

Code of Behaviour.

The Code of Behaviour was developed by a sub committee comprising of two parents, two staff members and two members of the Board of Management in February / March 2010.

It was then approved by the full school staff and at a meeting of the parent body in May 2010.

Mission Statement.

In Scoil Mhuire, Tallow, we aim to provide our children with a safe and caring environment in accordance with the principals of our patron where happiness and enhancement of self esteem are of prime importance.

All of our children will be encouraged to achieve their full potential and will be expected to allow all the other children to achieve their full potential in a safe environment.

Our ambition is that our children will leave us as well rounded, confident, respectful and caring individuals capable of making a positive contribution to the world around them.

Aims

The aims of the Code of Behaviour of Scoil Mhuire are.

- To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
- To provide for effective and safe operation of the school.
- To develop pupils' self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance 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 encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour.
- 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.

Bullying

Bullying is repeated verbal, psychological aggression by an individual or group against others. The most common forms of bullying are aggressive physical contact, name calling, intimidation, extortion, isolation and taunting. Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to cooperate with school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

Affirming Positive Behaviour

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions.

Expectations

In Tallow N.S. we expect children to:

1. Treat all staff, visitors and other children with respect and politeness.
2. Be kind to each other.
3. Be honest in their dealings with others.
4. Treat school property and other children's property with respect.
5. Listen carefully in class and do their best.
6. Complete homework, present it on time and get it signed by parents.
7. Maintain a high standard of behaviour while on school premises and while engaging in any school-related activity.
8. Keep the rules.
9. Help to create a safe, positive environment.

Note.

Behaviour will be subject to the school's code of behaviour anywhere on the school premises, school activity or where the child / children are representing the school e.g. sport events, cultural events, school tours etc.

In Tallow N.S. we expect parents to:

1. Ensure children come to school each day on time (9.20am - 2pm Jnr & Snr Infant 9.20am - 3pm 1st - 6th class)
2. Parents are legally required to send in a written note explaining why their child absent on the day following the absence. Please use Homework Journal *c.f. Procedures for notifying the school about reasons for absence from school.*
3. Inform the class teacher if they wish to collect their child early from school for any reason. (Appointments etc.)
4. Inform the school if their child is to be collected by someone other than a nominated person.
5. A written note is required when a pupil fails to do or complete homework.
6. Ensure children wear full uniform are clean, neat and tidy.
7. Ensure children wear appropriate clothing for P.E.

8. Label all property and clothing clearly.
9. Help children with their homework and sign homework journal daily.
10. Treat all school staff and other children with respect, courtesy and polite language.
11. Co-operate with school staff and attend meetings when requested.
12. Provide a healthy lunch daily for their children. (see Healthy Lunch Policy)
13. Make an appointment, through the secretary, if you wish to meet with a teacher.
14. Provide clothing to allow full access to school curriculum.
15. Provide children with a hand towel to dry hands in class.

In Tallow N.S. we expect staff to:

1. Be punctual.
2. Be prepared for class
3. Be cognitive of the various needs and ability levels of all children in their class and adapt their teaching accordingly.
4. Treat children, parents and other staff members with respect, courtesy and polite language.
5. Co-operate with each other and work as part of a team. When disciplining a child from another room the teacher should consult with the child's class teacher.
6. Be fair and consistent.
7. Be aware of their duty of care to all children, at all times.
8. Monitor Homework Journals.

Promoting a positive school climate.

1. Staff will have a common understanding of expectations and a common approach to sanctioning. Through daily contact with children teachers and staff will promote an atmosphere of mutual respect.
2. Through the SPHE curriculum we will teach the skills the children will need to live up to the school expectations, e.g. co-operating with each other, listening to each other, showing respect, taking turns, using 'please' and 'thank you' etc. It is envisaged that each class teacher will teach or revise the Code of Behaviour as appropriate to their class at the start of each term, as deemed necessary.

Ways in which teachers can promote good behaviour:

1. Teachers regularly praise good behaviour in a consistent manner.(catch them being good!)
2. Involve children in forming class rules.
3. Reward systems.
4. Good note to parents in homework journal.
5. Teachers model good behaviour.
6. Giving children responsibility in school
7. A written comment on pupils' work.
8. Use of school report to comment favourably, not only on good work and academic achievement but on behaviour, on involvement and on general attitude.

Ways in which parents / guardians can promote good behaviour:

1. Try to nurture a positive attitude towards school and all involved in it.

2. Try not to pass on any negative experiences which parents themselves may have had at school.
3. Model good behaviour in your relationship with teachers.
4. Support the work being done in school in teaching the Code of Behaviour.
5. Parents can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules and behave in an acceptable manner.

Purpose and content of school rules:

Each child coming to school has a right to expect an atmosphere where he /she can learn, play and feel safe. The following rules set out to ensure this:

1. Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated. (cf. Anti-bullying Policy)
2. Taking God's name in vain, swearing and the use of bad language is forbidden.
3. Children are not allowed to leave school grounds between 9.20am and 3.00pm (2pm for Infants) without teacher's permission.
4. Walk calmly and quietly inside the school building at all times, and in line.
5. Footballs must be carried while inside the school, and after the bell rings.
6. Children must walk to and from their bus/car.
7. If at any time a pupil is found to have an item that could be considered dangerous to him/herself or to others, it will be taken from them.
8. Pupils are not allowed to climb or walk on walls, or climb on the peripheral fencing.
9. Playing with sticks is forbidden, as is the throwing of stones.
10. Mock fighting and wrestling is forbidden.
11. Chewing gum is strictly forbidden.
12. Children are encouraged to bring drinks in re-usable plastic bottles. (NO glass bottles allowed)
13. Children must ask the teacher on duty to go to the toilet.
14. Children must stay in their designated areas in the yard.
15. Mobile phones, I-pods. MP3players, handheld games etc. are not allowed.
16. Collector cards, e.g. football cards are not allowed.
17. Helmets must be worn when hurling.
18. Children should put litter in bins.

