

Appendix Q: Code of Behaviour**Foreword**

Mary Queen of Ireland N.S. is committed to working in partnership with children and parents to ensure that our pupils:

- are safe and happy in school
- have the best start in life and are ready to succeed
- are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

Aims

The aims of the Code of Behaviour of Mary Queen of Ireland N.S. are:

- To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
- To provide for the 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.

The aims for the pupils are simple and clear and are explored with the pupils on a regular basis, both in class and at school assemblies:

- Everyone has the right to be safe.
- Everyone has the right to learn.

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, emphasis will be placed on 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.

General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour

1. Pupils are expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable
2. Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
3. Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to wear the school uniform, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.
4. Pupils are expected to obey a teacher's instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
5. Pupils are expected to be punctual and to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing, stating the reason for absence.

Learning: Principles and Practice

Mary Queen of Ireland NS is committed to promoting confidence, independent thinking and positive attitudes. The children should develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes that they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future. This should enable children to –

- make informed decisions in order to improve their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing
- experience challenge and enjoyment
- experience positive aspects of healthy living and activity for themselves
- apply their mental, emotional, social and physical skills to pursue a healthy lifestyle
- make a successful move to the next stage of education or work
- establish a pattern of health and wellbeing which will be sustained into adult life, and which will help to promote the health and wellbeing of our children.

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. The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom, while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the confines of the school.

All members of the school community should feel happy, safe, respected and included in the school environment. The staff are proactive in promoting positive behaviour in the classroom, playground and the wider school community.

Strategies and Incentives

- The “Happy Stamp” System and Class Dojo is used throughout the school when needed. Children’s positive behaviour is recognised and feedback is given to parents regularly
- A quiet word or gesture to show approval and reinforce positive behaviour
- A positive comment in child’s diary or other exercise book
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- Written or verbal communication with parent.

Rewards

- Raffle tickets with a monthly class draw
- Stickers/ points/ certificates
- Teacher’s treat time – list of activities compiled with children
- Golden time
- Extra yard time
- Awards day – trophies/ medals and enrichment prizes
- School trips and tours

Developing Independence in Dealing with Problems

In accordance with the Stay Safe programme, the pupils are taught three steps for dealing with a problem that arises in the playground or in the classroom. The steps provide the pupils with a way of managing their disagreements as well as knowing where and when they should ask for assistance:

Say No. Walk away. Tell.

Achievements and Responsibilities

It is our aim that all members of the school community should have confidence in themselves and their ability, and be encouraged to maximise their potential. The pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning, behaviour and achievement and to contribute effectively to the school. We maintain a positive ethos and create an environment which allows them to develop into responsible citizens. The pupils’ Achievements are celebrated in assemblies, through newsletters and on the school website and informally throughout the school year. ‘Awards Day’ allows each child to be highlighted for positive feedback and special mention. The pupils are given responsibilities that are classroom based such as class helpers and messengers, or school based such as Green School committee or Student Council representatives.

Discouraging Misbehaviour

Rewards, praise and encouragement are used frequently to promote positive behaviour, but we recognise that there may be a need for sanctions to discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development. At all times sanctions should be timely, fair and appropriate and should “fit” the misdemeanour. (i.e. poor conduct at a football match may lead to a one match ban). We endorse a co-operative approach to pupil behaviour. At all times parents and teachers should adopt a calm dignified approach to any difficulty that has emerged. Teacher’s use their discretion at all times and proceed in accordance with best practice guidelines and in the spirit of our school ethos. The NEPS Code of Behaviour Guidelines & Continuum of Support documents may be used as a guide. Sanctions may include:

- Reasoning with pupil.
- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class.
- Prescribing extra work.
- Loss of privileges.
- Detention during break.
- Detention after school.

- Communication with parents.
- Referral to Principal.
- Principal communicating with parents.
- Reduced timetable
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).
- Report to Gardai

Bullying

Bullying is repeated verbal, psychological or physical 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 the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's *Anti-Bullying Policy*.

Suspension/Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as detention, suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Where it is proposed to detain a pupil after school hours, the parents or guardians will be notified. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening, harmful or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross 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 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.

School Rules

School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly. They are listed in full in the *Plean Scoile* under *Section 5: Procedures and Practices; School Rules*.

Before/After School

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening time of 9.00 a.m. or after the official closing time of 1.40 p.m. (infants) and 2.40 p.m. (other classes) except where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management. Pupils involved in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with this code during these times.

Board of Management's Responsibilities

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- Ratify the code.

Principal's Responsibilities

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Arrange for review of the Code, as required.

Teachers' Responsibilities

Support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour.

- Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- Recognise and affirm good work.
- Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

Pupils' Responsibilities

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow school and class rules.

Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities

- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour.
- It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act 2000 that parents/guardians of pupils in all schools should read, agree to and sign the School Code of Behaviour.

Signed: Michael Mooney
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Aik O'Donnell
Principal

Date: 27/9/23

Date of next review: June 2024