

Code of Behaviour



Dunboyne Senior Primary School June 2016

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1. Introduction

This Code of Behaviour document has been written by the staff of Dunboyne Senior Primary School. As a school we are concerned, not only with the academic development of our pupils but also with their emotional, social and moral growth.

The aim of our school community, i.e. Board of Management, staff, pupils and parents/guardians is to create a happy, caring and safe working environment for all.

We strive to create an environment where learning and teaching can take place successfully. Our Code of Behaviour is designed to help to achieve this goal. It places emphasis on the encouragement of and rewarding for good behaviour. Sanctions are also used.

Our Code of Behaviour relies on the fostering of good relations between Board of Management, teachers, pupils and parents/guardians. All parties share a common responsibility for the promotion of good behaviour by all with regard to school life. This applies both within the confines of the school building and when representing the school at external events.

Implementation of this Code of Behaviour policy is central to the provision of effective teaching and learning. It is a reflection of our school ethos and central to our Mission Statement.

2. Purpose and Aims of the Code

2.1 Purpose of the Code

This Code is in place to:

- ensure equality and fairness and also to maintain standards of good behaviour in the school;
- ensure compliance with the school's obligations under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, in particular regarding suspension and expulsion and in relation to the procedures to be followed around a child's absence from school;
- Ensure compliance with the legal requirements and the good practice standards as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, (2008)*. This document can be accessed at:

http://www.newb.ie/downloads/pdf/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf.

2.2 Aims of the Code

The code aims to:

- create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces appropriate behaviour;
- promote self-esteem and positive relationships;

- encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour;
- foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support appropriate behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others;
- facilitate the education and development of every child;
- foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment;
- enable teachers to teach and pupils to learn without disruption;
- make sure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the school policies and that there is an ethos of open communication;
- encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Adults/Teachers

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

As adults we should aim to:

- create a positive climate with realistic expectations;
- promote positive behaviour, through example, 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 for all regardless of age, gender, race, appearance, ability and disability;
- show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all;
- discourage physical aggression;

3.2 Pupils

Pupils can help enormously to make our school a positive, happy and effective learning environment by adhering to the school rules. (See Appendix 2)

Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the pupils. Class rules will be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Where possible they emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. 'Walk' instead of 'Don't run'). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual differences. Where difficulties arise, parents/guardians will be contacted at an early stage.

Behaviour in class

Courtesy and respect are essential. Disrespectful behaviour towards other pupils, teachers or other members of staff (e.g. defiance, cheek, insolence) is unacceptable. Pupils must respect the right of other pupils to learn. Any behaviour which interferes with this right (e.g. constant disruption of the class, persistent distracting of others) is considered unacceptable behaviour. In order that pupils benefit from their work in class, full co-operation is required at all times. Pupils should co-operate with instructions given by the teacher.

Behaviour in the Playground

Pupils should treat others as they would like to be treated themselves. Any behaviour which endangers or offends others is not permitted. Rough behaviour e.g. fighting, kicking, spitting and pushing is forbidden. Games or activities considered to be dangerous shall be prohibited.

Any behaviour which interferes with other pupils' play is not permitted. Pupils may not leave the playground for any reason during breaks without permission of the supervising teacher; this includes re-entering the school building.

Behaviour in the School Environment & Behaviour on School outings

Respect and courtesy to others is essential. Any kind of verbal or physical abuse of other pupils is unacceptable. Use of foul language among pupils is unacceptable. Bullying or intimidation of other pupils is prohibited and is always regarded as a serious offence. Pupils must show respect for school property at all times. For reasons of safety and to minimise accidents, pupils should move about the school in an orderly manner.

Pupils are encouraged to be respectful of each other on their way to and from school. When on school outings, pupils are expected to wear their school uniform and to behave in an orderly manner and show respect for public property. They should always co-operate fully with their teachers and staff. Pupils participating in a sport organised by the school must comply with the Sports Code of Conduct – see Appendix 1.

Bullying:

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying, extortion, isolation and persistent name calling
- cyber-bullying
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the traveller community
- bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs,

- bullying of pupils who are deemed to be very clever and
- bullying of younger pupils

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging do not fall within this definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once – off offensive or hurtful public message, or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with our school's Code of Behaviour

The school takes particular care to intervene early in responding to the needs, fears or anxieties of individuals in a sensitive manner.

