

## **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school.

In Cork Educate Together N.S. we foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school.

The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises and on school outings.

### **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.

## **Responsibility of Adults**

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

As adults we 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, ability and disability.
- ⌚ Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.
- ⌚ Discourage physical aggression and encourage 'Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet'.

**Communication** – communication with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. 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 good communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents are 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 of communication are used within the school

- ⌚ Informal/formal parent/teacher meetings.
- ⌚ The homework journal for 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class and the homework folder in Junior and Senior Infants.
- ⌚ Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school.
- ⌚ School notice board.
- ⌚ Newsletters/school website/emails.
- ⌚ TextaParent service.

In Cork Educate Together we are promoting good behaviour through the Leadership Programme as defined by The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Students. The common language of the habits helps to ensure a shared understanding throughout our school community.

### **The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Students**

#### **Habit One : *Be Proactive***

I am a responsible person.

I take initiative.

I choose my actions, attitudes and moods.

I do not blame others for my wrong actions. I do the right thing without being asked, even when no one is looking.

#### **Habit Two: *Begin with the End in Mind***

I plan ahead and set goals

I do things that have meaning and make a difference.

I am an important part of my classroom and contribute to my school's mission and vision, and look for ways to be a good citizen.

#### **Habit Three: *Put First Things First***

I spend my time on things that are most important.

This means I say no to things I know I should not do.

I set priorities, make a schedule, and follow my plan.

I am disciplined and organized.

#### **Habit Four: *Think Win – Win***

I balance courage for getting what I want with consideration for what others want.

I make deposits in others' Emotional Bank Accounts.

When conflicts arise, I look for third alternatives.

**Habit Five: *Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood.***

I listen to other people's ideas and feelings.

I try to see things from their viewpoints.

I listen to others without interrupting.

I am confident in voicing my ideas.

I look people in the eyes when talking.

**Habit Six: *Synergize***

I value other people's strengths, and learn from them. I get along with others, even people who are different from me.

I work well in groups.

I seek out other people's ideas to solve problems because I know that by teaming with others we can create better solutions than any one of us alone. I am humble.

**Habit Seven: *Sharpen the Saw***

I take care of my body by eating right, exercising, and getting sleep.

I spend time with my family and friends.

I learn in lots of ways and lots of places, not just at school.

I take time to make meaningful ways to help others.

Source: Covey, Stephen R. (2008) *The Leader in Me: How Schools and parents around the World are Inspiring Greatness, One Child at a Time.* Free Press, Detroit MI.

## **Positive Behaviour**

Part of our vision at Cork Educate Together is to help children 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 children use a variety of approaches to solve problems.

### **Approval of Positive Behaviour**

Our reward system seeks to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children 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. Praise may be given by means of any one of the following.

- ⌚ 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
- ⌚ Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- ⌚ A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.
- ⌚ A Golden Achievement Award at Assembly.

Field trips and school tours will be reserved for those who have consistently strived to behave well.

Leadership is an integral part of our school life.

## **Negative Behaviour**

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross, examples given below. All 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.

### **Disapproval of negative behaviour will be dealt with as follows:**

The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to devise strategies with the pupil to help him/her ensure the behaviour is not repeated. The nature of the behaviour will determine the strategy.

1. Reasoning with pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve

3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class
  4. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened
  5. Loss of privileges
  6. Detention during break
  7. Communication with parents
  8. Referral to Principal/Deputy Principal
  9. Principal communicating with parents
  10. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular 7/88 and Education Welfare Act 2000)
- Sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

Examples of minor misbehaviour include:

- ⌚ Chewing gum in school
- ⌚ Running on the school corridor
- ⌚ Not heeding instructions
- ⌚ Leaving litter around classroom/school

Examples of serious misbehavior include:

- ⌚ Behaviour that is hurtful (including: harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- ⌚ Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- ⌚ Threats or physical hurt to another person
- ⌚ Damage to property
- ⌚ Theft
- ⌚ The use of unacceptable language
- ⌚ Leaving school/school activities without permission

Examples of gross misbehaviour include:

- ⌚ Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil
- ⌚ Serious theft
- ⌚ Serious damage to property
- ⌚ Serious bullying

### **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.

### **Bullying**

The new Department of Education and Skills *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, September 2013*, gives the following definition of bullying:

2.1.1. In the context of these procedures, bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

All incidents of bullying behaviour will be dealt with under Cork Educate Together's Anti-Bullying Policy.

### **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 may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances. Minutes of meetings will be recorded.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. If the parents 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.

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 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 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.

## **Review and Implementation**

This policy is subject to review at the discretion of the teaching staff and/or the Board of Management. A copy of this Code of Behaviour, as approved by the BoM has been forwarded to the Executive Committee, Patron of Cork Educate Together N.S.

The Code of Behaviour is available on the school's website [www.corkeducatetogether.ie](http://www.corkeducatetogether.ie)  
Hard copies are issued upon request to staff members, parents/guardians and to prospective parents/guardians.

This Code of Behaviour was formally approved by the Board of Management at its meeting on \_\_\_\_\_

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John Stapleton  
Signed on behalf of the Board of Management