

Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy

November 2023

Naíscoil & Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir
Positive Behaviour Policy

Aims:

To establish good discipline.

To develop and maintain good relationships between staff members, staff and pupils, the school and the community it serves.

To create an atmosphere in which both the pupils and staff feel secure, welcome and valued.

To give the school community the opportunity to discuss their interests and voice their concerns.

Through the creation of this ethos we hope to:

develop pupil's confidence and self-esteem,

encourage pupils to value one another,

develop a strong sense of belonging among pupils to the school as a community.

This positive ethos is embodied in our school Mission Statement:

To create a happy, caring, secure and stimulating learning environment in which all members of our school community can grow emotionally, socially, academically and in self-esteem thereby developing their potential by participating fully in an Irish Medium setting where we provide "High quality education at the heart of the community".

The positive side of discipline

We believe that an emphasis should be placed on the positive approach of encouragement and praise, rather than on the more negative one of criticism and punishment. Criticism should always include advice on how to improve and should be constructive in its approach.

Throughout the school children are motivated when they are taught that good behaviour and work are rewarded. We guide our pupils towards positive responses to our school and class rules by using charters, agreed rewards and consequences.

Promoting Good Behaviour

The school uses the following ways of promoting good behaviour:

Class Charter – discussed, agreed and displayed in all classes in September.

Class reward system – each teacher implements their own reward system in class.

Circle time - all classes participate in circle time and PDMU lessons at least once a week, where children have an opportunity to discuss issues relating to behaviour, i.e. how to handle their own behaviour and how to react in relation to others.

Réalta an lae – daily star is chosen in each class.

Páiste na Míosa – pupil of the month is celebrated each month at whole school assembly.

Gaeilgeoir na Seachtaine – Irish speaker of the week is awarded in each class.

Gaeilgeoir na Míosa – Irish speaker of the month will be rewarded.

Promoting the use of spoken Irish in the playground – tickets are given to children who have been heard using Irish in the playground/canteen during break and dinner time. The class with the most tickets at the end of each month are rewarded with a special treat eg ice-cream, McDonalds.

Praise - Praise is used regularly to recognise examples of good behaviour. It is more effective when it is made personal to a particular child and relates to a specific example. Teachers may decide to send a note home or a text to inform parents. Teachers also send some children to the Principal who rewards children with small token.

Individual rewards - Merits and stickers are used to reward individual examples of good behaviour. These are distributed by teachers, classroom assistants at their discretion.

Treoracha na Scoile / School Guidelines:

The guidelines that apply around the school are:

- **Bí deas**
- **Bí cineálta**
- **Coinnigh do lámha agus do chosa duit féin**
- **Bí bródúil agus labhair as Gaeilge**

These guidelines were discussed and agreed with all pupils at the beginning of each school year and they are displayed around the school. Parents were also informed of these guidelines and they are readily available on our school website. Consequences were also agreed with all children and parents. Each class teacher discusses the school guidelines regularly with their class.

In addition to the school guidelines, each class also has its own class charter, rewards and consequences which is agreed by the children and displayed on the wall of the classroom and shared with parents. Each class offers rewards using a different system to promote positive behaviour in their classroom. (Appendix 1) The class teacher will inform parents of the system which will be used at the beginning of each year. In this way, every child in the school knows the standard of behaviour that we expect in our school. In this way, every child in the school knows the standard of behaviour that we expect in our school.

Staff complete on-going professional development in this area to ensure our skills are continuously developing so that we can meet the needs of our pupils.

To encourage good standards of behaviour, guidelines need to be:

- Kept to a minimum

- Focused on the positive, i.e. what children can do, rather than are not allowed to do
- Made explicit
- Consistently applied
- Showing that *everyone* has responsibilities towards the school community

The following lists of statements identify types of behaviour that are conducive to effective learning and types of behaviour that impede it.

Desirable Behaviour in Pupils

- demonstrating a positive self- image and the confidence to engage successfully in activities;
- showing respect for the views, ideas and property of others;
- recognising that all have a right to share in and contribute to class lessons;
- co-operating with all staff and with their peers on shared activities, applying themselves to the task and working to the best of their ability;
- demonstrating good manners, respect and courtesy at all times;
- responding positively to opportunities to act independently of the teacher and to show initiative.

