

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR



Introductory Statement:

This policy has been drawn up thanks to the cooperation and involvement of all staff members. They drew from the valid principles already contained in the school's former code of discipline and from examples of good practice generally available. The purpose of the Discipline Policy is 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 pupils, parents and staff.

Rationale:

The aims of Primary Education may be briefly stated as follows:

- i. To enable the child to live a full life as a child.
- ii. To equip him/her to avail himself/herself of further education so that he/she may go on to live a full and useful life as an adult in society.

In order to facilitate this growth, discipline is essential for the smooth running of the school if it is to achieve its aim as an educational establishment. It is essential that pupils know that good discipline is demanded and that sanctions will be incurred for breaches of same.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of school:

Since this is a Catholic School, discipline and behaviour will be based on Catholic values and teachings.

In keeping with this ethos, we aim:

- i. To encourage children to be friendly, happy individuals with the ability and confidence to communicate with each other and with adults.
- ii. To develop all our children intellectually, spiritually, physically, aesthetically, emotionally and socially.
- iii. To encourage moral development through cultivation of good habits, good manners, honesty, respect for each other and authority through caring discipline.
- iv. To foster an understanding of human society and develop an awareness of the world in which they live.

To this end and to develop a child's good self-image we try to give our pupils skill in the following:

- i. Communication – written and oral
- ii. Reading and understanding
- iii. Thinking and judgment

Our aim is to provide a safe, happy, friendly, well ordered and stimulating learning environment for all our pupils. Our endeavour is to provide a curriculum suited to the needs of all pupils so that each may develop to their full potential. This is, hopefully, achieved by having guidelines to direct the behaviour of the individual for the good of all. It should help the child as he/she grows older to move away from an externally imposed discipline to become self disciplined.

Pupils are not permitted to take mobile phones to school, nor any electronic recording device. This also applies to school trips.

Guidelines:

THE CODE OF DISCIPLINE (including Examples of misbehaviour and sanctions) covers the following areas –

1. Behaviour in classrooms
2. Behaviour in yard
3. Behaviour in school environment
4. Bullying

BEHAVIOUR IN CLASS:

1. Pupils must be respectful and well mannered towards teachers, auxiliary staff, visitors and each other and generally behave in such a way as to bring credit to themselves, their parents and their school. Pupils must co-operate with instructions given by the teacher.
2. Pupils must respect the right of other pupils to learn. Any behaviour that interferes with this right e.g. constant disruption of the class or persistent distracting of others is considered unacceptable behaviour.
3. Pupils will stand to greet visitors and address them by name, if known. Senior classes will greet visitors through the medium of Irish.
4. Unnecessary noises and distractions are unacceptable in the classroom e.g. clicking fingers, muttering, sniggering – at any time and especially when others are being corrected; trying to be smart, facetious and attention seeking; making irrelevant comments, answering out of turn or back-answering, rocking or slouching on chairs, throwing items, writing or passing notes etc. Pupils are expected to behave in an orderly and safe manner within the classroom.
5. Pupils must make eye contact with the teacher when being spoken to on a one-to-one basis.

6. Pupils must not react in an unacceptable manner when corrected e.g. by protesting, by sulking, by answering back or by making cheeky or threatening remarks.
7. If, for any reason, a teacher is absent from the classroom, pupils must remain seated and not raise their voices above a conversational level.
8. Tipp-ex, rubber bands, chewing gum, mobile phones, hot drinks and glass bottles are forbidden.
9. Writing or marking of any kind on school furniture or walls is unacceptable behaviour.
10. The school uniform must be worn at all times except where exceptions are made for special lessons or events..
11. Jumpers, lunch boxes and flasks should be clearly marked.
12. Cigarettes, alcohol and drugs are forbidden on school premises.
13. Pupils must complete assigned work during the day. This should be carefully and neatly presented.
14. Pupils must complete assigned homework which may be oral/written, memorization or other tasks. Written homework should be neatly presented and signed by parents if requested.
15. Pupils should bring to school each day, pencils, copies, books etc. necessary to do their work properly.

EXAMPLES OF HOW MISBEHAVIOUR IN CLASS MAY BE DEALT WITH

The particular sanctions invoked will depend on the seriousness of the misbehaviour. These will be at the discretion of the teacher. This list is not exhaustive.

