

Code of Behaviour – Convent Primary School, Mallow.

1. Purpose:

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school.

In Convent Primary School, Mallow we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school. The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises. Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school. This policy has been set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998. It has been formulated in a consultation process with parents, staff, Board of Management and Patron, the Bishop of Cloyne.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the admission of all pupils to Convent Primary School Mallow

3. Responsibilities

The Principal, parents/guardians, staff, pupils and Board of Management take shared responsibility and will ensure that the terms and conditions of the policy are adhered to in order to make sure that a fair and just process exists to safeguard the good of the school community.

4. Reference Documents

Education Act 1998

Education Welfare Act 2000

Convent Primary School Rules

Parent signature page

5. Policy

5.1 Aims of the Code of Behaviour

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others
- To facilitate the education and development of every child
- To foster respectful and caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the parent's handbook, availability of policies and an ethos of open communication

- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy

5.2 Organisational Issues

- The daily responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal. In the absence of the principal, the Deputy Principal assumes this responsibility. These duties are further delegated to other post-holders in the absence of the principal or deputy principal or other relevant members of staff.
- Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom, while sharing a common responsibility for maintaining a harmonious atmosphere within the school
- A rota of teachers for yard duty will be drawn up at the beginning of each school year and issues that arise in the yard will be dealt with by the teachers on duty on any given day (in consultation with the class teachers and/or principal if necessary).
- A pupil will be referred to the Principal for serious breaches of discipline and/or for repeated incidents of minor misbehaviour (as defined in the “misdemeanours” section of this document).
- Parents/Guardians of all new entrants to the school will be required to sign an acceptance form in respect of the school’s behaviour policy.
- Rewards and sanctions (as described in the “Disciplinary Measures” of this document) may be applied
- Records of serious misbehaviour will be retained in the school.
- The Board of Management reserves the right to modify details of this policy at short notice to deal with matters that were not foreseeable when the policy was drafted.
- Standards, rules and sanctions in this code apply in any situation where the student, although outside the school, is still the responsibility of the school e.g. school tours and trips, sports events. On occasion parents/guardians may be requested to accompany their child to school events for the comfort, safety or wellbeing of the child in so far as is reasonably possible.

5.3 The School Rules

At Convent Primary School, school rules are summarised in Four Statements which are:

1. Colour-coded: Red, Blue, Yellow, Orange
2. Displayed in all classrooms and throughout the school
3. Regularly discussed in all classrooms and at assemblies.

5.3.1 The Rules:

The Red Rule: Safety:

We all have a right to feel safe. We also have a responsibility to ensure that everyone else feels safe.

The Blue Rule: Communication:

We all have a right to communicate. We also have a responsibility to allow others to communicate.

The Yellow Rule: Learning:

We all have a right to learn. We also have a responsibility to allow others to learn.

The Orange Rule: Respect:

We all have a right to be treated with respect. We also have a responsibility to allow others to be treated with respect.

5.4 Home School Communications

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school. A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly. Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life (in the past or present), which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following methods of communication are to be used within the school:

- Informal/formal Parent Teacher Meetings
- Communication via the Convent Primary School App
- Through children's homework journal
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- School notice board
- Newsletters/school website/e-mails
- Text-a-Parent service.

5.6 Attendance/Education Welfare Act

Under the Education Welfare Act 200, absences or lateness must be explained by parents/guardians. Absences of 15 days require a letter being sent to let parents know their child is at 15 days. Absences of 20 days or more must be referred by the school to Education Welfare Board. Any child wishing to leave school early must inform the school in advance, where possible. Any child leaving school before 2.40pm must be signed out from their classroom and reason for departure stated by parent/guardian in the class teacher's Sign Out Book. The Education Welfare Officer is available to support parents with attendance issues. Daily attendance and punctuality are required from pupils. School opens to receive pupils at 08:45 each morning. After a pupil has been absent, a note from the parents must be sent to the class teacher explaining reason for absence. This can be done either via the Convent Primary School App or in written letter form.

