

# Code Of Behaviour Policy

February 2023

Policy Document



## ***Code of Behaviour***

### ***S.N. An Croí Ró Naofa***

#### **Introduction**

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 the Board of Management of SN An Croí Ró Naofa (Belclare) has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for its pupils, parents and staff. This policy has been communicated to all parents via email and is accessible on the school website.

The Code of Behaviour details:

- 1) The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school.
- 2) The whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour.
- 3) The measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards.
- 4) The procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school.
- 5) The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil.
- 6) The school's Anti-Bullying Policy and
- 7) The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

The Code of Behaviour of SN An Croí Ró Naofa (Belclare) has been developed in accordance with "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools", National Educational Welfare Board, 2008.

#### **Aims and Objectives of the Code**

The aims and objectives of the code are:

- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences, recognising the rights of children to be educated in classes not disrupted by the behaviour of a tiny minority, and also the rights of teachers to work in conditions free from stress.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community.
- To assist school staff, parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

#### **Whole School Approach**

The Board of Management recognises the importance of creating consistent values, policies, practices and relationships that support the Code of Behaviour. Such an environment may only be formed by involving the entire school community and in this respect the Board acknowledges the importance of the roles played by, the Principal, teachers, ancillary staff and parents in the review and operation of the Code.

*For avoidance of doubt any reference in the foregoing to Principal is to be construed as meaning Acting Principal or Deputy Principal in the absence of the Principal/Deputy Principal as appropriate.*

*The integral role of the in-school management team of Mrs. Agnes Martyn, Mrs. Bernadette Finnegan, Mrs. Emer Walsh, Mrs. Stella Shally and Mr. Gary Sice in maintaining an orderly school is acknowledged by this policy.*

### **Code of Behaviour**

The only worthwhile and enduring form of discipline is self-discipline. We aim over the time a child spends with us to develop, in partnership with the parents, the consciousness of the child from that of the four-year-old where discipline is usually external to that of the 12 or 13-year-old who understands the need to exercise self-discipline in dealing with teachers, parents, adults and other children. In relation to schoolwork and homework we aim to motivate the children in such a way that by the time they reach the senior standards they see the need to work for and by themselves. In terms of general behaviour, the children should begin to see, as they grow older, that they are part of a larger community and that what they do always affects others either positively or negatively. We expect that the children will give of their best while they are in SN an Croí Ró Naofa and that the parents will support and join with us in our efforts to give the children the best education possible.

### **School Rules:**

- 1. RESPECT AND COURTESY:** All pupils are expected to treat staff, their fellow pupils and visitors with respect and courtesy at all times. The use of foul language and any form of bullying is unacceptable.
- 2. PUNCTUALITY:** All pupils are expected to be on time for school each day. The school does not accept responsibility for pupils outside official school openings hours.
- 3. ABSENCES:** Every absence of a child must be accounted for by forwarding a note via email to the office or homework journal to the Teacher giving the reason for the absence on the return of the child. If a child needs to leave school early, parents/guardians will be expected to furnish a note in the same fashion.
- 4. ILLNESS:** Any infectious illness should be notified to the school immediately.
- 5. UNIFORM:** Children are expected to wear the school uniform every day to school.
- 6. PERSONAL PROPERTY:** Children should have their names on their coats and other personal property such as schoolbooks, copies etc. If books etc. are left in the school, they are the responsibility of the child.
- 7. SCHOOL PROPERTY AND THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT:** Pupils must respect all School property and keep the school environment clean and litter free.
- 8. BEHAVIOUR IN CLASS:**
  - Pupils must have all books and required material.
  - Pupils are expected to work to the best of their ability and to present written exercises neatly.
  - They are to show respect for their classmates and follow the teacher's instructions.
  - Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others is unacceptable.
- 9. BEHAVIOUR OUT OF CLASS:**
  - Pupils must not behave in any way, which endangers themselves or others. If children behave in a violent or aggressive manner parents may be asked to attend the school immediately by the Principal and may be asked to remove their child for the remainder of the school day.
  - Any instructions or directions given by the supervising teacher are to be complied with.

- Children must line up in an orderly manner at the end of the break.
- Any form of threatening behaviour is unacceptable. If children are being bullied teachers must be told in a timely fashion so that the matter can be dealt with effectively.

## **10. HOMEWORK:**

- It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis.
- Parents are strongly encouraged to take an active interest in their child's homework. If homework causes worry for the child parents are asked to contact the teacher.
- Parents are asked to sign homework on any evening it has been assigned.

## **REWARDS**

- Oral and written praise for effort as much as for achievement.
- "Public" praise in front of other teachers/SNAs
- Stamp cards are used throughout the school as a reward system to encourage good behaviour and to promote attendance in school.
- Homework off.
- Occasional special privileges.

