbal reprimand from class teacher
- Removal from the group (in class)
- Withdrawal of privileges by class teacher



- Withdrawal from the particular lesson or peer group – Time out
- Detention given by class teacher – break time/lunch time.
- Report to Principal, if warranted.
- Verbal reprimand from principal ,if warranted
- Written note/phone call to parents
- Meeting with parents and class teacher and principal if warranted.
- Individual behavioural management programme may have to be implemented in order to improve behaviour
- Formal report to the Board of Management

Consistency is ensured through staff discussion and agreement.

Involving parents in management of problem behaviour

When a pupil's behaviour is a source of concern

- Parents are contacted as at No. 8/9 above
- The classroom teacher seeks a meeting with the parent.
- When parents are invited to the school, the pupil's behaviour is outlined and the intervention of the parents is sought. It may be appropriate to involve the child for part of the meeting.

Parents will be informed of strategies/ sanctions and their co-operation will be sought. This may involve a written agreement.

Managing aggressive or violent misbehaviour

In S.N. Phádraig Naofa we strive to cultivate self-discipline, positive attitudes, tolerance and a spirit of co-operation in all pupils. Every effort will be made to assist a child who presents with emotional/ behavioural difficulties. Such pupils will be referred by the class teacher to the Learning Support teacher and / or Principal. In some cases it may be deemed necessary to refer the child to NEPS.

Parents may be advised to seek professional help and/ or child guidance services. It is most important that parents inform the school of any social, emotional, behavioural, intellectual problem which may exist at the earliest possible opportunity. All such information will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Strategies used for dealing with serious emotional and behavioural problems

- Children referred to NEPS may be referred for psychological involvement/ assessment.
- Through the Special Educational Needs Organiser, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Service Executive, NEPS, SESS, Family Support Services, DEIS co-ordinator etc...



- S.E.N. personnel may facilitate teachers in sharing practice and support in the management of challenging behaviour
- Principal and LSRT teachers act as mentors for particular children or in assisting teachers in the creation of individual behaviour plans for specific children
- Professional development is available to staff e.g. NEPS, SESS, Education Centres.
- If the school proposes to include physical restraint as a strategy for dealing with violent or threatening behaviour, it is advised to seek expert advice, competent legal advice and to read *Managing Challenging Behaviour - Guidelines for Teachers*, INTO 2004: 11
- 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, the school may need to take the following steps:
 - Removal of other children from the situation
 - Removal of offending child.
 - Parent contacted and asked to take the child home.
 - Individual Behaviour Plan implemented.
 - Risk Management Plan implemented.

As a last resort and in extreme cases physical intervention may be necessary to ensure the safety of other pupils.

Suspension / Expulsion

The entitlement to education is protected in a range of constitutional and legal provisions and in human rights Conventions. These legal protections for the individual student's right to education mean that decisions to suspend or expel a student are open to appeal and may be subject to judicial review by the High Court. Schools are required, under section 23(2) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, to include their procedures for suspension and expulsion in their code of behaviour.

Suspension

Suspension is defined as 'requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of days'.

The BOM of S.N. Phádraig Naofa has the authority to suspend a student. This authority may be delegated to the principal formally and in writing. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds e.g.

- Behaviour that has had a serious detrimental effect on the education process
- The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety



- The student is responsible for serious damage to property
- Behaviour that has had a serious effect on, or is a threat to, another student or staff member
- A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension

Procedures in respect of Suspension

Fair procedures will be followed when proposing to suspend a student. When a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension

- Students and their parents will be informed about the serious behaviour.
- Parents will be invited to meet with the class teacher and/ or Principal.
- Parents are informed about the behaviour, the investigations that have taken place, the evidence of such behaviour and the possibility of a suspension.
- Parents are given the opportunity to respond to the seriousness of the situation.
- If the student is to be suspended the period of suspension is discussed with the parents – usually one to three days. However in exceptional circumstances this may be increased. Periods of suspension longer than three days will be referred to the BOM.
- All correspondence will be recorded.

Appeals

Parents will also be advised of their right to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 as amended by the Education Act 2007 where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days. 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)

Our period of suspension is as stated in Section 11.6 of the NEWB Guidelines. When the pupil returns to school he/she will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. It should be noted that teachers, the Principal and the Board of Management do not wish to have to suspend any pupil and will only do so when every other possible avenue of action has been exhausted.

Expulsion

Expulsion of a pupil is a very serious step and one that will only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour such as;

- Behaviour that is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process



- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property

Before expulsion of a student the school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour such as;

- Meeting with parents to try to help the student to change his/her behaviour
- Making sure that parent/student understands the possible consequences of the behaviour if it persists
- Seeking the assistance of support agencies

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence eg.

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

Procedures in respect of Expulsion

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will be implemented.

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
- A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
- Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation, and the holding of a hearing.
- Board of Management's deliberations and actions following the hearing
- Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

A student will not be expelled until 20 days after the Education Welfare Board receive the written notification. The Board may consider it appropriate to suspend the student during this time.

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. Accordingly, schools should advise parents of this right of appeal and associated timeframe if it has been decided to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. 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)

Keeping records

- Teachers will keep a written record of incidents of repeated serious or gross misdemeanours– including date, time, location, description and action taken. Using his/her judgement he/she may report these incidents to the Deputy Principal or Principal.
- Formal records regarding serious misdemeanours should be kept by the class teacher in advance of meeting with parents.
- In the case of a child who shows little/no improvement in behaviour and shows a record of frequent serious misdemeanours, such records are sent to the Principal to be kept until the child's age of majority.
- These records may also outline improvements in the behaviour of the pupil
- Pupils' behaviour may be reported in the end-of year school report to parents.
- Incidents of misbehaviour in the school yard during recreation time are dealt with by the supervising personnel who may record them if deemed necessary. They may also be reported to the classroom teacher / principal.

Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school

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

- Strategies that are used to encourage school attendance
- Creating a stimulating and attractive school environment
- System for acknowledging/rewarding good or improved attendance
- Adapting curriculum content and methodologies to maximise relevance to pupils
- Making parents aware of the terms of the Education Welfare Act and its implications.
- Parents/guardians send in a note informing teachers in writing of their child's absence from school and the reason for this absence. These notes are filed and kept in the family records
- Parents are informed when their child has been absent for 15 days and 20 days
- Pupil absences are recorded on school attendance software and forwarded to the NEWB on standard forms.



Reference to other Policies

Other school policies have a bearing on the Code of Behaviour .

- Anti-bullying
- Enrolment
- Home / School links
- Health & Safety
- Equality
- SPHE
- Learning Support

Success Criteria

Practical indicators of the success of the policy

- Observation of 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

Reviewed 2010 & 2019

Date of next Review 2022/2023