5.7 Disciplinary Measures

The purpose of a **Sanction** is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

1. helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
2. helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
3. helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
4. helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also

1. reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour
2. signal to other students and to staff that their well-being is being protected.
- 3 In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:
 - a) prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
 - b) keep the student, or other students or adults, safe

5.8 To ensure an atmosphere of good behaviour is nourished in Convent Primary School, praise may be given by means of:

1. A quiet word or gesture to show approval;
2. The use of Homework Passes to give homework (or part of it) off on one night. Use of Pen Passes to give no written homework on one night. These can be given to individuals, groups or entire classes etc.
3. A comment in a pupil's exercise book or diary.
4. A visit to another classroom or to the principal for commendation.
5. A mention to parents- via written or verbal communication
6. Golden Time
7. Whole class reward from class teacher.
8. Principal reward for whole class.

5.9 Unacceptable behaviour

Unacceptable behaviour may be **minor, serious or gross**. The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross will be judged by the teachers and/or Principal based on a common-sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours.

It should be noted that the lists of misdemeanours in this Code of Behaviour are examples only: It is not to be a totally comprehensive list of misdemeanours and procedural steps.

5.9.1 Examples of Minor Misdemeanours:

- Disrupting teaching & learning
- Interruptions in class
- Lack of cooperation in class (writing and passing notes, forgetting books, homework, stationery etc.) And in the yard (pushing and talking in the line)
- Not wearing appropriate uniform; bringing in chewing-gum
- Not following instructions.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with minor misdemeanours:

- Verbal reprimand
- Discussion with pupil re: the behaviour & refer to coloured rules displayed in each class
- Repeated minor misdemeanours will be communicated to parents

Note: The relevant teacher or teachers will decide on the relevant sanction(s) depending on the nature and number of misdemeanours.

5.9.2 Examples of Serious misdemeanours:

- Constant repetition of minor misdemeanour (i.e. no improvement following intervention)
- Refusing to complete work
- Bringing electronic equipment or mobile-phones to school. (In extreme emergency circumstances whereby, a child needs a mobile phone, permission must be sought from class teacher in advance).
- Constantly disruptive in class
- Disrespectful to school staff (back answering, giving cheek, ignoring staff, verbal abuse of staff)
- Using unacceptable language
- Rough play that poses a threat to the safety of others

- Graffiti on school furniture/property
- Bullying
- Telling lies
- Damaging or stealing another pupil's property
- Defiance to a teacher; continuous not listening, not carrying out instructions of teachers
- Refusal to Comply ref: Acceptable Use Policy

Possible consequences when dealing with serious misdemeanours:

- Reprimand by principal.
- May result in Loss of privileges (e.g. special treats which may include outings and/or representing the school at activities outside of school).
- Parents notified by class teacher/ Principal
- Supervised detention during break time
- In the case of repeated serious misdemeanours (i.e. following an intervention by a teacher and/or principal), the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the Parents/Guardians will be requested in writing to attend the school to meet the Principal. The situation will be brought to the notice of the parent(s)/guardian(s) and they will be asked to co-operate with the school in ensuring that their child (ren) behave in a safe and acceptable manner.
- In all cases of serious misdemeanours, teacher will ensure the incident will be recorded in the class Log of Actions, outlining the nature of the incident, why their behaviour was unacceptable and the child makes a commitment to acceptable behaviour in the future. In the case of a child with SEN, their level of understanding will be taken into account regarding this commitment.
- In the case of intentional damage to property/graffiti – making good the loss, by either repairing it or paying for it to be replaced, will be brought to the attention of the relevant parents/guardians.

5.9.3 Examples of Gross Misdemeanours:

- Stealing of valuables from another pupil, staff member or school
- Bullying after intervention
- Threatening behaviour
- Leaving school premises during school hours without appropriate permission (Gardaí and parents contacted immediately)
- Possession of illegal substances/weapons
- Injury of another child or staff member
- Serious damage to school property or to the property of pupils or staff.
- Aggression endangering the safety of the child or others
- Purposefully setting off fire alarm
- Continuous breach of school rules/ serious misdemeanours

5.9.4 Dealing with gross misdemeanours:

1. The principal will be informed of the situation
2. The safety of all concerned will be established through asking the pupil to accompany the principal, deputy principal or other post holder to the principal's office.
3. Parents/Guardians will be contacted and asked to meet with the principal who will outline the issues and seek the parents'/guardians' assistance and co-operation in remedying the situation

4. The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed of the situation as soon as possible. The Chairperson, in consultation with the principal, will decide if the matter should be discussed at a meeting of the Board of Management
5. A meeting of the Board of Management will be held as soon as possible
6. The Board of Management will discuss the matter and may suspend the pupil (See notes on suspension below) having due regard for the law of the school and the guidelines of the Department of Education and Science.
7. Alternatively, the Board may decide that an alternative sanction (from the list of sanctions in the Code of Behaviour) would be more appropriate.

