



# Scoil Chéile Chríost Rathmore NS

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## Code of Behaviour

### Introduction:

This Code of Behaviour has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools" published by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB, 2008). The Code of Behaviour also conforms with legislation as required by Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act (2000). Parents, staff, children and members of the school community have been involved in the development of this Code. The Code of Behaviour is available on the school website and a copy of the code is given to new parents before the beginning of the school year. The Code of Behaviour needs to be read in association with the school "Anti-bullying" and "Child Protection" policies. **When parents/guardians enrol their child in Scoil Chéile Chríost, Rathmore National School they are agreeing to support the implementation of the Code of Behaviour and other policies in the school.**

### Rationale:

The school has a central role in the children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. In seeking to define acceptable standards of behaviour it is acknowledged that these are goals to be worked towards rather than expectations that are either fulfilled or not.

The children bring to school a wide variety of behaviour. As a community environment, in school we must work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. It follows that acceptable standards of behaviour are those that reflect these principles.

Children need limits set for them in order to feel secure and develop the skills for co-operation. Therefore any rules will be age appropriate, with clear agreed consequences.

Parents/Guardians can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, by visiting the school and by talking to the members of staff.

A code of behaviour is established to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

### **Aims of the Code**

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour

- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others
- To facilitate the education and development of every child
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the availability of policies and an ethos of open communication
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy

### **Implementation:**

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Rules will be kept to a minimum, emphasise positive behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard 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.

### **School Rules**

1. **BE ON TIME** - This rule means that you turn up in time for school each morning and that you line up in time at each break.
2. **BE PREPARED** - This rule means that you come to school with everything you need for the day e.g. all your homework done, all your books, pens, pencils, etc. Also that you have your full uniform or your tracksuit on.
3. **BE HONEST** - This rule means that you always tell the truth no matter what the circumstances.
4. **BE HELPFUL** - This rule means that you will always try to be kind to those around you and that you will help them in any way you can. It is the opposite of being selfish or being a bully.
5. **BE CAREFUL** - This rule means that you should try to avoid any behaviour that could be dangerous or lead to an accident e.g. playing roughly, fighting, leaving the school premises without permission, running too fast, running indoors, etc.
6. **BRING ONLY WHAT YOU NEED** - This rule means that you don't bring anything to school that you don't need for the day's work. You should not have anything which could be a distraction to others or that could cause damage to another pupil or the school furniture e.g. glass bottles, crisps, chewing gum, etc.

7. **DO YOUR BEST** - This rule means that you try to always do your best at any task you are given in school e.g. it means that you pay attention in class, do your best at your lessons, do a job willingly and cheerfully when asked to do it.
8. **SHOW RESPECT** - This rule means that you show respect and consideration towards everybody that you meet during the day, e.g. your teachers, your fellow pupils, parents, visitors to the school, etc. It also means that you show respect for yourself - take pride in your appearance and your work. Respect the school building and furniture.

### **Yard and Around School Rules**

Speak politely and show respect to every student and adult.

Choose to play well with others - don't spoil each other's games.

Help to keep our school litter free.

On the first whistle, FREEZE.

On the second whistle, walk to your line.

Line up properly until your teacher comes to collect you.

Your use of "please" and "thank you" is always great to hear.

Always be where you are supposed to be - ask permission to leave the yard.

Respect your school, your belongings and the belongings of others.

Don't bring your lunch on the yard - it's time to run and have lots of fun!

### **School trips/tours Rules**

- Enter/leave the bus in an orderly manner;
- Arrive 15 minutes before departure time; Parents/Guardians are expected to contact the school at least 15 minutes before departure time if a child is sick or unable to attend.
- No mobile phones or electronic devices on school tours. Teachers will have mobile phones on tour if parents/children need to get in contact with one another.
- Sit in bus seats and avoid loudness that would distract the driver.
- Take food and drink at the appointed lunch breaks.
- Stay in their appointed groups at all times.
- Wear uniform / tracksuit on school tours.
- Return the parental/guardian permission slips allowing the child to go on tour.

