

St Kilian's Junior School

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CODE OF BEHAVIOUR:

Development of the Code of Behaviour

The attached Code of Behaviour has evolved in the school since its inception in 1980. During 1997-1998, in line with an increased number of promotional posts in schools, it was collaboratively decided to draft a formal written Code of Behaviour and this area formed part of a new post of responsibility within the school.

The teachers discussed and agreed a draft version, which was submitted to the Board of Management in June 1999. The document was then circulated to all parents/guardians requesting comments and suggestions. This current document takes account of all suggestions made. The document was then evaluated in September 2001 through the means of a questionnaire and three staff meetings. While there were some amendments in the area of agreed rewards and sanctions the general Code of Behaviour was endorsed by all and is a document of consensus.

The policy was reviewed and updated in June 2009 in the light of "Developing a Code of Behaviour – Guidelines for Schools".

- NEWB.

St Kilian's Junior School decided to review its Code of Behaviour at this time because

- It is a priority area identified by the staff
- The existing policy is due for review and amendment
- It is a requirement of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 and the aforementioned guidelines.

St Kilian's Junior School uses a whole school approach to behaviour and therefore, the following were involved in the review.

Teachers/staff:

Teachers, SNAs and other staff members bring to the review, their professional expertise in understanding the links between behaviour and learning; their experience of what works to help students to behave well; and their knowledge of the school and of the school community.

Parents:

Parental involvement draws on their expectations, insight and experience. It helps to underline their responsibilities for their children's behaviour. Parents, through the P.A., were given a draft version of the reviewed code and asked for their input. At the induction meeting for parents of newly registered junior infants in June each year, the code is referred to. At registration, each parent is given a Parent's Handbook which has a full transcript of the code. Parents are requested at registration to sign up to fully supporting the school's Code of Behaviour.

Pupils:

Pupils are more likely to support a code of behaviour when they have helped to develop it. Relationships of trust between teachers and students can develop and grow stronger through the process.

The philosophy of the school made up of vision, mission and ethos sets the tone of discipline in the school. Therefore it is necessary to commence by outlining the St. Kilian's Junior School philosophy.

A School Policy Supportive of Good Behaviour

St. Kilian's Code of Behaviour is:

Formed out of the ongoing consultation and collaboration with all members of staff on all issues pertaining to school policy and out of the ongoing positive co-operation and collaboration between staff, ancillary staff, Management, pupils and parents. The Code of Behaviour is owned by the whole school community.

Based on the belief in parents as partners in education, the realisation of the crucial role of parents in forming and realising all school policy and the practise of good quality communication with parents through meetings, newsletters, homework journals, formal and informal parent teacher meetings, concerts, fund raising activities, curricular meetings and junior infant school induction meetings. It is also based on the realisation of the importance of informing parents not only if their child has misbehaved but also if they have behaved particularly well

Founded on the premise of good teacher preparation, organisation and interpersonal relations with pupils, parents, colleagues and Management. It acknowledges that all teachers endeavour to provide a rich, stimulating, caring and loving learning environment, to adapt the curriculum to suit the varying needs of mixed ability pupils and to realise multiple intelligence. Ample time is devoted to considering the need of special pupils. It realises the need for inter staff support in discipline matters, in particular extra help and support for substitute and beginner teachers.

Hopeful of securing a happy, friendly and caring learning environment where each and every child is valued and given equal opportunity to reach their full potential academically, emotionally, spiritually, physically and socially.

It also is founded on the positive basis of children, teachers, parents and Board of Management working in partnership where each individual is encouraged, respected and facilitated to reach their full potential in a positive atmosphere. While the individuality of each member of the school community is respected so also is the right to education of each child in a disruption free environment.

Born of a school ethos that tries to motivate good behaviour by providing an attractive learning environment that fosters a positive success identity through displays of work and recognition of success and accomplishment.

Preventative rather than punitive, proactive rather than reactive, firm yet compassionate. Acceptable behaviour is taught like academic content. Good behaviour is sought out and rewarded. There is an emphasis on the development of self-discipline in pupils and on the training in good behaviour patterns based on consideration, respect and tolerance of others. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour and thus must bear the sanctions as well as the rewards. There is a core Code of Behaviour which the school community insists on and each member of staff is consistent in teaching this code. The rules are simple and positively stated. The emphasis is on rewards and not on sanctions. The whole focus is positive and in the case of misbehaviour it is the behaviour and not the child that is sanctioned.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Our School code of behaviour is formed out of ongoing consultation and collaboration with all staff members, ancillary staff, management, pupils and parents.