Undesirable Behaviour in Pupils

- any form of bullying;
- being unkind to peers;
- calling out in class, interrupting others and being inattentive when others are contributing to the lesson;
- displaying a lack of interest in learning and preventing others from learning;
- being unable or unwilling to abide by agreed standards of good manners, respect and courtesy;
- defacing or destroying other pupils' belongings or school property;
- using abusive or inappropriate language in any context;
- acting with violence or aggression towards any member of the school community.

These statements have not been ordered according to their seriousness. Staff will assess each breach of discipline on its own merits taking into account such variables as context, intention, the frequency with which the offence has been committed and the child's personal circumstances.

In Naíscoil & Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir we believe a clear understanding of the rights and responsibilities of parents, teachers and pupils will lead to a more harmonious and productive relationship between the key stakeholders of the school.

CLASSROOM CHARTER

The emphasis within the school at all times is on building self-esteem and the

acknowledgement of effort and achievement. In Naíscoil & Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir, good behaviour is expected from every pupil. Within the school's positive discipline policy each teacher will consult with pupils to draw up a classroom charter that is relevant for his/her particular year group. The classroom charter will include rewards that acknowledge good behaviour, effort and achievement. The drawing up of the charter will include a discussion on the consequences that will be incurred if children do not follow the class charter. These consequences will occur on a progressive, sliding scale and will include notifying parents about what has taken place at the relevant stage and the sanctions that may be used. A reward system will be worked with all children having the opportunity to achieve some recognition for good behaviour/achievement within the classroom. Teachers will keep a log that will record incidents of indiscipline for the purpose of referral.

The Referral Chain

A referral chain operates within Naíscoil & Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir for dealing with incidents of misbehaviour. Parents will be involved and supported in an effort to improve behaviour.

Step 1 –Class Teacher

The class teacher is responsible for discipline in his/her own classroom and in any part of the school or school grounds. A child may be referred to the Principal as part of the teacher's classroom discipline plan.

Class systems are applied fairly and consistently whilst taking into account individual circumstances, including the child's age and any learning difficulty/disability the child may have.

Supervisory assistants will attend periodic meetings with the Principal to discuss the current systems in place, and review progress and implementation.

Parents

Parents have a right to be informed about their child's behaviour. Opportunities for this are included in the referral chain system and class systems. Good co-operation should exist between the class teacher and the parents when trying to improve pupil behaviour. The parental safeguarding leaflet will be sent home annually.

Principal

A child may be referred to the principal if he /she does not respond positively to the corrective procedures carried out by the class teacher and supervisory staff. The principal will decide what measures need to be applied to improve behaviour. The principal will make the final decision regarding suspension.

Board of Governors

The Board of Governors will be consulted if a suspension needs to be extended beyond five days and will take the final decision regarding the expulsion of pupils for very serious offences.

Suspensions

Only the Principal has the authority to suspend a pupil, in accordance with the procedures set out. The decision to expel a pupil can only be applied to pupils who have already been suspended.

A pupil may be suspended from school by the Principal only.

An initial or subsequent period of suspension shall not exceed five school days.

Notification of pupil suspensions must be sent to the EA on the relevant form.

Where a suspension is to be extended, notification of, and reasons for the extension shall be sent in writing to the parent/guardian before the expiry of the current suspension.

A pupil may be suspended from school for not more than 45 days.

Notification of suspensions must be given to the parent/guardian of the pupil, the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and the designated officer of the EA.

Suspension can happen due to the following reasons but this list may not cover all incidents. Suspension may happen at the first incident due to the severity of the said incident. Suspension may happen following a series of incidents. Either way the decision to suspend lies with the Principal.

Dangerous aggressive act: This included the assault of another pupil / or member of staff: hitting someone with force and intention is not acceptable particularly in Key Stage 2.

Use of intentionally abusive language: Verbal abuse of another pupil / or member of staff / visitor to school.

Damage and / or destruction of school property.