## **SANCTIONS**

- Reasoning with pupil.
- Reprimand.
- Temporary separation from peers and friends.
- Loss of privileges.
- Temporary separation during breaks.
- Referral to Principal.
- Communication with parents.
- Suspension in accordance with the Rules for National Schools.

## **Standards of Behaviour**

### **PUPILS**

#### **General Behaviour**

##### **Each pupil is expected to:**

- Be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and all Staff and visitors.
- Show respect for the property of, the school, other children and their own belongings.
- Attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual.
- Do his/her best both in school and for homework.

#### **Classroom Behaviour**

##### **Each pupil is expected to:**

- Listen – to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking.
- Work – to the best of his/her ability.
- Value – school property and the belongings of fellow pupils, staff and visitors.
- Follow – the direction of his/her teacher.

- Obtain – his/her teacher’s permission to leave the classroom.
- Respect – the teacher, other pupils and visitors to the classroom.

### **Playground Behaviour**

#### **Each pupil is expected to:**

- Play – safely avoiding any games or play that is rough or dangerous.
- Follow – the directions of the playground supervisor(s).
- Remain – on school grounds at all times.
- Obtain – permission before re-entering the school building during break periods.
- Respect – the yard duty teacher and fellow pupils.
- Avoid – swearing, fighting or name calling, spitting, climbing on walls, wire-netting, swinging on posts
- Line-up – quietly when the bell rings

### **Behaviour in other School Areas**

#### **Each pupil is expected to:**

- Walk – in the school corridors
- Be courteous to all members of the school community.
- Respect school property.
- Display good manners.

### **Behaviour during School Outings/Activities**

#### **Each pupil is expected to:**

- Follow – his/her teacher’s directions at all times
- Remain – with the teacher/supervisors and group of pupils at all times
- Behave – politely towards those they meet on such trips
- Observe – the rules of general good behaviour.

### **Staff**

It is the Principal’s responsibility to ensure the school’s Code of Behaviour is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils. However, each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school.

Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class.

They will:

- Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in an age-appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year.
- Ensure the Class rules are established understood in the classroom.
- Encourage self-discipline and positive behaviour.
- Ensure there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times.
- Implement the reward/sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner.
- Keep a written record of all incidents. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and the consequences of its repetition.
- Inform pupils when instances of misbehaviour on their part are being recorded.
- Report repeated instances of misbehaviour to the Principal or single instances of gross misbehaviour.

## **Parents/Guardians**

- Parents/Guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive behaviour in school. Parents/ guardians can assist the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, encouraging punctuality and regular attendance and by ensuring that homework is given due time and effort.
- Should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child's behaviour they are welcome to make an appointment to discuss their concerns.
- In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour parents will be informed of the intervention process. **It is understood by accepting a place for your child in the school you are consenting to abide by the code and policies of the school.**
- Parents can assist the school in creating a positive school environment by modelling respect towards school staff, rules and procedures in place in the school.

## **PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**

As a general rule the school will endeavour to create an environment where positive behaviour is reinforced through praise and reward. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school, so that positive behaviour is instantly recognised and positively rewarded. Special attention will be paid to pupils who have previously been associated with poor behaviour so that the improvement in behaviour is acknowledged.

## **Rewards for Good Behaviour**

Good behaviour must be seen to be rewarded and this will be up to the discretion of the class teacher. For example, oral and written praise, yearly reports, small prizes, merit lists, merit stars, acts of kindness rewards, certificates and extra privileges as appropriate.

## **Inappropriate Behaviour**

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. The code also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed.

### LEVEL 1: Minor Breaches:

- Failure to wear school uniform except when excused for a good reason with a written note from parents/guardians, or on special occasions
- Careless presentation of schoolwork
- Failure to complete homework without a good reason
- Rough play
- Careless use of school property
- Disrespect towards visitors to school or towards other children
- Wilful damage of a minor nature
- Failure to follow the instructions of the class teacher, ancillary staff or SNA staff
- Disruption of class
- Disrespect towards staff/ancillary staff

### LEVEL 1: Sanctions:

- Correction by class teacher, other teacher, ancillary staff, SNA.
- Seating arrangement may be changed.

- Badly presented homework may have to be re-done.
- Incomplete homework may have to be completed.
- An apology from pupil.

#### LEVEL 1: Supportive Interventions:

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

- Classroom based interventions such as Circle Time or class meetings, with the option of informal consultation (e.g. with parents/guardian or staff members).
- Discussion of behaviour with the child.
- Informal notes kept by the teacher regarding incident/intervention date. This information would be useful should a problem persist.