### **Strategies/Incentives to encourage Positive Behaviour**

Part of the vision of Scoil Chéile Chríost, Rathmore N.S. is to help children achieve their personal best - academically, intellectually and socially. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and that similarly children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Reward systems which are based on academic merit or particular extrinsic goals continuously apply to only a limited number of children and undermine the

individuality of children. All children deserve encouragement to attain their own best. 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 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 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 parent/guardian, written or verbal communication.

### **Unacceptable 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. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour, parents 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

- Interrupting class work
- Arriving late for school
- Running in school building
- Talking in class line
- Leaving seat without permission at lunch time
- Leaving litter around school
- Not wearing correct uniform
- Being discourteous/unmannerly
- Not completing homework without good reason or having a signed note / note in diary

#### Examples of serious misbehaviour:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Bullying (Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others). See the school's 'Anti-Bullying' policy.
- 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 should be characterised by certain features:

- It must be clear why the sanction is being applied
- The consequence must relate as closely as possible to the behaviour
- It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions
- Whole class punishment should be avoided as it breeds resentment
- There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences
- It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus

The following steps will be taken when the children behave inappropriately. They are listed in order of severity with one being for a minor misbehaviour and seven being for serious or gross misbehaviour. The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the features by which sanctions should be characterised. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupils devise strategies for this. When an incident that involves serious / gross misbehaviour occurs, the teacher may deem it necessary to move directly to Sanction 4 /5. It is important to note that each day is a 'fresh start' - sanctions for misdemeanours do not carry over to the following day.

### **Classroom Sanctions**

1. I will be given my first warning (yellow card).
2. I will be moved to a different place.
3. I will be given a red card. I will be sent to another class and my parents told. The incident will be recorded by the class teacher on Aladdin.
4. I will be sent to the Deputy Principal. My name will be recorded in the 'Behaviour' book and my parents/guardians will be informed.  
\*Note: Parents/Guardians will be asked to meet the Class Teacher if their child's name is recorded in the 'Behaviour' book twice in two weeks.
5. Referral to Principal
6. Principal communicating with parents
7. 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)

Notes:

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health & safety. Teachers may on occasion detain a child in class during lunch breaks (under the teacher's supervision). A teacher may also put a child who has misbehaved in class standing at the wall in the yard during break time (for no longer than 5 minutes). The teacher on yard duty will be informed of this disciplinary action.

### **Yard Sanctions**

1. Minor misbehaviour - child gets a verbal warning or stands out at the wall. The child's name is recorded in the yard notebook and this record is transferred to 'Aladdin'.
2. Serious misbehaviour or misbehaviour while standing out at the wall. The name is recorded in the yard notebook and the child is sent to the Deputy Principal. The child's name is recorded in the 'Behaviour' book and their parents/guardians are informed.

Note: The teacher on yard duty / Deputy Principal may deem the behaviour to be of such a serious nature that the child will be sent directly to the Principal. The incident will be recorded on 'Aladdin' and the parents/guardians informed.

### **Rules and Sanctions for indoors at break times**

1. Children remain seated at their place and eat lunch or do activity permitted by Class Teacher.
2. Children need permission of teacher on duty to go to the toilet or bin.
3. If a child breaks a rule they get a verbal warning.
4. If they continue to misbehave they stand outside the classroom. Their name will be recorded in the yard notebook and this record will be transferred to 'Aladdin'.
5. Serious misbehaviour - name is recorded in the yard notebook and the child is sent to the Deputy Principal. The child's name is recorded in the 'Behaviour' book and their parents/guardians are informed.

Note: The teacher on indoor duty / Deputy Principal may deem the behaviour to be of such a serious nature that the child will be sent directly to the Principal. The incident will be recorded on 'Aladdin' and the parents/guardians are informed.

