

Ss. PETER & PAUL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, CLONMEL.

CODE OF CONDUCT.

1. Pupils are expected to wear full uniform always. School tracksuits are only to be worn for P.E. or when advised by the teacher.
2. Only pupils going directly home for lunch are allowed to leave the school premises at lunch time. All other pupils are expected to bring their lunches to school and remain on the school premises.
3. No pupil may leave the school grounds during the school day for any reason unless a written request is received from parent/guardians.
4. Climbing walls, hanging from rafters, cycling or running in the school grounds are not allowed.
5. Pupils must not interfere with or damage school property, teachers' property or other pupils' property. Compensation will be required for damage caused.
6. At close of school pupils must leave the classroom promptly and when participating in an extra curricular activity must go immediately to wherever the activity is taking place.
7. Bad language, bullying and fighting are forbidden.
8. School grounds must be kept litter free. All litter must be taken home at end of school day.
9. The wearing of jewellery (e.g. ear rings) is forbidden.
10. Mobile phones are forbidden except in exceptional circumstances to be agreed between parents and principal. Parents will be requested to collect mobile phones from the school principal which have been found in the possession of children who had same without.
11. Tipp-Ex is strictly forbidden.
12. Fizzy drinks, 'junk' food, yogurt is forbidden.
13. Wearing of hooded garments/baseball caps are forbidden.

These are general rules and are not meant to be exhaustive.

Please sign Consent Form and return to the school as soon as possible. The above should be retained for reference.

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I/We agree to abide by the above Rules and Procedures.

Child's Name: _____

Parents/Guardian signature: _____

Date: September 2008.

Ss. PETER & PAUL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, CLONMEL.

CODE OF GOOD BEHAVIOUR.

Revised January '09.

INTRODUCTION.

The school is justifiably proud of its excellent record of good behaviour amongst pupils. This record has been achieved through our enlightened system of encouraging the best in our pupils. Parents, Teachers, the School Principal and the Board of Management work together to do their best for every child.

The Department of Education and Science has directed all school Boards of Management to draw up a Code of Behaviour and Discipline for their school (Circular 20/90). Such a Code of Behaviour is to be adapted to meet the particular needs and circumstance of each school.

The Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for discipline in the school and must ensure that a fair code of discipline is applied. This code of discipline has been formulated by the Principal, the teaching staff and the Parents Council, in full consultation with the Board of Management (per Circular 7/88).

GUIDING PRINCIPLES.

Every child has the right to an education in a disruption free environment, and to be helped to achieve his/her full potential. This can only be brought about through a positive attitude to good behaviour. In this way, pupils will be enabled to grow in self-confidence and foster a respect for each other and for legitimate authority. Every teacher has a right to educate pupils without undue disruption.

Therefore, the following guiding principles are the foundation for our School's Code of Good Behaviour:

1. Every child has the right to be loved and cherished; it is only when the children know that they are valued and special that the best results will be achieved.
2. Parents play a crucial role in shaping the attitudes, which produce good behaviour in school.
3. The rights of pupils, teachers and parents will be observed at all times.
4. The school places emphasis on rewards rather than on sanctions as we believe that, in the long run, this will give the best results.
5. The School recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
6. The Code will be administered in a consistent and fair manner for all pupils.
7. Parents will be kept informed of occasions of good behaviour or improvement in behaviour. They will be advised early of any misbehaviour, in order that the child's needs can be met before any problem becomes more serious.

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT OF GOOD BEHAVIOUR.

At our School we believe that encouragement, rather than blame, brings out the best in any child. The following are some ways in which we endeavour to promote and encourage good behaviour.

1. Children are led through various exercises which are intended to enhance their sense of dignity and goodness. They are continually taught to have consideration for others. The Religion Programme is an essential source of reference in this process. Opportunities to implement these exercises are taken throughout the children's curriculum, including S.P.H.E., Speech and Drama, Sport, class projects and essays.

2. Teachers shall keep written records for all students documenting their good behaviour, misbehaviour, and improvements in behaviour.
3. Awards in the form of prizes given by Class Teacher for noteworthy improvements or achievements.
4. Children are given responsibility for certain duties to encourage and reward good behaviour. Examples are the daily collection of milk; carrying messages for Teacher; opening the classroom door to visitors, etc.
5. Classes are given treats for good behaviour e.g. shown a video, extra playtime, off some homework, bonus points, etc.
6. Rewards vouchers (Dearbhann Luachanna) are awarded by the Principal for generally good or helpful behaviour.
7. A term draw of Dearbhann Luachanna takes place for prizes for good behaviour.

