

Code of Behaviour

Related policies available on request:

1. Anti-bullying
2. Health & Safety Statement
3. Enrolment/Admissions Policy
4. Child Protection Policy

Introduction

Scoil Aonghusa aims to provide a happy, secure, friendly, stimulating learning environment, where children, parents, teachers, special needs assistants and the Board of Management work in partnership. Each individual is valued, encouraged and respected for their uniqueness and facilitated to reach their potential in a positive atmosphere.

The Code of Behaviour of Scoil Aonghusa will be implemented at the professional discretion of the teaching staff. All staff members are aware of the children's needs in relation to behaviour management. Every effort will be made to ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner.

The school also aims to teach, foster and encourage socially acceptable behaviour within the school community at large. The following are considered important in setting up this policy.

- The right of each child to respect, freedom of expression, to be heard, to be protected, to learn and to play.
- The differing needs of each child.
- The development of each child's self-confidence and self-esteem.
- The importance of keeping in touch with parents.
- Encouragement and appropriate reward for good effort.
- To make rules positive rather than negative, focus on the 'do's rather than the don'ts'.
- The times when difficult behavior is most likely to occur.

- The most productive use of 'timeout' and suspension.
- To create a school atmosphere that is calm, positive and structured.
- For staff to act as role models reinforcing appropriate behavior for students.
- To use affirmative respectful language suitable to the students level.
- Curricular activities should be appropriate to the needs of individual students and programmes reviewed regularly.
- The physical environment should be safe, comfortable and visually pleasing.

It is our Policy:

- To expect the highest standards from each child.
- To make children aware of this expectation.
- To inform parent(s)/guardians of our expectation and to let them know verbally or in writing when difficulties arise.
- To inform a parent when a student behaves particularly well.
- To reward good behavior appropriately.
- To use appropriate sanctions where necessary.
- That the class teacher deals with the difficulty at class level where possible.
- That the teacher keeps the special needs assistant(s) informed of disciplinary action and where necessary other school staff outside of the classroom.
- That where necessary, discipline is dealt with in consultation with the Principal.
- That prior to suspension, parents will be consulted and involved in every stage of the process.
- 'Timeout' will be used appropriately.
- At all times the welfare of the student is primary.

General school rules, realistic to the individual pupil.

Care of Myself:

- I come to school clean and tidy.
- I can take care of my own belongings.
- I like to be as independent as possible.
- I always try my best in my work and my behaviour.
- I learn from examples of good behaviour.
- I follow the advice of staff on safety.
- I follow our healthy eating guidelines

Care of Others:

- I will be kind and respectful to the staff in the school and the other students.
- I will use my good manners, 'please' and 'thank you'.
- I learn about what other people need.
- I learn about how other people like to be treated.
- I like to help others.
- I will behave at all times in the classroom.

Care of the Environment:

- I walk on the school corridors.
- I am careful with equipment and toys.
- I help to recycle the school waste.
- I tidy up after myself.

Class Rules

Each class Teacher in consultation with Special Needs Assistant(s) will develop and maintain class rules appropriate to the needs of the students in their care. Class rules will be kept to a minimum and they are to be devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Where possible they should emphasise positive behavior (e.g. 'Walk' and not 'do not run'). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the students and to the individual difference. Where possible the students will be involved in drawing up these class rules. The class rules will be displayed in the classroom.

Incentives/Reward System

Part of the vision of Scoil Aonghusa School is to help the students achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for life after school. Our rewards system seeks to provide encouragement to all students of all abilities and talents. The student 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.

Rewards:

Whenever possible good behaviour should be praised and bad behaviour ignored and redirected.

Rewards should be instant and often.

Positive/good behaviour may be communicated to the Principal, parents and the general school staff.

Incentives:

These are particular to individual students and classes, the list is not exhaustive.

- Verbal praise.
- Choice of favorite activity.
- Visit to the shop.
- Visit to the Principal.

- Game of football.
- Given more responsibility.
- Visit to the restaurant.
- Time on the iPad/computer.
- Stickers (stating achievement).
- Choice to spend time with preferred school friend or staff member.

In the event of one pupil hurting another following steps will be adhered to:

1. Teacher/classroom staff will deal with the incident immediately.
2. School nurse will be called.
3. School Principal will be informed.
4. Incident report form will be filled out.
5. Parents of both children will be informed of the specific incident.
6. Class teacher will decide on how the unacceptable behaviour is managed.

Unacceptable/Challenging Behaviour.