6. Disciplinary Action

In the instance of repeated Minor, Serious or Gross Misdemeanours disciplinary action will be implemented as follows:

6.1 Suspension

- The Board of Management may sanction the suspension of a child following one or more instances of serious or gross misbehaviour or repeated minor misbehaviours, which are deemed sufficiently grave to warrant such action.
- Suspension may also be imposed if a child's behaviour does not improve to an acceptable level. The Board of Management will decide on the form and degree of suspension on the basis of the seriousness of the incident(s) and/or the degree to which earlier interventions have been unsuccessful in bringing about the desired change in behaviour.
- Parents/guardians will be asked to attend a meeting with the Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management if available. Parents/Guardians will be informed of all decisions re. Suspension. Suspension will be in accordance with Rule 130(5) of the Rules for National Schools.
- The Board of Management of Convent Primary School has formally delegated the authority to impose an 'Immediate Suspension' to the Principal Teacher. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.
- Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally and in writing delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an 'Automatic Suspension' for named behaviours detailed in this policy. An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

6.2 Suspension will operate as follows:

- Repeated serious misdemeanours following a one- or two-day suspension will result in a full suspension of three days.
- Three-day suspensions may be lifted, at the discretion of the Board of Management, following a meeting of the pupil, parent/guardian, with the school principal and the Management. At this meeting the pupil would be expected to a) apologise, b) make a commitment to obey the school rules and if appropriate, c) make good any loss to the school/other child/teacher etc. e.g. in the case of damaged property and/or agree to the imposition of a lesser sanction such as temporary removal from his/her peers during break times.
- Repeated serious misdemeanours following a three-day suspension will result in a further three day suspension.

(Immediate Suspension –In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person. Automatic Suspension –Particular named behaviours will result in automatic suspension).

6.3 Expulsion

This procedure may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

6.3.1 Grounds for Expulsion:

- Behaviour is persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- Continued presence of pupil constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- Pupil responsible for serious damage to property.

6.3.2 Automatic Expulsion

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

- Sexual Assault
- Possession of illegal drugs
- Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff.

6.3.3 Procedures in Respect to Expulsion

1. Detail investigation by school principal
2. Recommendation by principal to Board of Management
3. Board of Management considers Principal's recommendation and holds hearing
4. Board of Management decides if expulsion is appropriate. If BOM recommends expulsion, the B.O.M will propose a date which will allow a 20-day cooling off period.
5. Education Welfare Officer is informed of proposal to expel pupil and effective date of that proposal
6. Parents of the pupil are informed of rights to invoke a Section 29 appeal under the Education Act 1998
7. Education Welfare Officer arranges consultation
8. Confirmation of decision

7. Children with Special Educational Needs

1. All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with special educational needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules.
2. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning support/ resource teacher, and/or principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given.
3. Cognitive development will be considered at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable.
4. The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special educational needs 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.

8. Role of Parents

1. The support and cooperation of parents are essential to the effective operation of the Code of Discipline.
2. If teachers and parents are not working in harmony, inevitably the pupils will suffer. Parents will be informed at an early stage if problems occur and not simply at the point where possible suspensions are involved.
3. Parents are invited to keep in close contact with the school with regard to all aspects of child's progress.

9. Outside Agencies

The Board of Management in consultation with the parents will seek the advice of outside professional agencies in cases of extreme continuous behavioural problems.

Ratification and communication

1. This policy is ratified by the Board of Management and parents Association.
2. A copy of the policy will be given to each parent on enrolling a child.
3. Parents will be asked to sign a document agreeing to abide by this policy.
4. Class teachers will go through the document with each class with an appropriate manner depending on age.
5. Pupils will be asked to sign classroom and school rules annually.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in November 2020

Signed Rita Fitzgerald Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed Sheila O'Connor Principal/Secretary, Board of Management