

**Scoil Chormaic**  
COMMUNITY NATIONAL SCHOOL  
*SCOIL NAISIÚNTA POBAIL*



Castlemill, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin  
*Muileann an Chaisleáin, Baile Brigín, Co. BÁC*

# Code of Behaviour

## **Introductory Statement**

This policy was formulated as collaboration between Principal, Staff, School Manager and Parents. Courtesy, respect and general positive behaviour are expected at all times and this applies to the manner in which pupils treat staff, visitors and each other and in the care they take of their surroundings. Currently the school has a single school manager and it will eventually be managed by a Board of Management under the patron of Dublin Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board.

## **Aims**

- To provide a suitable environment for learning and teaching
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others ensuring a happy, secure and nurturing environment for pupils, teachers and all who work in the school.
- 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 developing pupils' self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
- To assist teachers, 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.
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.

## **Principles**

- 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 among staff and between staff, parents and pupils.
- The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- Every effort will be made to ensure that the code of discipline is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner.
- 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.

## **Implementation of Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Behaviour**

Within Scoil Chormaic CNS we have a detailed whole school approach to behaviour which clearly outlines the implementation of positive behaviour strategies and reward systems and when needed sanctions and steps to followed when behaviour is deemed unacceptable. (See Appendix 1)

Every member of our school community has a role to play in the implementation of the code of behaviour – parents, pupils and all staff members. Teachers and parents will lead by example and by treating each other and the children with respect and understanding. It is of the utmost importance that all partners in the education process are consistent, fair and vigilant. Emphasis is placed positive behaviour and affirmation of doing the right thing. Due regard will be given within reason to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage and help from outside agencies will be sought where necessary. It is the responsibility of every single member of staff to be observant of all behaviour, and whenever necessary to remind the children of school rules and the standards of behaviour we expect at Scoil Chormaic Community National School.

### **Rules**

**The following are School Rules for Scoil Chormaic CNS:**

- Kind Hands and Feet
- Kind Words
- Good Listening
- Good Work
- Respect for teachers and others
- Telling the truth

### **Promotion of Positive Behaviour**

In Scoil Chormaic we strive to place a great emphasis on positive reinforcement and adhere to this through a variety of ways:

#### **Praise**

- Verbal praise or gesture to show approval.
- A comment on a child's exercise book or work.
- A visit to another class or principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- Praise at assembly in front of the school group.
- Written or verbal communication with parent.
- Student of the Week.

### Individual and Class Rewards at Whole School Level

- Children earn a tick each day for adherence of school rules and each child receives an individual prize or activity at the end of the week/fortnight. (See Appendix 1)
- Children are awarded a Green Card on the yard for positive behaviour e.g. playing nicely, including others, sharing toys and the class with the most Green Cards at the end of each week earns a trophy.
- Each class has a compliment jar where classes can receive compliments on their work and behaviour within the school. A schedule of reinforcement is displayed in each room displaying activities earned.
- Individual class teachers merit awards, points awards or award stamps e.g. Dojo points, Group Stars etc.
- Golden Time may be given each Friday for children who have worked well all week.

### Discouraging misbehaviour

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour.

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

- Helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable and to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others and take responsibility for those actions.
- 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.
- It reinforces the boundaries set in the code of the behaviour and prevents serious disruption of teaching and learning while maintaining a safe environment for staff and students.

### Minor Misdemeanours

All cases of minor misdemeanours are dealt with the class teacher or supervising teacher and follow a list of sanctions that a teacher will follow if minor misdemeanours occur throughout the school day. Children following the sanction steps will firstly receive a warning from the teacher to alert the child to the behaviour and if these behaviours persist go through the appropriate steps. The number and sequence of steps vary from each year group to facilitate due regard for age and emotional development of those children. (see Appendix 1)

**Examples of minor misdemeanours:** Interrupting class work / Arriving late for school / Running in school building / Distracting others when working / Talking in class line / Leaving seat without permission / Talking out of turn and interrupting teacher / Leaving litter around school / Not wearing correct uniform / Being discourteous/unmannerly / Not completing work without good reason / Endangering self/fellow pupils in the school yard at break time / Repeated swinging in chair/ Name calling

### **Daily Steps when faced with minor misdemeanours:**

1. Non- verbal/ Verbal warning e.g. making pupil aware that you have noted their behaviour .(number of warnings dependant on class level, please see Appendix 1)
2. Move child's name to yellow traffic light.
3. Temporary separation from peers in class i.e. the thinking chair. Child completes worksheet for 5-10 minutes. Lose their reinforcement tick.
4. Temporary removal to another class. Child is given work to continue with in another classroom.
5. Move name to red, note goes home to parent, extra homework sent home.
6. Referral to the principal.
9. Principal communicates with parents.
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).