#### LEVEL 2: More Serious Breaches:

- Regular use of foul or offensive language
- Repeated failure to complete homework
- Bullying
- Stealing
- Extortion of money
- Derogatory reference towards another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, sexual orientation, disability or ethnic origin
- Use of a mobile phone by a pupil on school grounds during school hours
- Possession of any item likely to be injurious to the child or others
- Continuous breaches of level 1 minor breaches

#### LEVEL 2: Sanctions:

- Further correction by class teacher, other teacher, ancillary staff.
- Note to parents/guardians.
- Writing out of a page with explanation of misbehaviour to be signed by parents/guardians.
- Referral to Principal.
- Temporary separation from class group.
- Formal contact with parents/guardians.
- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Confiscation of dangerous items.
- Confiscation of mobile phone during school hours and/or a letter home to parents/guardians.
- Written apology from pupil.
- Cleaning up so as to restore school buildings, grounds or furnishings to correct state, where applicable.

#### LEVEL 2: Supportive Interventions:

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

- Level 1 interventions.
- Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Deputy Principal or Principal.

#### LEVEL 3: Gross Misbehaviour:

- Repeated instances of above after warning regarding future conduct
- Use of threatening language or behaviour towards teachers or other members of staff

- Any act of wilful violence towards other pupils, teachers, SNA or ancillary staff
- Wilful damage or attempted wilful damage of school property, property of teachers, ancillary staff or other pupils
- Leaving school grounds during school hours without permission and notification from parents/guardians
- Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions towards another person or group involving gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability or ethnic origin

LEVEL 3: Sanctions:

- Immediate contact with parents/guardians

The Board of Management following due process and procedure can issue a suspension.

In cases or repeated incidences of misbehaviour and/or an incidence of serious misbehaviour the Chairperson of the Board of Management/Principal will request a meeting with parents. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future and/or the behaviour does not improve the pupil may be suspended as per Department of Education guidelines.

***In cases of serious misbehaviour (isolated or otherwise), expulsion from school, the ultimate of sanction will be considered by the Board of Management in accordance with DES Guidelines.***

LEVEL 3: Supportive Interventions:

- Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Education Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education.
- Referral for a child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment with the parents/guardian's consent.

In the event of severe misbehaviour, a child will be sent straight to the principal.

**Procedures in respect of Suspension. (as per page 77 of the NEWB Guidelines)**

While the BOM has the authority to suspend, they may delegate this authority to the principal, for periods of up to three days.

- Investigation of the facts to confirm serious misbehaviour.
- Parents will be informed by phone or in writing about the incident.
- Parents will be given an opportunity to respond.

**If suspension is still decided upon-**

Principal notifies parent in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter should confirm:

1. The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
2. The reasons for the suspension.
3. Any study programme to be followed.
4. The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents.
5. The provision for appeal to the Board of management



6. The provision for appeal to the Secretary General of the DES. (Only where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days.)
7. Where the cumulative total of days reached 6, the NEWB will be notified.

### **Records and Reports.**

Formal written records will be kept of:

- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- The decision-making process.
- The decision and rationale for the decision.
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

### **Expulsion. (As per page 82 of the NEWB Guidelines)**

Procedures in respect of expulsion.

- Detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
- Inform parents in writing of alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- Give parents and students the opportunity to respond before a decision is made.
- A recommendation to the BOM by the Principal (see page 84 NEWB guidelines)
- Consideration by the BOM of the principal's recommendations and the holding of a hearing. (see page 84 NEWB Guidelines)
- BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing. (page 85 NEWB Guidelines)
- If BOM is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing, of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. The intention to expel a student does not take effect until 20 school days have elapsed after NEWB have received written notification. The NEWB should be notified using a Notice of Intention to Expel form which is available on [www.schoolreturn.ie](http://www.schoolreturn.ie) or from our helpline (1890 36 3666). This form should be completed and sent to School Return Section, National Educational Welfare Board, 16-22 Green St, Dublin 7.
- Consultations arranged by the EWO.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

### **Appeals.**

- A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 section 29)

### **Expulsion**

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil. Expulsion should be proportionate to a pupils behaviour and would only be invoked in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour when all other possible remedial steps have been taken.

### **Steps taken in event of possible expulsion**

1. A detailed investigation is carried out under the direction of the principal.
2. A recommendation is made to the Board of Management by the principal.

3. The Board considers the recommendations and the holding of a hearing.
4. The Board of Management, if it concurs with the recommendation to expel, informs the National Education and Welfare Board in writing. (Expulsion can only take place after 20 days have passed since the receipt of that letter by the NEWB.)
5. Consultations are arranged by the Education Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.
7. Inform parents of the appeal process in line with section 29 of the Education Act 1998

### **Attendance**

The principal is required to inform the National Education and Welfare Board of the names of any child who has been absent from school for 20 days or more. He/she is also required to give reasons for the absences. Parents should therefore send a note on the reason for a child's absence on his/her return to school.

### **Conclusion**

This code will be reviewed at regular intervals and changes made in the light of new needs.

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on:

**Date: 21/02/2023**

**Signed Richard Broderick  
Chairperson, Board of Management**

**Agnes Martyn  
Principal**

**21/02/2023  
Date**

**21/02/2023  
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