MISBEHAVIOUR.

As our School subscribes to the philosophy “Misbehaviour is the symptom. Discouragement is the disease. Encouragement is the cure”, parents are informed of both good or improved behaviour, and misbehaviour. However, to ensure that misbehaviour is dealt with fairly and consistently, we have followed the suggested categorisation of misbehaviour contained in the Official Board of Management Handbook. These are (1) Minor Misbehaviour; (2) Serious Misbehaviour; and (3) Gross Misbehaviour. **All misbehaviour will be recorded by the class teacher in the Class Discipline File. (1st to 6th Class).**

However, as all children are different, these are guidelines and not absolute rules, and as such will be applied at the discretion of the Teacher, who will have the best interests of the child as their first priority.

1. MINOR MISBEHAVIOUR.

As implied, minor misbehaviour is an action on the part of a pupil which does not cause serious harm to the pupil, other pupils, staff or property, but which contributes to a disruptive environment in the school. The kind of transgression contemplated here would include the following:

- Eating in class
- Interrupting others
- Homework not done
- Late for school
- Wasting time
- Distracting others
- Running in corridor.

The following strategies will be used to deal with such misdemeanours:

- Reasoning with pupil.
 - Reprimand, and advice on how to improve.
 - Temporary separation from classmates or being sent to another classroom.
 - Prescribing additional homework.
 - Loss of privileges (e.g. watching video).
 - Prescribing lines.
 - Repeated offences noted in the Discipline File.
 - Parents informed after three entries in the Discipline File.
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- Referral to School Principal after three (3) Discipline File entries, followed by meeting between parents, Principal and Class Teacher for discussion.
 - YELLOW CARD issued after six (6) entries.

- RED CARD issued after nine (9) entries resulting in a three (3) day suspension imposed by the Principal who acts on behalf of the Board of Management.

2. SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOUR.

Serious misbehaviour consists of actions which may cause harm to the pupil, other pupils, staff or property, or is of an ongoing or disrespectful nature so as to disrupt the school environment. The following are examples of serious misbehaviour:

- Continued occurrence of minor misbehaviour constitutes serious misbehaviour.
- Disrespectful attitude to any member of the school staff.
- Teasing or intimidation.
- Falsely blaming others for transgressions.
- Noisy disruptive behaviour.
- Throwing objects.
- Telling lies.
- Truancy.
- Stealing.
- Deliberate disobedience.
- Spitting.
- Abusing property.
- Bringing lewd materials to school.
- Kicking, pushing, and fighting.
- Bad language.
- Using mobile phone in class.

Progressive sanctions needing to be applied would be as follows:

- Every deliberate act of serious misbehaviour will be recorded - Principal and parents informed.
- If a second such incident occurs the pupils will be given a yellow card.
- For a third offence, the parents will meet with the Class Teacher, the Principal and Board Chairperson, and will be reminded that a further occurrence will merit a suspension.
- For a further offence, the pupil will be given a red card and a minimum two-day suspension. The parents will be given details in writing and will be required to give a written commitment to co-operate fully with the school to ensure an improvement in the child's future behaviour.
- A recurrence of misbehaviour will merit a minimum three day suspension imposed by the principal with the prior sanction of the Board of Management with a warning that expulsion will be considered should the behaviour not improve.

3. GROSS MISBEHAVIOUR.

Gross misbehaviour consists of actions which imply or cause harm to the pupils, other pupils, staff or property, or behaviour of an ongoing or blatantly disrespectful nature which untowardly disrupts the school environment. Examples of gross misbehaviour would be:

- Bullying, as defined by the Department of Education Guidelines, i.e. repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others.
- Threatening behaviour of a serious nature.
- Serious verbal or physical threat or assault on another pupil.
- Serious verbal or physical threat or assault on any member of the Staff.
- Serious theft.
- Malicious damage to school property or to the property of a staff member or pupil.