How staff, parents and students can help each other to meet the standards expected in school:

Staff will teach the code as part of their SPHE lesson.

Reminders of the school /class rules will be displayed in school.

School staff will model good behaviour.

Parents will accept the code, discuss it with their children, and model good behaviour at home.

Students can encourage each other to adhere to the rules, in the interest of all the children.

Unacceptable Behaviour and Sanctions

Some examples of Minor Misbehaviour:

1. Disobedience: not carrying out instructions from the teacher
 not getting on with work set by the teacher

- not following class rules.
2. Disrupting class: shouting out, throwing objects e.g. paper, rubbers etc.
Swinging on chairs distracting others, interrupting the teacher,
Wandering around the classroom, fidgeting, inattention and sulking
 3. Damaging school or other children's property, marking tables with pencils or pens, marking other children's books/library books, tearing books or tampering with I.T. equipment.
 4. Pushing, leaving children out of play/group activities, leaving designated play areas
 5. Returning to classroom during break times without permission.
 6. Not completing homework (without a note of explanation)
 7. Use of bad language.
 8. Being insolent/giving cheek.
 9. Telling lies.
- (This is NOT an exhaustive list)*

Continuous minor misbehaviour automatically becomes a serious misbehaviour

Some examples of Serious Misbehaviour:

1. Bullying (See school's anti-bullying policy)
 2. Inappropriate play.
 3. Kicking, fighting, spitting, and biting.
 4. Throwing objects. (that could cause harm)
 5. Abusive language.
 6. Damaging school / other children's property e.g. defacing walls, desks, tables with permanent markers, deliberately breaking windows, destroying other children's work/property.
 7. Stealing school /staff or other children's property, books etc.
 8. Leaving school grounds without permission.
 9. Deliberate disobedience.
 10. Being aggressive.
 11. Telling harmful lies.
- (This is NOT an exhaustive list)*

Some examples of Extreme Misbehaviour (these may incur automatic suspension at the discretion of the Board of Management or the Principal)

1. Threatening behaviour.
 2. Verbal or physical assault on a staff member / other pupil.
 3. Serious theft / vandalism.
 4. Total disregard for School Rules.
- (This is NOT an exhaustive list)*

Note:

Any behaviour which has implications for a child protection will be dealt with as laid out in our Child Protection Policy. Behaviour involving serious assault and / or illegal substances will be referred to An Garda Síochána.

Sanctions:

When choosing a sanction the teacher will be aware of the following:

Sanctions should:

1. Defuse and not escalate a situation.
2. Preserve the dignity of all parties.
3. Be applied in a fair and consistent way.
4. Be proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the behaviour.
5. Be appropriate to the age and development stage of the child and take account of the cultural background of the child.
6. Take note of students with special needs.

Appropriate Sanctions:

For Minor Misbehaviours:

1. Reasoning with the child.
2. Reprimand (including advice on consequence of continuing and how to improve)
3. Temporary separation from peers. (within classroom)
4. Temporary loss of responsibility, class jobs etc.
5. Additional work of Penalty Sheet. (signed by parent)
6. Communication with parents from class teacher (note in journal, phone call, meeting)
7. Temporary separation from peers to another classroom.
8. Communication with Principal.

These sanctions may not always be applied in this order.

For serious misbehaviours:

As above plus:

1. Temporary separation from peers to another classroom.
2. Immediate referral to Principal.
3. Communication with parents.
4. Detention at break times.
5. Meeting with parents, class teacher and / or principal by appointment to discuss misbehaviour and draw up behaviour plan.
6. Suspension. (Parents may be contacted by phone and will be asked to collect the child)
7. Expulsion.

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

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

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

If suspension is still decided upon:

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

- The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
- The reasons for the suspension.
- Any study programme to be followed.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents.
- The provision for appeal to the Board of Management or secretary general of the D.E.S.. (Only where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days)
- 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

1. A 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.
1. A recommendation to the B.O.M. by the principal (see page 84 NEWB guidelines)
2. Consideration by the B.O.M of the principals' recommendations and the holding of a hearing (see page 84 NEWB guidelines)
3. B.O.M. deliberations and actions follow owing a hearing.(page 85 NEWB guidelines)
4. If B.O.M. 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 **Notice of Intention to Expel form** which is available on www.schoolreturn.ie or from our helpline (1890363666). This form should be completed and sent to **School Return Section, National Educational Welfare Board, 16-22 Green St, Dublin 7.**
5. Consultations arranged by the EWO.
6. 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)

Procedures for notifying the school about reasons for absence from school

Parents are legally required to send in written note explaining why the child was absent on the day following the absence. Please use Homework Journal The Education Welfare Act came into operation in July 2002. According to the Act, parents must notify the school in writing of the **reason for child's absence** (Section 18) and Principals are obliged to notify the Education Welfare Officer of absences exceeding 20 school days. (Section 21)

Review of Code

Three years.

Ratified by Board of Management on

June 2010