The focus of the code is positive, in the belief that this will give the best results. The code outlined aims to protect the rights of children, teachers and others who work in the school.

Parents/guardians are provided with a Parent's Handbook which outlines our Code of Behaviour upon applying to enrol their child. It is a condition of registration to accept in writing the specified code. Parents/guardians are obliged to make all reasonable efforts to ensure their child complies with the code. The focus of the code is positive.

Aims:

- To create a happy and secure environment where everyone involved can work in partnership.
- To enable each child reach his/her full potential within a positive learning environment.
- To develop within each child, a positive self image.
- To cultivate values of respect, courtesy, honesty and tolerance.

In achieving the aims set out previously, pupils, parents, teaching and other staff and the Board of Management, all have vital roles to play.

Parents and Guardians should:

- familiarise themselves with the school’s policy document in relation to discipline.
- Co-operate with the school with regard to the implementation of its policy on discipline.
- communicate regularly with the school about factors likely to affect the behaviour of their children in school.
- Notify the class teacher in writing of their child’s absence when the child returns to school, stating the dates of absence and the reason. If a note is not received by the teacher, he/she will send a template note to parents requesting its completion and return.

The school will notify the NEWB if a child is absent for 20 days or more, in any given school year, or where the absence gives rise to concern.

If the child is sick or is absent for other good reasons, no action will be taken by the NEWB. However if there is concern about a child’s attendance, parents may be visited by an Educational Welfare Officer who will decide if further action is necessary to ensure that the child receives his/her full entitlement to an education.

- Notify the class teacher about any concerns relating to behaviour involving his/her child, notify the principal if concerns relate to other cases.

Our Golden Rules (in the school)

Keep my hands and feet to myself

Walk everywhere

Listen and do as I am told

Our Wishes

The pupils in St.Kilian’s School were directly involved in the audit of our Code of Behaviour in April 2009. The children in first and second class unanimously agreed that our golden rules work and that the rules helps them to feel safe.

However, they felt that at first/second class level, other issues needed to be addressed. They were reluctant to call these new guidelines rules, instead they referred to them as wishes. Following agreement from staff, it was agreed that the following are to be taught in First and Second class, and that each class would display these wishes.

1. We respect – *our parents, our teachers, school staff,our classmates, those who are different, our property, school property, others’ property*
2. We include – *all children in our school*
3. We are polite

Rewards:

We are using a positive method of discipline whereby the children gain rewards for specific good behaviour. From discussion with the children it is found that it is the normal wish of the child to do the proper thing at all times. Therefore we assume that the child always wants to behave. We try to catch children being good.

The children may earn the following rewards at their teacher's own discretion:

Rewards for Individuals:

- * Immediate verbal praise from teacher or neighbouring teacher
- * Stamp or sticker or star award
- * Prizes like sweets or lollipops or pencils.....
- * Extra privileges like extended computer time, no homework....
- * Name in Teacher's Gold Book
- * Name in Principal's Gold Book
- * Certificate for pupil of the week awarded monthly by the Principal or Deputy Principal at school assembly
- * Good reports home to parents either verbally or in writing.

All of these rewards are given for very specific good behaviour eg. raising hand before speaking, remaining in seat, answering quietly, sharing, lining up quietly....

Outside the school: (When accompanied by teacher/s)

- The standards expected in the Code of Behaviour apply in any situation where pupils are still the responsibility of the school. These include school trips, going to and from the church, fieldtrips and sports activities in the school grounds.
- Children must cross the road, only at the direction of the teacher/adult/parent who is with them

Understanding Behaviour:

The staff at St.Kilian's Junior School are aware of the factors that affect behaviour. These factors include external and interpersonal factors (such as parent and family patterns and relationships, peer groups/friends and neighbourhood and community factors) and within-person factors (including age and stage of development, personality and temperament, physical and medical characteristics and ability to learn). The staff also believe that student's behaviour can change and know what they can do to make this more likely. To this end, teachers will implement a programme of intervention for pupils with ongoing difficulty. Such intervention will include routine strategies in the course of the classroom situation and more active intervention for some students to help them manage their behaviour. For pupils who show particularly challenging behaviour, a sustained and systematic response involving the adults in their lives and local/other support services will be provided as appropriate.