- Leaving the school during school hours, without permission.
- Having any type of illegal substance, including cigarettes, in their possession.
- Carrying any item, which could be construed as a weapon to inflict harm.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, the board of Management has authorised the Principal to sanction an **immediate** suspension of from one to three days, depending on the severity of the misbehaviour. If possible, consultation with the Board of Management Chairperson should take place before the suspension is imposed. The suspension would be ratified at the earliest opportunity by the full Board of Management. A special meeting of the Board of Management would be necessary for any further or longer period of suspension. A written commitment to co-operate fully with the school to ensure an improvement in the child's future behaviour will be sought from the parents. As a last resort, expulsion would have to be considered by the Board.

Criteria for re-admitting a pupil after a suspension period has expired.

A child will be permitted to return to school after suspension when the following conditions have been met by parents/guardians and child.

1. The child is accompanied by his parents/guardian.
2. The child is brought to the Principal's office (not to the classroom).
3. Parents sign an agreement form stating their intention to do everything possible to ensure the good behaviour of their child in school.
4. Make good any damage caused to school property.
5. Child will furnish a written apology (or verbal depending on age of child) to appropriate school personnel (Staff/pupil).
6. Child will give an undertaking to abide by Code of Behaviour.
7. Parents will have to give a written undertaking to ensure that every effort will be made by them to help their child to abide by school rules and Code of Behaviour.
8. Any written punishment given while on suspension will have to be completed.

A refusal by either child and/or parent to fulfil the above criteria will result in the Board of Management refusing to re-admit the child to school.

At the end of twenty(20) days of exclusion and if the matter has still not been resolved the parents have the right to appeal the Board's decision to the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 of the Education Act.

EXCLUSION.

The sanction of expulsion will only be used in exceptional circumstances when all other avenues have been exhausted. However, the school has a duty of care to all its pupils and employees. The Health and Safety at Work Act 2005 requires that Boards of Management conduct their business, as far as reasonably practicable, in ways that prevent improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the safety, health or welfare at work of employees or the health and safety of pupils, parents or visitors at risk. Provisions relating to expulsion of a student are contained in section 24 of The Education Welfare Act 2000.

The authorities will be reserved for the Board of Management. Expulsion will be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour. The following steps will be undertaken to address misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion:

1. Meeting with parents and pupils to try to help the student change the behaviour
2. Making sure the pupil and parents understand the possible consequences of the behaviour
3. Exhausting all other possible options

4. Seeking the help of support agencies i.e. National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Health Service Executive (HSE) National Council for Special Education (NCSE), National Behavioural Support Services (NBSS).

GROUNDS FOR EXPLUSION.

1. The pupil's behaviour is persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
2. The pupil's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
3. The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SUSPENSION/EXPULSION.

Whilst the grounds may be similar there would be additional factors:

1. The degree, seriousness and persistence of the behaviour
2. Where expulsion is considered a series of interventions should have been tried by the school
3. All possibilities of changing the pupil's behaviour should have been exhausted.

EXPULSION FOR A FIRST OFFENCE.

The BOM may impose automatic expulsion for certain prescribed behaviours or in exceptional cases for a first offence. These behaviours may include, according to the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB):

1. Sexual assault
2. Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
3. Actual violence or physical assault
4. Serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff

PROCEDURES IN RESPECT OF EXPLUSION.

1. Detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal
2. Recommendations will be made by the Principal to the BOM
3. BOM will consider Principal's recommendation and hold hearing
4. BOM will deliberate and will propose action following the hearing
5. Consultations will be arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel will be relayed to parents by letter.

FAIRNESS OF PROCEDURES.

The Constitution of Ireland gives rights to parents and pupils in the matter of education and these will be respected as fundamental in the school's Code of Behaviour. The requirement of fairness of procedures also derives from the constitution.

The BOM will adhere to two basic rules of fairness.

1. The parents' right to be heard i.e. the right to respond, the right to know what alleged misbehaviour is being investigated, the right to know how the issue is decided. If there is a possibility of a serious sanction the right to be heard by the Board of Management. If the dispute is about facts, the right to ask questions of the other party or witnesses.

2. The right to impartiality i.e. The right to an absence of bias in the decision-maker. Generally, impartiality requires that the investigation is separated from the process of making a decision so that the decision-maker comes to the task with an open mind.

Appeals from decision of Board of Managements to expel or to suspend for 20 days or more.

The remedy opens to parents who feel that the decision of a Board of Management to expel or suspend a pupil for more than 20 school days is a Section 29 appeal or judicial review.

