

Scoil Náisiúnta Tighearnáin Naofa.
Ardagh NS

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Ardagh National School

On receiving copies of the publication of the NEWB Guidelines,(2008) we reviewed our Code of Behaviour. Subsequent reviews took place in June, 2009. August 2012, June 2014, June 2015 and April 2019

We work with the pupils on revising classroom and yard rules through our SPHE lessons. Our code applies to everyday school life and includes school-linked activities such as swimming, games, field trips and school tours.

The Code of Behaviour will be reviewed regularly in consultation with all stake holders.

The Policy will work in tandem with other policies that Ardagh NS has in place which may have a bearing on Behaviour Policy, i.e. Anti-Bullying Policy, Attendance Policy, Homework Policy and S. P. H. E. Policy.

Ethos/Mission Statement

Scoil Tighearnáin Naofa, Ardagh National School, is a mixed multi-class rural Catholic School. The role of our school is to provide the highest possible standard of education for all its pupils. The school aims to present each child with opportunities to develop his or her powers, both intellectual and physical at their own rate.

Education is at the centre of the whole school experience. The atmosphere is one of caring, concern and encouragement, which enable each child to achieve his/her own goals, and progress at his/her own pace.

Each pupil is accepted as unique, bringing with him to school his/her own individual personality and his/her talents in varying degrees of ability.

The school also recognises that each child comes from a unique home and family background and that the home has a strong influence on the child.

The school exists for the benefit of the pupil and seeks to positively influence his/her growth through sympathetic encouragement and stimulation rather than by an authoritarian emphasis

Aims of Code of Behaviour

The code of behaviour aims to achieve three things:

- 1. The efficient operation of the school and the structuring of in-class discipline to allow for an efficient and stimulating learning environment.***
- 2. The maintenance of good order throughout the school and respect for the school environment.***
- 3. The development of self-discipline in pupils and training in good behaviour patterns based on consideration, respect and tolerance for others.***

In devising the code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of this 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 disruptive free environment.

The Board of Management endorses the view that good communication and effective co-operation between parents teachers and pupils is fundamental to the development of a happy

and effective learning environment.

Formal class meetings between parents and teachers are arranged annually and parents are given the opportunity to have a one to one meeting with the teacher. Student council representatives discuss the procedures outlined and Board of Management members review and ratify the document.

PASTORAL CARE

- Above all else, the pupil needs love, care and attention.
- We believe in dealing with issues at an early stage and not letting problems magnify. To that end, we encourage parents to come, by appointment, to the Principal or class teacher if they have any issues or concerns.
- Each pupil has a right to expect love unconditionally. We focus on individual issues or incidents rather than labelling a child.
- Each pupil has a right to care. Not only should he/she have his needs for food, clothing, shelter, etc looked after, but he/she also needs reassurance, encouragement, support and understanding. All staff members endeavour to be approachable at all times.
- Pupils should treat others, as they would wish to be treated themselves. Pupils are expected to behave in a responsible manner both to themselves and all others.

School Rules

Timekeeping:

School opening time is at 9.20am as class begins at 9.25am, the school insurance does not cover children who are on the school property outside of school hours. The school cannot accept any responsibility for children who arrive at school before the official opening time of 9.20am or for children who remain in the school grounds after 3.10pm.

Uniform:

Children are expected to wear the full school uniform on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. School tracksuits should be worn for P.E on Thursday and Friday.

Attendance:

The Department of Education and Skills has requested parents/guardians not to remove children from school outside of official school holidays as it can be very disruptive in the classroom if children go away on holiday during the school term.

A note of explanation for infants /and a note written at the back of children's homework journal for children from 1st to 6th classes, must accompany a child returning to school after an absence. Schools are now legally bound to inform Attendance Officers of children absences of 20 days or more.

Lunches:

In the interest of children's health and nutritional needs we discourage children from eating high sugar and or heavily processed foods such as high sugar drinks, crisps, biscuits, chocolate (including spreads) and sweets (including cereal bars) Attention is drawn for the need for a balanced diet and nutritious lunch.

We also encourage children to eat a healthy a substantial breakfast before coming to school.

Personal Hygiene:

In an effort to promote hygiene and to educate our young people in personal hygiene:

- Hands should be washed after going to the toilet.
- Long hair should be neatly tied back
- Children's hair should be checked regularly for lice.

Homework:

Homework is considered a necessary and important part of school life. Children should complete homework assignments to the best of their ability. Homework notebooks (Children 1st to 6th class) should be signed by the parents to show that the work has been completed, this notebook can be used as a means of communication with the class teacher.

Mobile Phones/ Communication/Photographic Devices

Personal communication, photographic or internet enabled devices such as mobiles phones or iPods are not allowed in school. If there is an exceptional circumstance where a parent requests that a child needs to take their mobile phone to school, permission must be sought in advance from the teacher/principal in writing. If granted the device will be powered off and securely stored in the secretary's office until home time.

General /Day to Day Rules.