Unacceptable Classroom Behaviour:

In the interest of the children's safety, dignity and basic right to education the following behaviour is not acceptable:

1. Not raising my hand before answering
2. Not completing assigned activities
3. Bad manners
4. Not keeping the classroom or toilets tidy and clean
5. Not doing as I am told eg. leaving the seat when told not to.
6. Not keeping my hands and feet to myself
7. Running on the school premises

Graded Sanctions:

1. Ignore the inappropriate behaviour and draw attention to two or three instances of the correct behaviour.
2. Verbal reminder followed by a warning.
3. Move place temporarily in the room.
4. Move to the thinking chair to consider his/her behaviour
5. The class teacher discusses the misbehaviour with parents.
6. Written record of the behaviour begins and the parents are notified in writing.

Our School Rules (for yard)

- Keep my hands and feet to myself
- No fast running
- Listen and do as I am told

These rules are discussed frequently in class and displayed in large format in every classroom and corridor in our school. They are displayed in both written and pictorial form.

Acceptable Behaviour at Playtime

Good behaviour in our yards means keeping our three school rules; keeping your hands and feet to yourself, not running, and listening and doing as you are told. Children are asked to play in the designated area away from the bars, steps and clay verges, to stay in the yard, to avoid sitting on the ground as this often leads to accidents, to play cooperatively together, include others in their games and to line up quietly. This is in the interest of each child's safety and to ensure a happy playtime for all. There is no food taken into the yard as all children will have had lunch before going out. Children are encouraged to go to the bathroom before yard time. If children need to go to the toilet during yard time, they should ask the teacher on yard before going.

Line up: At the end of play time, the first whistle is blown and the children are asked to freeze and put their hands on their heads. After the next whistle is blown, the children are expected to walk to their class line. This procedure is again in the interest of children's safety, as running to the line and jostling for first position can lead to physical injury. Note: all teachers have a leader list in their classrooms so that the children know who the leader is on any particular day.

All of this is discussed with the children regularly in class and there are often class lessons on playtime and line up. Appropriate games are taught and children are shown the yard boundaries. If they are seen to be following the rules, they receive immediate praise, the children who try hardest are given a 'happy card' by the teacher on duty. Most children wish to be good and behave well once they are aware of the rules.

Rewards for good yard behaviour:

Children who behave well in the yard are rewarded by Golden Time.

Golden Time takes place weekly in each classroom for a period of 15-20 minutes, at the end of the school day, usually on a Friday.

Suggestions for Golden Time:

All of which have educational value include:

- *Letting the children come up with their own ideas of how to spend the time.
- *educational card games
- *extra computer time
- *painting lessons
- *story time
- *joke/song/party piece time
- *chat time
- *dance or disco time
- *face painting
- *educational video
- *making rice crispy buns
- *seasonal: dress up at Hallowe'en, summer picnic, Christmas art and craft
- *Children bring in their own toys and play and share them with other children, only toys that can be easily shared are encouraged, board games, turn taking activities etc
No Nintendo DS, game boys, solitary toys or expensive toys are allowed.

For line up time there is a monthly competition. Each day, the teacher on yard duty picks the best line/lines. At the end of the month, the class with the most stamps in each year group receives a trophy to display in their classroom. The children in that class also receive a chocolate bar/appropriate treat each. The trophy and treats are presented to the class by the principal at the monthly assembly.

Unacceptable Yard Behaviour:

In the interest of the physical and emotional safety of all the children in this school the following behaviour is not accepted:

1. Physical or verbal injury to others or inappropriate games like 'wedgies' or 'trains'.
2. Any activity on the metal bars or step areas in our yard
3. Digging of stones or clay near the grass verges
4. Jostling at line-up time
5. Sitting on the ground (sitting on the ground often leads to an accident as other children trip over or collide with the seated child.)

All of these activities can lead to serious injury and are in breach of the three school rules.

Sanctions for unacceptable yard behaviour

It is realised that usually the child wants to do well and to behave, therefore it is the behaviour and not the child that is sanctioned. Immediate sad cards/misbehaviour card are given for activities 1 to 4. In the event of activity 5, the children are reminded about safety and only given a misbehaviour card if the activity is repeated.

Children who receive misbehaviour cards in the yard must present them to their class teacher

*One card in the week means a loss of 5 minutes Golden Time.

*Two cards in the week means a loss of ten minutes Golden Time

*Three cards in the week means a loss of all of Golden Time for that week.

If a child has received a misbehaviour card in the yard and engages in no further misbehaviour or it is felt that the behaviour was totally out of character, he/she has a chance of winning back golden time at the class teachers' discretion. All children start with a clean sheet each week.

