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# Code of Behaviour

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## **1. Introduction**

This policy was reviewed and updated by the staff, pupils, Board of Management and parents/guardians of Cappataggle National School on \_\_\_\_\_.

The National Educational Welfare Board recent publication 'Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools' was used as a source during the review and updating process.

### **Rationale:**

The code of behaviour was reviewed because

- It is a priority area for our school.
- The existing policy is due for review and amendment.
- It is a requirement under D.E.S Curricular 20/90 on school discipline as per the Education Welfare Act 2000 Section 23 (1).

### **Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School**

- Order and discipline ensure effective teaching and learning and thus enable students to reach their full potential. It is our policy to encourage and acknowledge positive behaviour and to foster and develop qualities of leadership and responsibility in our students.
- We aim to maintain and build upon our high standards of teaching and learning.
- Community spirit in school through academic work, school activities and courtesy is acknowledged and rewarded.

### **Aims**

- To allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious way.
- To enhance the learning environment, 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/guardians 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.

## **2. Guidelines for Behaviour**

It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires high level of co-operation between staff, children and parents/guardians.

- ✚ **School begins at 8.50 a.m and finishes at 2.30 p.m.**  
Please note we cannot accept responsibility for pupils arriving before 8.40am. School ends at 2.30p.m. Pupils punctuality is greatly appreciated.
- ✚ **School day ends for infants at 1.30 p.m.**  
Please make arrangements to have your child collected at this time.
- ✚ Please label clearly all personal items especially clothing.

- ✚ It is compulsory to wear a full school uniform each day. Class teachers will advise if there is a change to this.  
*The uniform comprises of a light blue polo shirt, **royal blue V-neck** jumper and grey trousers or grey skinny fit tracksuit bottoms. Girls may also wear a grey pinafore or grey skirt with grey tights or socks. Pupils will wear the light blue polo shirt and royal blue V neck jumper every day to school.*
- Parents will be contacted if a child persistently does not wear their uniform.
- ✚ For the safety of our children hooped or dangling earrings are not to be worn. Only stud earrings allowed.
- ✚ We recommend that children bring healthy lunches and avoid junk food e.g. crisps, fizzy drinks, etc. See Healthy Eating Policy
- ✚ In the interest of safety for children no glass bottles are allowed. We advise keeping drink containers separate from school books i.e. in a separate compartment of the school bag/lunch bag.
- ✚ "Chewing gum" is banned on school premises.
- ✚ All forms of bullying are considered unacceptable. Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others. See Anti-Bullying Policy.
- ✚ Littering is strictly forbidden.
- ✚ **Attendances/absences:** It is expected that children attend school each day unless there is a legitimate excuse.
- ✚ It is necessary for parents/guardians to contact the school office, via phone or email, on each of the following occasions.
  - When a child is absent.
  - When a child is away for part of the day.
  - When a child wishes to leave school during the day.
- ✚ **If a child is ill we ask you to keep him/her at home until fully recovered. Please also see our Covid 19 Response Plan.**
- ✚ If your child/children are leaving the school permanently, please inform the Principal beforehand.
- ✚ **Mobile phones/IPads are not allowed in school.** If found they will be confiscated and kept until the end of the day and parents/guardians informed.
- ✚ In exceptional circumstances, and by prior arrangement with the principal, iPads/mobile phones can be locked away until home time once given in before school begins. No liability will be accepted for any loss or damage

### **3. Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Behaviour**

It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation between staff, parents/guardians and pupils. Through discussion between staff members, pupils and teachers, parents/guardian's, student council representatives, and Board of Management we agree that the focus in our school is on the promotion and recognition of positive behaviour.

### **Staff**

- A positive school ethos is based on the quality of relationships between teachers and the way in which pupils and teachers treat each other. The staff at our school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with children and with each other. The example set by adults in the school has an important influence of children.
- In our school we treat our children with respect and dignity. We recognise the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- As a staff our focus will primarily be the promotion and recognition of positive behaviour as advocated by the Incredible Years Training Programme, which many of the staff have become certified training.

We aim to:

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

The S.P.H.E curriculum will be used to support our Code of Behaviour. It aims to help children develop good communication skills and good positive self-esteem. It will also hopefully help them to grow up to become good responsible citizens.