No school, however positive, can eliminate disciplinary difficulties. Even the most sensible and well adjusted children can at times be mischievous, over-exuberant or disruptive. Sometimes the task of creating and maintaining an orderly atmosphere for learning can be exceptionally demanding. Hence the need for sanctions to register disapproval of unacceptable behaviour and to protect the pupils. Sanctions are, as far as possible, related to the misbehaviour.

- i. The teacher may discuss misbehaviour with pupils and give advice on how to improve.
- ii. Pupil may be given extra homework which should be signed by parents.
- iii. Temporary separation from friend(s).
- iv. Child may be sent to another class.

- v. Incomplete homework may have to be completed.
- vi. Badly presented work may have to be redone.
- vii. The class teacher may meet with the parents of the pupil (the Principal may be informed that the meeting is taking place).
- viii. A note or comment may be written in the homework journal to be signed by parents.
- ix. If a pupil's behaviour is a source of danger/disruption he/she may be removed from that activity in which he/she is involved.
- x. Recompense is expected to be made by pupil/parent/guardian for damage, loss or theft of property.
- xi. Parents may be called to the school by the Principal to discuss pupils behaviour with a view to helping the child overcome the difficulty.

BEHAVIOUR IN YARD:

Pupils should treat others as they would like to be treated themselves. Any behaviour which endangers others is not permitted. Any behaviour which interferes with the play of others is also not permitted.

- i. Rough behaviour e.g. fighting, kicking, punching, biting, spitting, pushing, bad language, shoving, name calling etc. is forbidden.
- ii. Running/chasing games or activities which are considered to be dangerous are prohibited. Pupils may not leave their play yard for any reason during the breaks without the permission of the supervising teacher.
- iii. Retaliation by a pupil is also unacceptable.
- iv. If a pupil is hurt he/she should report the matter to the supervising teacher.
- v. Out of bound areas are: (a) behind or at the side of shelter (b) around the cars (c) at the sides of the school building.
- vi. Pupils may not cross the road or go over the fence for the ball without permission from the teacher on duty.
- vii. Pupils are not allowed to play ball on the driveway.
- viii. Pupils are not allowed to cycle inside the school gate.
- ix. All litter must be put in the bin.
- x. When the bell rings, children must go immediately to their lines and, when called, walk quietly into their classroom.
- xi. Children who line up at the back door must not run around the corner.

- xii. Climbing on basketball posts, fences and football goalposts is not allowed.
- xiii. Throwing inappropriate objects is forbidden.
- xiv. In case of inclement weather or dangerous conditions in the school playground, children will remain in their classroom at break time. Staff will supervise them.

EXAMPLES OF HOW MISBEHAVIOUR ON THE YARD MAY BE DEALT WITH:

- i. Teachers on supervision on yard during break times may warn the pupil as to his/her future behaviour and this warning will last for a period of one month. If there is a further incident of indiscipline, the teacher will impose a sanction and inform the class teacher of same. In the case of incidents in sports, the pupil will have to sit out from the game for a period of three relevant days (i.e. when play outside is possible). Children who otherwise misbehave may be asked to sit on the 'Timeout Seat' in the school porch for a period of one minute per year (e.g. a six-year old will sit for six minutes). Incidents of serious misbehaviour in the yard will be recorded at the back of the incident book kept in the staff room. This book will inform teachers on duty about the children who are, for example, under a warning.
- ii. The pupil is reprimanded by supervising teacher 'Re the misbehaviour and encouraged to behave.
- iii. Pupils may be isolated from peers. If pupils continue to misbehave a note to parents may be put in homework journal. Punishment may be given i.e. extra homework.
- iv. If there is no improvement in behaviour parents may be called to the school to discuss ways of helping the child overcome this problem.

BEHAVIOUR IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT:

For reasons of safety and to minimize accidents pupils should move about the school in a quite orderly manner. Pupils must show respect for school property and the property of others at all times. Courteous behaviour (e.g. standing back to let adults by doorways, greet teachers and adults) is expected at all times.

EXAMPLES OF MISBEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT:

- i. Running in corridors.
- ii. Shouting and talking loudly, thereby disrupting others.
- iii. Damage to and theft of school property.
- iv. Graffiti.
- v. Littering – litter bins are provided in yards each day at break times.