- The children hold responsibility for the care of their own belongings including bicycles at all times.
- From when a pupil enters the school premises a level of behaviour is expected which conforms to the aims of the school and to the rules.
- The school considers that all members of the school should strive towards a high level of good manners.
- Respect for others, forms the basis of the code of good behaviour.
- Aggressive threatening or violent behaviour will generally be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour, depending on the circumstances.
- Polite language is expected from pupils and swearing is not tolerated.
- In the interest of safety, pupils never climb up on the boundary fence or walls.
- Once a pupil enters the school premises, they may not leave it again without the express permission of the class teacher and the Principal.
- If a parent wishes a child to leave school during school hours (e.g. to visit the dentist), it is essential that the class teacher receive such a request in writing or by phone. In the interest of the safety of a child it is essential that the child be collected from the classroom.
- During break, or before the bell rings in the morning, a child should never leave the yard without the express permission of a member of the teaching staff.
- Children are asked not to run around corners or in the corridors in the interest of safety.
- Children are allocated yard space according to their class level.
- It is expected that older children would at all times protect and care for younger children.
- Play fighting is not allowed due to the risk of accidental injury, and in the general interest of health and safety.
- Where a pupil has been corrected regarding a certain behaviour, it is understood that his/her instruction is to be obeyed, regardless of who is on duty.
- All children are expected to line up and walk in and out of class in an orderly fashion when the bell rings.
- All people using school premises are expected to walk when entering and exiting the school buildings, as running at these times is extremely hazardous.
- It is expected at all times school property and equipment will be treated with respect and causing damage to such is forbidden.

It is very important that children understand that they have rights. It is essential that they understand that with these rights come responsibilities.

All the above rules are designed in the best interest and safety of all the pupils of the school so that they may play and learn in a happy, healthy environment.

The aim of this code 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.

Strategies to promote positive behaviour.

- ✓ Verbal affirmation of positive behaviour is deployed by class teacher or Principal. Acknowledgement by principal of academic, sporting and extra curricular achievements; this is done by way of school assemblies, school website, school Twitter account and school Masses.
- ✓ At parent teacher meetings, we endeavour to accentuate the positive behaviour and attributes of the child in question.

- ✓ Shared reading/buddy system is a method we employ in the school, which we feel nurtures both academic progress and reinforces positive peer relations in the school.
- ✓ The school has fun days, football leagues, mini-sevens, sports days and we are involved with whole school initiatives such as Active School Week where the emphasis is on maximum participation and enjoyment.
- ✓ We are involved with the Green School Flag initiative and the pupils have been actively involved in the decision making process from infants through to sixth class.
- ✓ We respect and listen to student input and ideas via the Student Council which is elected yearly from within the student body.

Strategies to deal with misdemeanours for Junior and Senior Infants:

- At Junior Class level, Cloud System is used.

Strategies to deal with misbehaviour from 1st to 6th Classes including possible sanctions.

The following strategies may be utilised as appropriate ways to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour (not necessarily in this order).

1. ***Reasoning with the pupil.***
2. ***Advice on how to behave by class teacher or Principal.***
3. ***Temporary separation from peers, friends or others (in class)***
4. ***Referral to Principal, Loss of privileges, break time separation from peers (in playground) to reflect on their misbehaviour.***
5. ***Write a letter acknowledging fault and explaining nature of incident. This letter is to be signed by the Class Teacher and Principal and a photocopy is sent home to be signed by parent/guardian and returned to principal the next day.***
6. ***Meeting with parent/guardians to be requested to discuss behaviour issue and sanctions that might follow.***
7. ***Suspension.***
8. ***Expulsion.***

Children are encouraged to acknowledge their mistakes, make amends for any hurt caused and strive to improve their behaviour. In so far as is practicable, each day, every child starts on a clean sheet.

Suspension and Expulsion

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that

- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- 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.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

(Reference page 71 of NEWB guidelines for Codes of Behaviour).

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- The student's behaviour 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.

Where expulsion is considered, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

(Reference: Page 81 NEWB Guidelines).

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

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. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or 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 will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the principal. If the parents 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 the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Education Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act. (With regard to suspension, the Principal shall inform the education welfare officer, by notice in writing, when a student is suspended from a recognised school for a period of not less than 6 days. (sections 21 (4) (a).

Appeals

Under section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents 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 twenty school days or longer in one school year.

BULLYING

Bullying is a problem, which many children encounter nowadays. It can be a problem in all schools from time to time and one that requires co-operation between school and parents in seeking solutions. Bullying and intimidating behaviour in any form infringe the rights of children, parents and teachers.

Central to the aims of our Code of Behaviour is the elimination of bullying of any sort in our school. We believe in seeking to develop self discipline and good behaviour pattern in our pupils, an anti-bullying climate is created in which respect, caring, tolerance and responsibility for others is promoted.

We have a separate policy on Anti-Bullying that is available for viewing in the school.

Positive school climate

While there are procedural requirements in dealing with breaches of the Code of Behaviour, as laid out by the NEWB guidelines, we focus on promoting positive school behaviour and developing positive relationships in our school.

We also adopt a partnership approach with our parents, Board of Management and wider school community. This, we believe will assist us in reinforcing the Code of Behaviour in Ardagh National School.

Ardagh N. S. is a school with a very positive school climate. We aim to model positive behaviour for our pupils at all times and consequently, we believe that this enhances positive behaviour in all the pupils of our school.

Ratification by the BOM

Date: 2-5-2019

Signed: Red. Pat Kennedy
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Dates for review:

June 2009 ✓ June 2012, ✓ June 2014, ✓ June 2015, ✓ May 2019 ✓

Every two years subsequent to this or when the need arises.