Parents are contacted if a child is continually missing parts of golden time.

Incidents of Serious Misbehaviour

By using a positive method of discipline we hope to keep serious misbehaviour to a minimum. However if such incidents do arise they must be dealt with. Such incidents may include:

- Repeated cheek to another adult in the school
- Persistent less serious misbehaviour despite all use of rewards/sanctions
- Incidents where physical injury is inflicted
- Verbal abuse or racist remarks
- Deliberate damage to property
- Repeated incidents of bullying

If a child is involved in such an incident she/he will be sent to the office. The Principal will talk to the child. She may use a misbehaviour card or put the child's name in a behaviour diary. The Principal will check up on the child after two to five days to ensure behaviour has improved. If so, the misbehaviour card will be taken down from the class notice board, or the child's name removed from the behaviour diary. The Principal may inform the child's parents or request a meeting with parents depending on the nature of misbehaviour. 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 /or the Principal.

Procedures for Dealing with Children with Challenging Behaviour

The procedures outlined below are a guide only. Each case will be child/behaviour specific. The principal should be made aware of any case where the use of these guidelines may be required.

The majority of children will respond to the strategies used in the agreed school code of behaviour. These guidelines are produced in an effort to manage the behaviours of a very small minority of children, where the consistent use of the general code has proven unsuccessful.

1. The class teacher seeks a solution through all strategies listed in the Code of Behaviour
 - Rewards
 - Sanctions
 - Drawing attention to positive behaviour
 - Being specific about inappropriate behaviour
 - Putting sanctions in place; loss of golden time, time out, thinking chair etc
 - Regular use of circle time

Consult games/books etc held in SET, specifically dealing with behavioural issues

Connor's Rating Scale or BASC rating scales may be used as a checklist, copies available in SET
2. Consultation with parents
 - use of daily/weekly behaviour log
 - record any triggers/trends in behaviour patterns
 - use of notebook – two way communication with parents
3. Class teacher looks to others for advice – colleague, senior teacher, Assistant Principal (postholder with responsibility for Code of Behaviour) Deputy Principal, Principal, NEPS Psychologist, Special Ed. Support Service (SESS)
4. Individual Behavioural Programme to be devised with Parents, and documented daily/weekly –regular meetings with parents are essential.
5. Parents/Guardians may be requested to seek an appointment with Lucena Clinic. They will need a referral letter from their G.P.
6. Psycho-educational Assessment will be sought if appropriate and resource hours/provision of an SNA may be recommended.
7. The Principal may apply for the above resources.

While every effort will be made to resolve behavioural issues the Board of Management reserves the right to suspend or expel a child as follows

A pupil who is involved in any of the following behaviours may be suspended:

- the serious physical and /or psychological abuse of a pupil or staff member
 - violent or aggressive behaviour
 - unacceptable verbal disruption or verbal abuse
 - serious damage to or abuse and/or theft of property on the school premises
 - the consumption, possession or sale of any illegal substance
- (the above list is not exhaustive)

Procedures for suspension:

The Board of Management and Staff of St.Kilian's Junior School will follow the procedures for suspension and expulsion outlined in the Guidelines for Schools on Developing a Code of Behaviour (chapters 10-12).

Fair procedures (i.e. the right to be heard and the right to impartiality) will be applied at all times. Accordingly, pupils and their parents will be fully informed about an allegation and the processes that will be used to investigate and decide the matter and they will be given the opportunity to respond to an allegation before a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed. In exceptional circumstances, the principal/Board may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary when the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff of the school, or any other person (p73)

The Board of Management will also follow the factors to consider before suspending a student(p72) and the factors to consider before proposing to expel a student (p82).

In relation to suspension:

- Communication to parents regarding the suspension of a pupil or the possibility of suspension will be in writing and all copies of all correspondence will be retained. In some circumstances it may be necessary to contact parents by phone.
- The parent/guardians will be invited to meet with the Principal and/or Board of Management to discuss the proposed suspension.
- The Board of Management has delegated responsibility for suspension to the Principal in the event that immediate suspension of a pupil is warranted (guidelines p73). The parents/guardians and child will be invited to discuss the matter with the Principal and the procedures governing suspension will be applied.
- A written statement of the terms and date of the termination of a suspension will be given to parents/guardians. A suspension will not be for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is necessary in order to achieve a particular objective. The letter will confirm;