### **Board of Management**

- The Board of Management has a role to play in the review of the existing Code of Behaviour.
- The Board of Management can support the school staff in their implementation of the Code of Behaviour by providing and facilitating opportunities for staff development. This can be done by encouraging staff to attend in-service courses, by facilitating projects which promote an orderly and harmonious school environment thus enhancing positive behaviour.
- The Board of Management will be aware of the procedures that are in place as part of the school Code of Behaviour when dealing with serious breaches of behaviour. These procedures will be cognisant of current legislation e.g. Education Welfare Act 2000 and Department of Education and Skills, Curricular 20/90

### **Parents/Guardians**

- Schools need the support of parents/guardians in order to meet legitimate expectations with regard to good behaviour and discipline.
- A copy of this reviewed Code of Behaviour will be sent to representative members of the Parents Association and they will be asked to give feedback with regard to its content.
- On the enrolment of their children a copy of the Code of Behaviour will be sent to parents/guardians. Parents/guardians are welcomed and encouraged to make an appointment to discuss with the Principal or teachers any concerns.
- A copy of the reviewed and sanctioned Code of Behaviour will be available to all parents/guardians on the school website [www.cappatagglens.com](http://www.cappatagglens.com)
- Where a problem arises parents/guardians will be involved at an early stage.

#### **Pupils**

- At the beginning of each year the class teacher will draft a Classroom Code of Behaviour with the children. These will reflect and support the school rules but, through discussion with the teacher, the children will take ownership of the rules themselves.
- Class rules will be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety, physical and emotional welfare of all members of the school community.
- Rules will emphasise positive behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner.
- A code of behaviour document will be given to each teacher at the beginning of the year and they will explain and discuss with the children the school rules with due regard to age difference.
- Yard rules will be discussed at school assemblies throughout the year.

#### **4. Positive Strategies for managing behaviour**

##### Classroom:

At the beginning of each year all teachers will receive a copy of this Code of Behaviour. They will discuss it with their own class and ensure that pupils understand how they are expected to behave. It will be explained to children that problems occurring during break-times will be dealt with by the teacher on duty and not carried back into the classroom. The class teacher will be informed if any follow-up is necessary, This code of behaviour will support the drawing up of a Classroom Code of Behaviour by pupils and teachers and thus create a positive atmosphere for learning.

##### Playgrounds:

Class teachers always lead their children from the playground. The teacher on duty will inform them of any behavioural incidents during playtime and whether follow-up action is needed.

#### **5. Rewards and Sanctions**

##### Rewards

Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to at all times by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards of behaviour as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for academic work.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given;

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book
- A visit to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class

- A system of merit marks or stickers
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parents/guardians, written or verbal communication

### Unacceptable Behaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour, parents/guardians will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the Principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of serious misbehaviour:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Repeated behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft

Examples of gross misbehaviour:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil
- Serious Theft
- Serious damage to property

### Sanctions

The use of sanctions or consequences will be characterised by certain features:

- It must be clear why the sanction is being applied.
- The consequence must relate as closely as possible to behaviour.
- It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid further sanctions
- There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offenses.
- It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus.

The following steps will be taken when the children behave inappropriately. The list is not necessarily in order and by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the features by which sanctions should be characterised.

1. Reasoning with the pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class
4. Prescribing extra work/punishment exercise to be signed by parent/guardian
5. Loss of privileges (Representing the school at competitions and school outings)
6. Time out off yard during break in specified area
7. Class teacher communication with parents/guardians
8. Referral to Principal
9. Principal communication with parents/guardians
10. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).

However sanctions should relate as closely as possible to behaviour. Therefore a child, who does not do his/her work in class or has not completed his/her homework without a note from parents/guardians, may be detained for part of break time to finish the work.

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health and safety.

It should be noted that these lists consist of examples only: It is not meant to be a totally comprehensive list of misdemeanours and procedural steps.

## 6. Managing aggressive or violent behaviour

Strategies for dealing with aggressive or violent behaviour once the above steps are exhausted:

- Children with emotional difficulties or manifesting aggressive or violent misbehaviour are referred for psychological assessment.
- Appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Services Executives, NEPS and other social care services.
- SNA's may be requested to support in the management of challenging behaviour.
- In the event of seriously threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil themselves or the safety of other pupils and staff parents may be requested to facilitate removal of the pupil from the school.
- A shorter school day for the pupil may, in some circumstances, be required to manage extremely challenging and disruptive behaviour.

### Suspension and Expulsion

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

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious behaviour suspension may be considered. Parents/guardians 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/guardians will be requested in writing to attend the school to meet the Chairperson and the 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 with 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/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 shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

### Removal or Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parents/guardians may apply to have the pupil reinstated 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 pupil's own safety or that of other pupils or staff. 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.

## **7. 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 will be put in place in consultation with parents/guardians, and the class teacher, learning support, resource teacher, and/or Principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the differences in all individuals.

## **8. Review and Implementation**

### Success Criteria

Success Criteria will be monitored by:

1. Positive feedback from teachers, parents/guardians and pupils.
2. Observation of behaviour in classrooms, corridors and yards.

### Roles and Responsibility

The Principal will co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of the policy.

### Timeframe for Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

### Ratification and Communication

Parents/guardians informed by school website

Parents/guardians input in form of suggestions/amendments etc. considered by the staff and the BoM.

Policy will be reviewed by B.O.M. as necessary

Ratified by Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of the Board of Management)

