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Code of Discipline

In devising the code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of our school. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adapt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school. The policy aims to create a positive school ethos, where learning and development can take place, and to promote the highest possible degree of consensus about standards of behaviour among staff, pupils, parents and guardians.

The school places greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions, in the belief that this will in the long run, give the best results.

The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences.

It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, pupils, parents and guardians.

In the belief that the most effective schools tend to be those with the best relationships with parents and guardians, every effort will be made by the principal and staff to ensure that parents and guardians are kept well informed and that the school provides a welcoming atmosphere towards parents and guardians.

The active support of parents and guardians make it easier to implement a policy on behaviour and discipline in the school. Parents and guardians can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, by attending at Parent/Teacher meeting and by informing the school about any fears, problems or difficulties that arise.

All efforts will be made to match the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and interests of each pupil. This should help to reduce boredom, lack of interest or lack of progress.

The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom, while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school. A pupil will be referred to Principal for serious breaches of discipline and for repeated incidents of minor misbehaviour.

Standards & rules usually apply in situation where thought outside the school, the student is still the responsibility of the school e.g. school tours, games, extracurricular activities, and attendance at events whereby the teachers and staff have accompanied the children there.

Aims of the code

- 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 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.

The School Code of Discipline and Behaviour covers:

1. The classroom.
2. The playground.
3. The school environment.
4. Activities away from the school premise.

The school expects students to commit to:

1. Attend school regularly & punctually.
2. Do his best in class.
3. Take responsibility for his work.
4. Keep the rules.
5. Help to create a safe, positive environment.
6. Respect staff.
7. Respect other students & their learning.
8. Participate in school activities.

Unacceptable Behaviour is behaviour that:

1. Is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination & victimisation)
2. Interferes with teaching & learning.
3. Threats or physical hurt to another person.
4. Damages property.
5. Theft.

Attendance at School

Pupils are required to attend school regularly and to be in time for school each day. Scoil Cholmcille opens to receive pupils at 9.05a.m. When a child is absent from school during part of a school day, or for a school day or more than a school day, the parents must notify the teacher/principal in writing of the reasons for the child's absence. In the case of a pupil being absent for part of a school day the parents must write an explanatory note which must be presented on the day the partial absence occurs. In the case of a pupil being absent for a school day or more than a school day the written explanation must be presented on the day the child returns to school following the absence. Written explanations have to be retained in the school in accordance with Section 21 of the Education Welfare Act.

School-related Activities off the School Premises

Children taking part in school-related activities off the school premises, such as educational outings and sports events, are required to act responsibly, to listen to and obey the instructions of teachers, supervisors and guides, to be courteous to others and to respect property.

Homework

It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis.

All homework must be done promptly and completely. Parents should sign the Homework Journal to confirm that all homework has been completed. Homework may include memorization, written assignments or other tasks.

If for some reason homework, or any part of it, cannot be completed parents are asked to note this in the Homework Journal. Written homework must be done neatly and carefully. Graffiti on textbooks and copybooks is discouraged.

Promotion Implementation

Where possible positive behaviour is promoted, through a system of rewards and positive re-enforcement. Good behaviour is rewarded through a system of traffic lights (green, orange (warning) and red (sanction) or using an online platform e.g. ClassDojo. Good behaviour equals rewards. This system enables pupils, parents/guardians and teachers to see that there are tangible benefits from behaving in a positive manner.

In order to create a positive atmosphere the school needs to establish a healthy balance between punishments and rewards. It is hoped that the children will realise that there are real benefits from positive behaviour for themselves and others but that negative behaviour will prevent them from participating fully in the reward system, will disrupt the other children and prevent them from learning and will interfere with their own learning.

Sanctions

It is accepted that there is a need for sanctions to register disapproval of unacceptable behaviour. The use of sanctions or consequences should be characterised by certain features. It must be clear why the sanctions are being applied.

- It must be clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions.
- Group punishment should be avoided as it breeds resentment.
- There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences.
- It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus.

Minor Misbehaviour in class

1. Warning – e.g. yellow light, red light. (Each teacher uses a positive re- inforcement system as outlined in Promotion and Implementation and the working system varies according to age of class)
2. If warnings are not heeded it may result in the loss of privileges / temporary separation from peers, friends/ detention during break/ prescribing additional work.
3. If a child continues to ignore repeated warnings they may be referred to the Principal or parent/guardian may be informed.