- *the period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.*
- *the reasons for the suspension*
- *any programme of study to be followed*
- *the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents (e.g. parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)*
- *the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management*
- *the right to an appeal to the Secretary General of the Dept. of Ed. And Science. (Education Act 1998. section 29)*
- The suspension will be recorded on the NEWB Student Absence Report Form (when applicable)
- When a period of suspension ends, the pupil will be re-admitted formally to the class by the Principal.
- Where a satisfactory resolution of a problem is achieved, a pupil may be re-admitted to school within a suspension period at the discretion of the Principal and/or the Chairperson of the Board of Management.
- If a pupil continues to misbehave he may be suspended for a major fixed period (up to ten days) to allow for consultation with both the pupil and the pupil's parent/guardians to address the issues.
- As outlined above, parents/guardians and pupil will be given the opportunity to discuss the issues with the Principal/Board .
- The Education Welfare Officer will be informed when a student when a student has been suspended for six days or more cumulatively.
- Section 29 Appeal - When the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days, the parents may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act and will be given information about how to appeal.

The Board of Management authorises the Principal and/or Chairperson to exclude a pupil up to a maximum of three school days in response to a serious breach of discipline or continuously disruptive behaviour.

If a suspension of longer than three days is required, the matter is referred to the Board of Management for consideration. Where the Board is unable to convene within this timeframe, an initial suspension of up to five days may be authorised, subject to the guidance concerning such suspensions. According to the guidelines, the Board may place a suspension of up to ten days.

Parents will be informed of the decision to suspend a pupil both by phone and in writing and will be given an opportunity to respond. It is a condition of the pupil's return to school that the parent/s undertake to address the issue/s which led to the suspension.

Expulsion:

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil where;

- the pupil's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- the pupil's continued presence in school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- the pupil is responsible for serious damage to property (the above list is not exhaustive).

All proposals to expel will be reported to the Education Welfare Officer and will be dealt with in accordance with the guidelines issued by the National Education Welfare Board, and the requirements of the patron.

Procedures for Expulsion – the procedures outlined on p.83-86 of the guidelines will be followed (see steps 1-6 below)

- subsequent to the above suspension procedures and meetings with parents/ guardians, if serious/gross incidents of misbehaviour continue, the pupil will be recommended for permanent exclusion (expulsion) by the Board of Management. This excludes expulsion for a first offence – see p81.
- *Step 1: A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal*
- *Step 2: A recommendation to the Board of Management*
- *Step 3: Consideration by the Board of the Principal's recommendation, and the holding of a hearing.*
- *Step 4: Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.*
- *Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer*
- *Step 6: Confirmation of the decision to expel.*

A record will be kept in the school of all instances of serious misbehaviour by pupils.

Breaches of behaviour will be recorded in writing by the class teacher and if necessary by the Principal.

Other relevant school policies (e.g. Health and Safety) may be referred to. The school's Anti-Bullying Policy is attached to this policy.

Pupils with special needs:

Pupils with special needs will be required to follow the school's Code of Behaviour but teachers/snas will use their professional judgement in relation to regularity and level of sanctions. While teachers must be seen to be fair in the eyes of other children who have exhibited the same type of misdemeanours, they will also show leniency and understanding in relation to children with specific learning/behavioural difficulties. Parents of these children will be kept informed of their child's behaviour on a regular basis and may be requested to work with the school in devising effective strategies to help the child to improve his behaviour. This may involve working and co-operating with an SNA and contacting and meeting with relevant out of school agencies.

Success Criteria:

Practical indicators of the success of the policy include:-

- A happy and caring school environment
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.
- Observation of behaviour in classrooms, corridors and the yard.

Roles and Responsibility:

The people who have particular responsibility for aspects of the policy are:

- Board of Management
- Principal
- Postholder with responsibility for Code of Behaviour
- Class teacher
- Parents
- Pupils

The overall responsibility for behaviour within the school rests with the principal. However the Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for behaviour under its management and a duty to ensure that a fair code of behaviour applies therein.

Implementation Date:

This policy will apply from June 2010

Teachers will discuss the code with their pupils and formally teach/revise the expectations for behaviour so that each child is aware of what is expected of them. The school rules will be revised/taught in all classes, and our "wishes" will be discussed and displayed in all first and second classes.

Timetable for Review:

This policy will be reviewed, and if necessary, amended in June 2012.



Signature of Chairperson :

Date: 27/4/ 2010.

Copies of "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools NEWB 2008" are available from National Education Welfare Board or online at www.newb.ie