HOW MISBEHAVIOUR IN THE ENVIRONMENT IS DEALT WITH:

- i. The pupil is spoken to 'Re the misbehaviour and encouraged to improve.

- ii. Recompense is expected to be made by pupils or parent for damage, loss or theft of property.

BULLYING:

The school's Anti-bullying Code has been drawn up thanks to the co-operation and involvement of all staff members and the Board of Management. It is closely linked with our Code of behaviour and with the Catholic spirit of our school, which is:

'Treat others as you would have them treat you'.

Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, which should not be condoned, can scarcely be described as bullying. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing it is bullying.

The school has a comprehensive Anti-Bullying Policy. It was updated in 2010 and distributed to the parents. It is also given to all new parents on Intake Day.

OTHER ITEMS RELEVANT TO OUR CODE OF BEHAVIOUR:

Altar Servers:

Should your child/children be asked to serve at Masses during school hours, parents/guardians are requested to arrange for them to be collected at the school and returned again afterwards. If no travel arrangements have been made, the child in question will not be permitted to leave the supervision of the school.

The School Day:

The Board of Management of St. Conal's N.S. wishes to draw your attention to the following points with regard to the opening hours of the school:

- i. Morning supervision of children begins at 9.20a.m. *No responsibility is accepted for pupils arriving before that time and no supervision will take place before this time. Pupils should not arrive at the school gate before this time.*
- ii. If your child(ren) travel(s) by bus, ensure that the company/driver is aware that the start time of supervision is 9.20a.m. Pupils should not be dropped off before that time.
- iii. Teaching commences at 9.30a.m. The school authorities do not accept responsibility for children who gain access to the school grounds before 9.20a.m. or who remain on school property after 3.00p.m.
- iv. It is important that the school can contact a parent or authorised adult at all time in case of emergencies, such as a child's sickness or injury.
- v. The school day finishes for infants at 1:55p.m. All other classes finish at 3:00p.m. In the general interest of the children in the infant classes, Parents/Guardians are asked to have the children collected from school at 1.55p.m. each day.

Absences:

If your child is absent from school, it is important to send a note of explanation when your child returns. Should your child be ill during the night, or in the morning, please do not send him/her to school the following day. Children should not return to school until they are well enough to cope with the normal day's work. If, for health reasons, you wish your child/children to remain indoors during break times, you must send a note to the class teacher to that effect. It is important that a contact person be available at any one of the contact numbers given to us in the unlikely event of an emergency situation arising. Parents/Guardians should be aware that, by law, all primary schools are obliged to notify the National Education Welfare Board of any child who has missed 20 or more school days in the course of a school year.

Uniform:

We appreciate your contribution towards ensuring that each child is wearing the correct school uniform. Wherever we go on school outings, our pupils are complimented on the standard of dress. The uniform consists of grey polo shirt, grey socks, grey trousers, grey skirt or pinafore, royal blue crested jumper or cardigan and black shoes. Boots or shoes with very prominent heels are not permitted on safety grounds. All uniform jumpers, cardigans and jackets should be clearly marked with the child's name. Stud earrings are the only form of jewellery allowed for safety reasons. Hard head-bands are not permitted. Short-length boots may also be worn, provided they have a flat sole and are not dangerous to walk/run on. Runners are required for PE days or if the children wish to play on the football pitches at break-times. These can be hung in a plastic bag on the child's coat-hook in the classroom.

The Board of Management decided in January 2016 that astroturf-style runners (those with pimpled soles) would not be permitted, as they carry a lot of dirt into the school.

Lunches:

In the interest of your child's teeth and general health, we ask that you omit crisps and bars from the lunch box. Our school encourages a 'Healthy Eating' policy. We ask that lunch-boxes and re-usable liquid containers be clearly marked with the child's name. Glass bottles are not allowed, nor are hot drinks for safety reasons. Chewing gum is strictly forbidden.

Issuing of invitations:

We ask that invitations to birthday parties or cards for other occasions be delivered outside the school premises. The reason for this is to avoid the hurt felt by those children who are excluded. Likewise, children are discouraged from bringing sweets back to their class-mates on their return from holidays.