### Serous Misdemeanours

Any instances of serious misdemeanours result in immediate dismissal of the pupil from the classroom to the Principal's office. If a serious misdemeanour occurs in the playground the pupil is sent to the Den and their name is noted in the 'Red Book' and at a convenient time this pupil will be called to the Principal's office. The pupil discusses the incident with the Principal and fills out a reflection sheet to ascertain better choices that could have been made. A note is sent home to communicate the incident with parents and if two notes are sent home within the school year parents are asked to meet with the Principal.

No code of behaviour can be so exhaustive as to cater for all eventualities, therefore, we as a staff will be flexible in implementing the code so as to respond effectively to the individual needs and context of each child. The Principal will adopt a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours and in each individual case will be dealt with due regard to the individual pupil and their needs.

**Examples of serious misdemeanours:** Continued defiance and not following teacher instruction/ Deliberate damage to property/ Verbal abuse towards other children or adult/ Physical abuse with intent to hurt to other children or members of staff/ Throwing of objects to deliberately hurt others/ Continued fighting when asked to stop/ Spitting/ Deliberate exposing private parts to other/ Theft of any items from school or others/ leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission /using unacceptable language

## **Suspension/Expulsion**

### **Suspension**

In the case of a serious offence or repeated continual less serious misdemeanours the child may be suspended from school.

The authority to suspend lies in the following persons:

Principal: may suspend a child for up to 3 days.

Principal and BOM / Single Manager: may suspend a child for up to 5 days.

BOM / Single Manager: May suspend a child for up to 10 days.

Examples of offences that warrant suspension are:

- where the behaviour of the child has a seriously detrimental effect on the education of the other children.
- where the child poses a threat to the safety or wellbeing of other children, staff, themselves or others e.g. use of racist language, false accusation of wrong doing towards staff members.
- where there has been serious damage to property\*.
- where there has been theft of property\*.

\*property being defined as that of the school, pupil, staff member or any visitor on the school premises

When a child is suspended from school their parents/guardians will receive written notification confirming;

- The period of suspension and dates.
- Reasons for suspension.
- Arrangements for returning to school including any commitments to be entered into by the pupils and parents.
- Provision of appeal to the BOM / Single Manager.
- Notification of right to Section 29 appeal if total number of days suspension exceed 20.
- Allowances will be made for parents with reading or language difficulties, i.e. the suspension may be explained orally to them.

If a suspension exceeds 6 school days a report will be furnished by the school to TUSLA (Child and Family Agency)

### **Expulsion**

In the case of expulsion, the authority to expel will rest solely with the BOM/ Single Manager.

Grounds for expulsion include but are not limited to the following:

- behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- the continued presence of the pupil constitutes a real and significant threat to the safety of the staff, pupils, child themselves or others
- where the pupil is responsible for serious damage of property
- repeated offences of above behaviour.

The difference between behaviours that warrant suspension and expulsion are

- the degree of seriousness and persistence of behaviour.
- where an expulsion is considered a series of interventions will have been attempted by the school.
- all possibilities within the power of the school of changing the child's behaviour will have been exhausted (with the exception of cases warranting automatic expulsion).

The BOM /Single Manager may automatically expel a child for the following prescribed behaviours or in exceptional cases for a first offence, including;

- sexual assault
- possessing illegal drugs/ selling illegal drugs to other pupils
- actual violence or physical assault
- serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff

The following procedures in respect for expulsion will generally be followed.

- a detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the principal
- a recommendation by the principal to expel the child will be given to the BOM/ Single Manager

- the BOM / Single Manager will consider the principal's recommendation and will hold a hearing
- the BOM / Single Manager will decide whether or not expulsion is appropriate
- the EWO (Educational Welfare officer) will be informed and there will be a 20 day cooling off period after which a confirmation or otherwise of the decision to expel will be decided

Scoil Chormaic CNS takes every opportunity to work with pupils and parents in early intervention. The school also will provide where relevant the necessary information to support a referral for a professional assessment to support any pupils displaying significant behavioural difficulties.