Issues in relation to bullying are explored continually during SPHE lessons and using Circle Time, Drama etc.

If a parent/guardian has any concerns which need to be discussed with a teacher, they should contact the teacher as soon as possible by phone call to the school secretary's office and note to the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties to meet.

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

Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in line with the school's **Anti Bullying Policy and Anti Cyber Bullying Policy** [copies can be downloaded from school website].

School Opening and closing times [Clár ama na Scoile]

- Assembly: 9.15a.m
- School begins: 9.20a.m.
- School Closes: 3.00p.m. Monday to Thursday
- School Closes: 2.55p.m. on Fridays

Homework

It is the policy of the school to give homework on a regular basis. The time taken for this will vary from child to child – about 1 hour for 3rd and 4th class pupils and 1 - 2 hours for 5th and 6th class pupils.

Homework is recorded in the pupil's homework journal. The homework journal is an important communication tool between parents/guardians and the school.

Parents/guardians are strongly advised to take an active interest in their child's homework and parents/guardians should sign the homework journal to confirm that the work has been fully attempted.

If for some reason homework (or part of it) cannot be completed, parents/guardians are asked to note this in the homework journal.

Generally, homework is not given at weekends. Written work must be done neatly and carefully. Graffiti on textbooks and copy books is not permitted.

School Uniform

All pupils must wear the school uniform.

Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices

Mobile phones and other electronic devices are strictly forbidden. Any infringement of this rule will involve the confiscation of the phone or any other electronic device and it will only be returned to the parent or guardian of the pupil.

3.3 Parents/guardians

What might be expected of/and by Parents/guardians

Parents/guardians are expected to:

- Encourage their child to co-operate in implementing the Code of Behaviour
- Ensure their child attends school and are on time for school each day
- Equip their child with appropriate school materials, a sufficient healthy lunch and full uniform
- Take an active interest in their child's homework and sign the homework journal to say the work has been fully attempted
- Be courteous towards pupils, teachers and other staff
- Make an appointment to meet with a teacher/the Principal through the school office
- Respect school property and encourage their child to do the same
- Label coats and other personal property
- Strictly supervise pre-school pupils when on the school premises
- Comply with parking restrictions and access rules for vehicles to the school.

As the Board of Management is responsible for the safety, health, wellbeing and welfare of all staff and pupils, parents/guardians are not allowed to approach or reprimand another person's child on the school premises.

Attendance/Education Welfare Act

Under the Education Welfare Act 2000, absences or lateness must be explained by a brief note and signed by a parent/guardian. Absences of 20 days or more must be referred by the school to the Child and Family Agency (Tusla). The Education Welfare Officer is available to support parents/guardians of pupils with attendance issues. Daily attendance and punctuality are required from pupils. When a pupil has to leave school early (i.e. before 3.00pm) a note from parents/guardians must be brought to the class teacher stating the time at which the pupil is to leave. The Parent/designated adult who is collecting the child must report to the secretary's office before collecting their child

4. Pupils with Special Needs

All pupils are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However the school recognises that pupils 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 the 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 considered.

The pupils 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 difference in all individuals.

5. Rewards and Sanctions

5.1 Incentives/Reward System

Part of the vision of Dunboyne Senior Primary School is to help pupils achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and similarly that pupils use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Our reward system seeks to provide encouragement to all pupils of all abilities and talents. Pupils will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

The following are some samples of how praise will be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval;
- A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal;
- A visit to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation;
- A word of praise in front of a group or class;
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege;
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication;
- 'Bualadh Bos' in class.

Field trips, annual school tours and inter class leagues are rewards for those who have consistently strived to behave well.

5.2 Inappropriate Behaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: minor, serious and gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher, or the supervising teacher at break-times. 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 minor misbehaviour include:

- Interrupting class work;
- Running in school building;
- Leaving seat without permission at lunch time;
- Leaving litter around school;
- Not wearing correct uniform;
- Being discourteous/unmannerly;
- Not completing homework without good reason;
- Bringing crisps and fizzy drinks into school etc.

Examples of serious misbehaviour include:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation);
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning;
- Threats or physical hurt to another person;
- Damage to property;
- Theft;
- Bringing dangerous equipment to school;
- Leaving school/school activities without permission.