Hygiene:

You are advised to check your child's hair regularly. Due to close contact within classes, it is possible that head lice can be passed from one child to another. Shoulder length hair or longer should be tied back off the face in ponytail or similar. Parents/Guardians should examine their child/children's hair once a week. Should you discover that your child has contracted head lice, it would be important that you notify the school so that we may alert other Parents/Guardians. Confidentiality will be respected. The school should always be notified about children who have contacted any contagious illnesses. Students are prohibited from bringing hair-sprays, Tippex-like products or deodorant sprays into school. Neither are they permitted to wear make-up.

Contacting Staff:

Children are not allowed to make unsolicited contact with staff members via phone, text message, Facebook or any other form of communication.

SANCTION PROCEDURE:

- i. The following strategies will be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour:
- ii. Reasoning with pupil, reminding him/her of the rule and of the consequences of breaking it.
- iii. Reprimand, reminding pupil that this is a **second** offence and offering advice on how to improve.
- iv. Minor Sanction, at the discretion of class teacher – (e.g. temporary separation from friends or group). This indiscipline will be recorded on the child's Report Sheet.
- v. Referral to Principal. Alerting parents/guardians by way of extra homework assignment to be completed on 'Alert' sheet which must be signed by them on completion of the assignment.
- vi. Major Sanction – e.g. possible loss of opportunity to take part in out of school activities such as matches, quizzes, school trips, etc. This indiscipline will also be recorded on the child's Report Sheet.
- vii. Formal written communication with parents/guardians inviting them to come to the school to meet with the class teacher and the Principal.
- viii. If the pupil continues to misbehave, the matter will be considered to be extremely serious. The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents/guardians requested, in writing, to come to the school and to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. If parents/guardians cannot give an undertaking that the pupils will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the pupil may be suspended for a period. This will be in accordance with **Rule 130 (5) in Rules for National Schools**.
- ix. Under the terms of (Circular 20/90) of the Dept. of Education, continuously disruptive pupils or a pupil guilty of a serious breach of discipline may be excluded from the school. The maximum initial period of such exclusion shall be three school days. The B.O.M. has authorised the Principal to carry out this function. A special decision of the B.O.M. is necessary to authorize a further period of exclusion up to a maximum of ten school days to allow for consultation with the child's parents. In exceptional circumstances the Board may authorize a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed. The ultimate sanction of expulsion may only be carried out with the consent of the Patron.

Parents/guardians will be asked to pay for repair to or replacement of property deliberately damaged by their child. Given the tremendous commitment by the parents/guardians in the catchment area of St. Conal's School, it is highly unlikely that there will be any need for major sanctions to be imposed in the foreseeable future.

Success Criteria:

- i. This will be assessed through positive feedback from staff/parents/guardians on rules adopted and the sanctions employed.
- ii. Pupils should be more content knowing the extent and limitations of their freedom.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Rules and Regulations have been drawn up to ensure the smooth running of the school and for the safety and protection of the children. While some apply directly to children and others require the co-operation and assistance of parents/guardians, all to a greater or lesser extent require the close co-operation of Pupils, Parents/Guardians, Teachers and the Board of Management.

1. Parents/guardians are acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children and have a crucial role to play in shaping the attitudes, which produce good behaviour at school. They will be kept informed from the outset of instances of serious misbehaviour on the part of their children. The school considers it best to involve parents/guardians at an early stage rather than as a last resort.

Parents can help the school achieve its aims by:

- i. Encouraging your child to be mannerly, obedient, truthful, attentive and thoughtful to others.
 - ii. Keeping in touch with your child's teacher and actively supporting him/her with homework and given tasks. Listening to your child, making time for him/her, discussing school with your child. Reading to your child as frequently as you can and allowing your child to help with household tasks.
 - iv. Being mindful of the amount and type of television, video programmes and computer games you allow your child to view.
 - v. Reinforcing the School Rules from time to time at home with your children.
2. The staff members will consider themselves responsible at all times for the behaviour of children within sight or sound of them and will respond promptly and firmly to instances of unacceptable behaviour.
 3. The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal and Vice Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within that classroom while sharing common responsibility for good order in any area of the school premises.
 4. It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to ensure that this policy is enforced.

Timeframe for implementation and review:

This policy was updated in early 2011 and was reviewed by the staff and then the B.O.M. regularly in the years since.

Ratification and communication:

The Board of Management will ratify this policy in consultation with the staff and parents.