If a child is to be suspended the principal will meet with parents and ask them to take their child home immediately. Principal will give parents a letter on the same day outlining the reasons for suspension and the arrangements for work which must be completed during the period of suspension. Parents and child will meet with principal on return to school and complete relevant planning activity together. Child will return to class and behaviours will be monitored closely for an agreed period of time.

Expulsion

A pupil shall not be expelled from school otherwise than by the Board of Governors. A pupil may be expelled from school only after serving a period of suspension.

A decision on whether or not to expel a pupil from school shall be made only after:

(i) consultation has taken place between the principal, parent/guardian of the pupil, the Chairperson of the Board of Governors (or nominee) and the duly authorised representative of the EA. These consultations shall include consideration of the future provision of suitable education for the pupil concerned.

(ii) an opportunity has been offered to the parent/guardian of the pupil, and the child if present, to make representations to the Board of Governors in relation to the pupil and the circumstances surrounding possible expulsion. The future education provision for the pupil must be considered as part of the process. In addition, the Board of Governors shall consider any written documentation submitted by the parent/guardian. A refusal on the part of the parent/guardian to take part in such procedures shall not prevent a pupil from being expelled.

A Board of Governors shall expel no pupil unless the Governors are satisfied, on considering all the evidence available to them, that the pupil has failed to meet the school's minimum required standards of behaviour and the Governors are further satisfied that expulsion is the appropriate sanction.

The Principal, in writing, shall draw the specific attention of the parent/guardian, or the pupil, where he/she has attained the age of eighteen, to the right of appeal to an Articles Tribunal against the decision of the Board of Governors under Article 49 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 as amended by Article 39 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1993. In particular, the Principal shall provide the parent/guardian with the address and telephone number of the EA that has responsibility for making arrangements for hearing the appeal.

Additional support

Additional support is available, through the school's SEN system for pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural needs. We recognise that some pupils may need more support than others to develop their skills, and staff are encouraged to act on concerns about a pupil's learning, conduct or emotional behaviour as early as possible. We will treat all pupils fairly but differently. This will be taught explicitly to all pupils throughout the school.

If necessary, pupils will be offered additional support and may in some instances have a social, behavioural, emotional wellbeing plan attached to their IEP. This plan will be drawn up in consultation with staff, the pupil and parent / guardians.

For pupils with more significant difficulties, the school will work in partnership with outside agencies such as the Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support Team. Risk Management plans are introduced when necessary to support the child. All relevant staff will be made aware of the plan.

The school may also consider the involvement of Social Care and Health Services.

We will make reasonable adjustments to the rewards, consequences and teaching strategies within this policy in order not to disadvantage pupil. This would apply to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and other pupils as their personal circumstances warranted it. This group of pupils may include those with dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, sensory and physical impairments and more complex behaviour, emotional and social difficulties such as Oppositional

Defiant Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Tourette's syndrome. These adjustments would be made before any official diagnosis if necessary and all staff would be made aware of the reasonable adjustments they would need to make. This may mean that there is the appearance of the policy not being adhered to at times, as rewards and sanctions are applied "differently" but pupils, staff and parents should be reassured that adjustments are only made when necessary in order to meet a pupil's individual need.

Support for Parents/Carers in developing their child's social emotional and behavioural skills

Our school works in partnership with parents in all aspects of their child's learning. Class teachers can offer support to parents and parents are always involved when their child is at any stage of the SEN Code of Practice or has a statement of Special Educational Needs.

ATTENDANCE

The school has a separate Promoting Good Attendance Policy.

BULLYING

The school has a separate Addressing Bullying Policy that identifies forms of bullying, rights and responsibilities and school strategies to prevent and deal with reported incidents of bullying.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The school uses professionals to provide whole school INSET as required and staff are also informed of relevant courses being run by EA's Continuous Professional Development Service. The SENCO or other members of staff may also provide in house training. Staff are given a copy of the behaviour policy and the rewards and sanctions available to them are clarified. Classroom Assistants are made aware of the policy by the principal who arranges any additional training they require. We participate in regular activities which focus on developing as a team.

This policy will be updated when necessary and reviewed on at least an annual basis by Principal and Governors.