### **Managing aggressive or violent misbehaviour**

The following strategies are used for dealing with serious emotional and/or behavioural problems and are implemented in consultation with the child's parents:

1. Children who are emotionally disturbed / displaying persistent behavioural problems may be referred for psychological assessment through the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO).  
Appropriate support may be sought from services available e.g. Health Service Executive (HSE), National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS).
2. The Special Educational Needs (SEN) personnel facilitate teachers in sharing practice and support in the management of challenging behaviour.

3. S.E.N. personnel may act as mentors for particular children and assist teachers in the creation of individual behaviour plans for specific children. The drawing up of such plans will follow a staged approach as outlined in 'Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties - A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers '(NEPS 2010)
4. Teachers will read 'Managing Challenging Behaviour - Guidelines for Teachers', INTO 2004

### **Suspension and Expulsion**

Before serious sanctions such as detention, suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents 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 misbehaviour 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 at 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 and 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 Rule 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 of 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 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.

## **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 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 difference in all individuals.

## **Methods of Communicating with Parents/Guardians**

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.

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 should be encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following methods are to be used at all levels within the school:

- Informal parent/teacher meetings and Formal parent/teacher meetings
- Through children's homework journal
- Phone calls
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- School notice board
- Text-a-Parent
- School website

## **Record Keeping**

Rathmore N.S. / Scoil Chéile Chríost utilises 'Aladdin School' software for maintaining records of a disciplinary nature (aladdin.ie). All access to school information in Aladdin is controlled via username and password with different levels of access built in e.g. the Principal, Deputy Principal and Secretary will have access to all student records and school-wide functions, whereas a class teacher will only see students in their own class and a resource teacher will only see the students they teach.

- Class level - Discipline Record Sheet used initially (appendix 1). Information transferred to the child's records on Aladdin system.

- Yard Level - Yard notebooks (books sent to office at the end of lunch break and entries made into child's records on Aladdin system by the school secretary).
- School record - all records kept on the Aladdin system.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Board of Management Responsibilities**

- Provide a safe, comfortable environment.
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- Ratify the code.

### **Principal's Responsibilities**

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Arrange for review of the Code, as required.

### **Parents/Guardians Responsibilities**

Parents/Guardians play an important role in the ongoing implementation of the code of behaviour by:

- Co-operating with the school's system of rewards and sanctions.
- Ensuring children are in school and are collected on time.
- Attending meetings at the school if requested.
- Helping children with homework and ensuring that it is completed.
- Ensuring children have the necessary books and materials for school.
- Ensuring children wear full school uniform/tracksuit.

### **Pupil Responsibilities:**

Pupils play an important role in the ongoing implementation of the code of behaviour:

- By participating in the formation of class rules at the start of the year
- Through discussion during S.P.H.E. and other curricular areas
- By taking part in whole school assemblies

The childrens' behaviour is continuously monitored and discussed. The Principal / Deputy Principal will discuss school rules at assembly to ensure ongoing implementation of the code of behaviour. Children are given the opportunity to discuss the code of behaviour and contribute ideas to promote positive behaviour.

### **Teachers' Responsibilities**

- All teaching staff familiarise themselves with and discuss the 'Code of Behaviour' at the first staff meeting of the school year.
- Support and implement the school's code of behavior.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- Recognise and affirm good work.
- Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.

- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with misbehavior.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

### **Implementation and Review**

The implementation of this plan will commence in May 2014. The plan will be audited and reviewed in May / June 2016 and at the end of every second school year thereafter. The audit and review of the policy will follow the recommendations contained in 'Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools' published by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB, 2008).

### **RATIFICATION:**

This school plan was formulated by the Principal, Staff, Parents' Association and Children of Scoil Chéile Chríost, Rathmore N.S. and approved by the Board of Management of Scoil Chéile Chríost, Rathmore N.S in June 2014.

This plan will be reviewed every two years.

### **Communication**

The ratified policy will be available to all interested parties on the school's website and a hard copy will be available in a folder in the Principal's office.

### **Success Criteria**

- Positive feedback from the whole school community.
- Observations of behaviours in class, yard, corridors, etc.
- Happy and caring school atmosphere