Safety is a priority, the safety of the student, other students and staff must be considered in all cases. Incidents of challenging behaviour, which, give cause for concern for the physical well-being of the student, his/her peers or staff members should always be reported verbally to the Principal and also documented on an incident form (see attached). When filling in the form the information should be as specific as possible. Where it is deemed appropriate, unacceptable behaviour will be highlighted and parents will be informed and involved from an early stage, rather than a last resort. The Principal in consultation with the class teacher will make an informed decision on the basis of each individual case.

A concise record of events and outline of behaviours should be recorded by the class teacher. The involvement of the multi-disciplinary team may be requested to assist and a meeting involving the school, parents and the multi - disciplinary team will be arranged. The Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) will be contacted for extra resources where deemed necessary. Professional advice from Psychological Assessments will be invaluable.

Where a behaviour support plan is in place for a student it is important that staff familiarise themselves with the contents and are consistent with its implementation.

Strategies:

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

- Helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- Helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others.
- Helping students (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 take responsibility for their behaviour.
- Redirecting/distracting a pupil.
- Reasoning with/encouraging the pupil.
- Using 'Social Stories' to clarify expectations.
- Using 'Planned Ignoring'
- Defining boundaries.
- Using Cause/Effect/Consequences - child's action results in loss of privilege e.g. 'If you complete your task then we will...'
- Using praise and positive attention to reinforce acceptable behaviour.
- Using rewards.
- Fostering peer support.
- Using augmentative communication systems to assist understanding.
- Using the SPHE programme to discuss behaviour in general.
- Using Behavioural Support Plans (which are agreed with parents) where appropriate.
- Using contracts or recording notebooks where appropriate.

(The type of strategy chosen will depend on the competency and ability of the child)

The following consequences are used to manage unacceptable behaviour in the school.

- Use of facial expression.
- Using a firm tone of voice.
- Removing others from the vicinity of the pupil.
- Putting the pupil 'on notice' of a possible consequence of their behaviour.
- Sending home a note or calling a parent on the phone.
- Withdrawal of privileges for a reasonable period of time realistic to the individual pupil.
- Sending a pupil to the Principal.
- Carrying out a useful task in the school.
- Temporarily removing a student from the classroom to a supervised location.

It is NEVER acceptable to use the following strategies:

- Physical punishment or threat of physical punishment.
- Ridicule, sarcasm, remarks likely to undermine a student's self-confidence.
- Public or private humiliation.
- Sanctions given to whole groups in cases of individual wrong doing.
- Leaving a student in an unsupervised situation (e.g. a corridor) while in the care of the school.
- Persistent isolation of or ignoring a student in class.
- Invading a pupil's personal space.

Where behaviours persist or pose a persistent challenge to other pupils or staff, the school uses the following processes.

1. Referral to the school psychologist.
2. Establishment of a Behaviour Support Plan (in consultation with parents and members of the multi - disciplinary team)
3. Frequent meetings/phone calls to parents as part of the process.
4. Keeping incident reports where applicable (copies of which are available to parents)
5. Informing the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) of the need for possible resources for the pupil.
6. Sourcing extra training for staff.

Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher, SNA or pupil will be regarded as a serious misbehaviour. For repeated instances of serious misbehaviour parents may be asked by the Principal to take the child home for the rest of that day. Following this the parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case with the Principal and class teacher and to formulate a plan of action.

In extreme cases, where all internal processes have been exhausted and the Board of Management is of the opinion that the school does not have the resources to meet the challenge posed to the welfare of the pupil, other pupils or staff, the Board will follow the procedures and guidelines as stipulated in the Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 24 with regard to suspension and expulsion. This action will be taken when there is no alternative and only with due consultation with parents, the National Education Welfare Board and school staff.

Removal of Suspension:

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent(s)/guardians may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent(s)/guardian 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.

Communicating with Parents:

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents 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 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 to be used within the school:

- Informal/formal parent/teacher meeting.
- Through children's communication diaries.
- Letters/notes from school to home from home to school.
- Telephone.

Staff well-being and welfare is paramount within the school. Where a staff member or members are involved in an incident of challenging behaviour and may even get hurt during this, the Board of Management through the Principal will endeavor to do its utmost to support individual staff members both medically and emotionally. The Principal shall be available to staff members on request to discuss individual cases.

Review:

This policy was reviewed on 24th September 2024.

Ratification:

The Board of Management ratified this policy on 24 September 2024.

Signed: David Barry

David Barry - Chairperson Board of Management.

I have read and agree to the terms and conditions of this policy