Examples of gross misbehaviour include:

- Verbal or physical assault on a teacher, member of staff or pupil;
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher, member of staff or pupil;
- Serious theft;
- Serious damage to property;
- Serious bullying;
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes.

5.3 Sanctions

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

- helping pupils to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable;
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others;

- helping pupils (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences;
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in the Code of Behaviour;
- signal to other pupils and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning;
- keep the pupil, other pupils or adults safe.

The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the circumstances involved. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupil devise strategies for this.

- Reasoning with pupil;
- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve;
- Prescribing extra work;
- Consequence Sheet – signed by parents/guardians ;
- Supervised detention during break;
- Referral to Principal;
- Communication with parents/guardians by class teacher;
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class;
- Principal communicating with parents/guardians ;
- Loss of privileges;
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and the Education Welfare Act 2000)

Usually sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

5.3.1 Inappropriate Sanctions

Inappropriate sanctions include:

- Physical punishment or the threat of physical punishment: physical chastisement of a pupil is illegal under Section 24 of the Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act 1997;
- Ridicule, sarcasm or remarks likely to undermine a pupil's self-confidence;
- Ridicule or private humiliation;
- Applying sanctions to whole groups or classes in cases of individual or small groups wrongdoing;

- Leaving a pupil in an unsupervised situation (e.g. a corridor) while in the care of the school;
- Persistent isolation of, or ignoring, a pupil in class;
- Sanctions that are used in a discriminatory way - the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004 require that schools do not discriminate in the use of sanctions.

Temporarily removing a pupil from the classroom to a supervised location may be appropriate in the interests of classroom management in order to ensure the learning of other pupils and to help the individual pupil to recognise and learn about the impact and consequences of their behaviour. However, consistently denying a pupil access to a particular part of the curriculum as a general sanction would not be appropriate.

5.3.2 The School's Duty of Care to Pupils

All teachers should ensure that, in applying a sanction, the duty of care to the pupil is maintained. The teacher's duty of care is a professional duty of care, reflecting the teacher's training, skill and knowledge. This duty requires that a pupil is appropriately supervised at all times while at school.

5.4 Suspension and Expulsion

Suspension is defined as 'requiring the pupil to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days' (NEWB guidelines, p.70). Exclusion for part of a school day, as a sanction, or asking parents/guardians to keep a pupil from school, as a sanction, counts as suspension. Suspension will be considered as part of a range of sanctions where a pupil has engaged in a serious or gross misbehaviour. While suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern, a single instance of serious misbehaviour may be grounds for suspension. The decision to suspend will be based on the following grounds:

- The seriously detrimental effect on the education of the other pupils of the pupil's behaviour to date;
- Whether the pupil's continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to safety;
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.

The purpose of suspension includes: providing a respite for staff and pupils, giving the pupil time to reflect on their actions and the staff time to plan ways of helping the pupil to change their behaviour. Suspension shall be used as part of an agreed plan to address the pupil's behaviour.

The procedures in respect of suspension are those outlined in section 11.5 of the NEWB 'Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools'. The Principal can suspend pupils for periods of up to three days. If a suspension for a longer period is being proposed, the Principal should refer to the Board of Management for consideration and approval. Reports to the Board and to the relevant authorities should be made in line with NEWB guidelines.

(Refer to pages 70-78, Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008
http://www.newb.ie/downloads/pdf/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf

Expulsion (permanent exclusion)

Under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, 'A pupil shall not be expelled from a school before the passing of twenty school days following the receipt of a notification under this section by an educational welfare officer' (Section 24(4)). It is the right of a Board of Management to take '...such other reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school concerned and that the safety of pupils is secured.' (Section 24(5)).

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil. This authority will be exercised in line with the procedures outlined on pages 80-87, Developing a Code of behaviour: Guidelines for School, NEWB, 2008.
http://www.newb.ie/downloads/pdf/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf.

5.5 Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents/guardians are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills against some decisions of the Board of Management, including (1) expulsion (permanent exclusion from a school) and (2) suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or pupil. (See Circular 22/02). Parents/guardians will be informed of their entitlement to appeal a decision of the Board of Management in relation to suspension or expulsion by letter from the Chairperson of the Board /Principal. Parents/guardians will be given a copy of Circular 22/02 and related forms. (Section 12, Circular 22/02 – Processing of an Appeal).
http://www.newb.ie/downloads/pdf/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf.