### **Field Trips**

If a child's behaviour is considered to be a health and safety risk to themselves or others, they will not be permitted to go on field trips e.g. if a child has consistently misbehaved in school, extra supervision will not be provided to deal with such behaviour on school outings.

### **Pupils with SEN**

All pupils are required to comply with the school code of behaviour. However the school recognises that pupils with SEN may need additional support in understanding certain rules. Where possible, support is provided for pupils displaying challenging behaviours in a small group setting to teach the children strategies to assist the children follow the school rules as best they can. Where necessary individual behaviour plans will be put in place for these pupils in consultation with: class teachers, support teachers, principal and any other professional whose input is necessary.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Each staff member, pupil, parent and Board of Management member has a role to play in the implementation of this policy. Currently the School Principal and School Manager have the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

The elements of a whole-school approach to behaviour include:

- An ethos, policies and practices that are in harmony;
- A team-work approach to behaviour;
- A whole-school approach to curriculum and classroom management;
- An inclusive and involved school community;
- A systematic approach for planning and reviewing behaviour policy

**Board of Management:**

The overall responsibility for ensuring that a code of behaviour is in place rests with the school management. Management should make sure that all members of the school community have the opportunity to be involved in work on the code of behaviour. The board of management/ single school manager should formally record the adoption of the code of behaviour, the commencement date and decisions about when the code will be reviewed. Therefore, the code of behaviour will be discussed as part of management meetings in October of every year. Management will support the staff in implementing the code of behaviour, such as opportunities for staff development. Management will also carry out procedures that are in place to deal with serious misbehaviour. The school manager will carry out the duties of the boards of management until the establishment of such.

**Staff:**

It is the responsibility of staff as a whole to know, understand and respect the school's code of behaviour. Teachers will work with the principal and colleagues to foster an awareness and understanding of the code, within the school community, and a consistency in its implementation to create a safe working environment for each pupil. This code of behaviour is on the agenda of the September staff meeting every year. This familiarises new staff members with the policy in place in the school and allows for review of the policy. This policy is then reviewed as part of the May staff meeting or as part of school planning, in the context of the Haddington Road agreement, and review may also arise during the school year. This code will be available for viewing on the school website and staff server. Hard copies are kept in the Principal's office, Deputy Principal's office, Secretary's office and Staff resource room.

**Parents:**

Parents are involved in a consultative process regarding the code of behaviour. This will involve a review of the policy on a regular basis. It will be brought to parents' attention that this policy is available to be viewed on the school website.

- Parents are expected to ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually;
- Parents are expected to encourage their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work and actions;
- Parents are expected to make themselves aware of and co-operate with the school's rules and system of rewards and sanctions;
- Parents are expected to attend meetings at the school if requested.
- In the instance where parents are not fulfilling their duties the school will continue to proceed to the more serious sanctions listed in the code of behaviour

**Pupils:**

- Know, understand and respect the school's code of behaviour and follow the school rules.
- Attend school regularly and punctually.

- Interact with other pupils and staff respectfully.
- Listen to their teachers and follow teacher instruction.
- Show respect, kindness and empathy for all members of the school community
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.

### **Communication with Parents**

Communicating with parents/guardians is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents/Guardians 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.

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

- Informal/formal parent/teacher meetings
- Through children's homework sheet
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- School notice board
- School web-site/e-mails
- Text messages

As part of the whole school code of behaviour, as outlined previously, if a pupil reach a specific step on the sanctions list (see Appendix 1) a note will be sent home by the class teacher to inform parents of misdemeanour. When two such notes are sent home by the class teacher, a meeting is arranged with the parents. Likewise if the Principal sends home two such notes, again a meeting is arranged with parents. All meetings are conducted with the aim to develop a very positive/open relationship with parents/guardians and to enable them to help their child in collaboration with the school as much as possible.

### **Review and Ratification**

The Single Manager of Scoil Chormaic Community National School supports and fosters the development of this Code of Behaviour policy. This policy will be reviewed informally at planning meetings and formally on an annual basis, at the end of each academic year. As with all our policies, parents have access to this policy on our school website and on request to the school office.

This school plan was formulated by the principal and staff and approved by the Single school manager on \_\_\_\_\_

Single School Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parental / Guardian Agreement**

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read this code of behaviour

(Name of Parent/Guardian)

and understand its contents.

I agree to abide by its contents and procedures laid out and to ensure that my child,

\_\_\_\_\_ does likewise.

(Name of Child)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendices**

1. Whole School Code of Behaviour per year group, playground and office procedures.