Minor Misbehaviour in the yard

- Separation from peers/ detention during break.

Major misbehaviour in class/in yard

Examples of major misbehaviour – refusal to comply with teachers’ instruction: physical or verbal abuse of another pupil or teacher: continually disrupting the class: serious damage to school property, another child’s property or teacher’s property; bullying.

1. Referral to Principal Teacher and communication with parents via serious behaviour note.
2. If the unacceptable behaviour continues the parents/guardians will be asked to meet Principal and class teacher.
3. Suspension and Expulsion procedures will be invoked.

Suspension and Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents/guardians will be utilised.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents/guardians concerned will be invited to the school to discuss their child’s case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or a pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents/guardians will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and Principal. If the parents/guardians 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 School and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to ensure the safety of the pupils the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding 3 school days pending a discussion with the parents/guardians. Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil the Board will notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension the parents may apply to have the pupil re-instated to the school. The parents/guardians 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 pupils own safety or that of other pupils or staff.

Children with Special 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. Specialised behaviour plans may be put in place in consultation with parents/guardians and the class teacher, learning support/resource teacher and the Principal will work closely with them to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account as will professional advice from psychological assessments.

Responsibility of Adults

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealing with the children and with each other as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we should aim to:

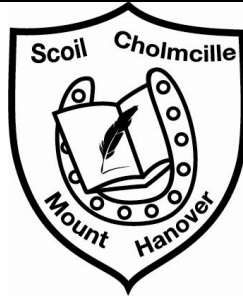
- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations.
- Promote honesty and courtesy.
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment.
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others.
- Ensure fair treatment of all regardless of age, gender, race, ability.
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.

Parents are requested to:

- Become familiar with the school's policy document in relation to discipline.
- Co-operate with the school with regard to the implementation of its policy on discipline.
- Communicate regularly with the school about factors likely to affect the behaviour of their children in school.

Should a parent/guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed with a teacher, all staff members are more than willing to facilitate a meeting, made through the proper channels i.e. a phone call to the office, or a note to the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties. The first person to be informed should be the class teacher. The teacher reserves the right to have the Principal/another class teacher present.

This arrangement ensures that all concerns are dealt with in a dignified, meaningful manner, without infringing on valuable teaching time.



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To the parents of _____ Date _____

I know that you are interested in your child's behavior. This note is my way of letting you know that the following behavior occurred today and needs to be addressed at home before the problem becomes more serious. Please feel free to call me if you have any questions.

Thank you for your support.

Please sign and return tomorrow: _____

- Biting
- Spitting
- Throwing stones
- Hitting/slapping another child intentionally
- Pulling down another child's trousers.
- Inappropriate language/behaviour

Supervised Time-Out

Dear Parents / Guardians,

I am writing to let you know that _____ will have supervised time-out from the yard on _____ for unacceptable yard / wet day behaviour.

_____ was responsible for:

- Deliberately hurting and causing injury to another child
- Using bad language / inappropriate language
- Continually disrupting and spoiling playtime for other children
- Refusing to co-operate with teacher on duty
- Disrespectful and insolent behaviour to teacher on yard duty
- Unsafe and dangerous play
- Continually engaging in bullying behaviour

Please talk to child and remind him / her of the importance of keeping the golden rule(s) for yard and /or wet days.

Signed: _____ (Teacher)

I have talked to _____ about the unacceptable behaviour. S/he promises to keep the golden rules for the yard.

Signed: _____ (Parent / Guardian)

Date: _____

Appointment letter regarding behaviour:

Dear Parents / Guardians,

You have received two reminder letters regarding _____'s behaviour. There is still no improvement. I would like to discuss this matter with you and your child.

Please make an appointment to meet with me as soon as possible.

Thank you for your support and co-operation

Class Teacher

Appointment

I would like to talk to you about my child's behaviour.

Day: _____ **Date:** _____ **Time:** _____

Signed: _____ *(Parent / Guardian)*

Please return signed letter to class teacher

Reminder Letter to Parents re Code of Discipline

Dear Parent(s) / Guardian(s),

Please talk to your child and remind him /her of the importance of keeping the following rule / rules:

- Behaving in class.
- Behaving in yard.
- Not deliberately hurting others.
- Listening and paying attention.
- Having respect for all members of the school community.
- Having respect for school property, their own belongings and others.

Teacher's comments: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

I have talked to my child about the above rules and he / she promises to try harder.

Signed: _____ (Parent / Guardian)