5.6 Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour 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 the 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.

6. Communicating with Parents/guardians

Parents/guardians of incoming pupils are provided with a copy of the Code of Behaviour.

Communicating with parents/guardians is central to maintaining good, positive relationships with pupils in our school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents/guardians have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to talk in confidence to the class teacher about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour or any other concerns that may arise.

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

- Informal/formal parent/teacher communication;
- Pupils' homework journal;
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school;
- Newsletters/school web-site.

7. Review

This Policy will be reviewed in May 2017.

Ratification

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson of the Board of Management.

Dunboyne Senior Primary School is under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Meath and operates in a spirit of respect, inclusiveness, fairness and equality for all.

Appendix 1

Dunboyne Senior Primary School Sports Code of Conduct

How I treat Myself.

- ❖ If I play below my best but try my best, I should not blame myself for a defeat. A defeat, the same as a victory, is brought about by a team.

Players from opposing teams.

- ❖ I should shake hands before and after the match.
- ❖ I should treat our opponents with respect.
- ❖ I should wish them well whether they win or lose.
- ❖ I should never deliberately hit an opponent.
- ❖ I should never lose my temper.

Our Own Team Coaches.

- ❖ I should respect our own team coaches.
- ❖ If I'm not picked to play in a match, I shouldn't complain.
- ❖ I should never use bad language.
- ❖ I should never be cheeky or back answer our own team coaches.
- ❖ If our own team coach is giving a pep talk or advising us, I should not interrupt.

Supporters and Coaches of Other Teams.

- ❖ I should respect adults supporting and coaching other teams.
- ❖ I should not use bad language.
- ❖ I should never give cheek to them.
- ❖ I should wish them well if I meet them after a game.

Fellow players.

- ❖ I should respect our fellow players and treat them as part of a team.
- ❖ The team includes the players and the substitutes – the full panel.
- ❖ I should show loyalty to everyone on our team.
- ❖ I should encourage my team mates and support them, even when they make mistakes.
- ❖ I should remember my team mates are always trying their best.

Referees

- ❖ I should respect the referee as he/she is in charge of the match.

- ❖ I should never give cheek or use bad language to the referee.
- ❖ I should remember that I can never change a referee's decision no matter what I say or do/a referee's decision is always final.
- ❖ If the referee's decision seems unfair, I should not give out, sulk, blame other people; instead I should get on with the game.
- ❖ I should shake hands with the referee and thank him/her after the game.

When participating in sport organised by Dunboyne Senior Primary School I agree to follow the above Sports Code of Conduct.

Player's Signature: Mother's Signature

Father's Signature:

Guardian's Signatures: Date:

Appendix 2



DUNBOYNE SENIOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rules of the School

Safety: For my own safety and that of others I should:

- a) Be careful coming to and going from school.
- b) Always walk while in the school building.
- c) Remain seated at all times in class and while eating lunch.
- d) Bring a note of explanation following absences.
- e) Never leave the school grounds without the permission of the Principal.

Caring for myself: For the care of my-self I should always:

- a) Respect myself and my property, keeping the area around my desk, my school bag, books and copies in good order.
- b) Be in the school line at 9.15 a.m.
- c) Show respect for my school and be proud to wear the complete school uniform every day.
- d) Be aware of my personal cleanliness.
- e) Bring a sensible, nutritional lunch to school. Crisps, minerals, chocolate, sweets and chewing gum are not permitted (including Fridays).
- f) Do **my best** in school by listening carefully, working as hard as I can and by completing my homework.

Caring for others: For the care of others I should always:

- a) Be kind and respectful to teachers, staff members and fellow pupils by being mannerly and polite, by taking turns and by remaining silent and orderly in my class line.
- b) Behave well in class so that my fellow pupils and I can learn.
- c) Be truthful and honest at all times.
- d) Show respect for the property of my fellow pupils, the school building and grounds.
- e) Keep my school clean, by bringing unfinished food and drinks, cartons, wrappers etc, home.

Bullying:

Never bully others. Never allow others to bully me and if it happens tell my parents/guardians and my teacher. Bullying is always unacceptable.

When attending Dunboyne Senior Primary School I agree to follow the above school rules.

Pupil's Signature: _____

Mother's Signature: _____

Father's Signature: _____

Guardian's Signatures: _____

Date: _____