



St. Nessian's National School
Mungret,
Co. Limerick

14409N

Code of Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of *St. Nessan's N.S.* has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for its Pupils, Staff and Parents.

The Code of Behaviour details:

1. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school;
2. The whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour;
3. The measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards;
4. The procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
5. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil
6. The school's Anti-Bullying Policy; and
7. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

The Code of Behaviour of *St. Nessan's N.S.* has been developed in accordance with '*Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*', *National Educational Welfare Board, 2008.*

POLICY FORMULATION

In formulating this policy the Board of Management completed the following steps;

- I. A committee of parents and teachers reviewed the existing Code of Behaviour on 9th December, 2009.
- II. Parents and Staff were informed that an initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was available and they were invited to make submissions on the content of the code within a specified timeframe by January 22nd, 2010.
- III. Class teachers were requested to discuss the topic of 'rules' with their classes and submit a list of pupils suggestions to the Principal.
- IV. The initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was reviewed on 26th January, 2010 and where deemed appropriate was amended in-line with the feedback received.
- V. The Board of Management of St. Nessan's N.S. approved it on February 1st 2010
- VI. The finalised draft of the policy was submitted for the Patron's Approval.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THE CODE

The aims and objectives of the code are:

- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences, recognising the rights of children to be educated in classes not disrupted by the behaviour of a tiny minority, and also the rights of teachers to work in conditions free from stress.
- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community
- To assist school staff, parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

The Board of Management recognises the importance of creating consistent values, policies, practices and relationships that support the Code of Behaviour. Such an environment may only be formed by involving the entire school community and in this respect the board acknowledges the importance of the roles played by, the principal, teachers, ancillary staff and parents in the review and operation of the Code.

For avoidance of doubt any reference in the foregoing to Principal is to be construed as meaning Acting Principal or Deputy Principal in the absence of the Principal

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

Pupils

General Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- Be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and all staff and visitors
- Show respect for the property of, the school, other children and their own belongings
- Attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual
- Do his/her best both in school and for homework.

Classroom Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- Listen – to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking
- Work – to the best of his/her ability
- Value – school property and the belongings of fellow pupils, staff and visitors
- Follow – the direction of his/her teacher
- Obtain – his/her teachers permission to leave the classroom
- Respect – the teacher, other pupils and visitors to the classroom.

Playground Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- Play – safely avoiding any games or play that are rough or dangerous
- Follow – the directions of the playground supervisor(s)
- Remain – on school grounds at all times
- Obtain – permission before re-entering the school building during break periods
- Respect – the yard duty teacher and fellow pupils
- Avoid – swearing, fighting or name calling

Behaviour in other School Areas

Each pupil is expected to:

- Walk – in the school corridors
- Be courteous to all members of the school community.
- Respect school property
- Display good manners.

Behaviour during School Outings/Activities

Each pupil is expected to:

- Follow – his/her teacher's directions at all times
- Remain – with the teacher/supervisors and group of pupils at all times
- Behave – politely towards those they meet on such trips
- Observe – the rules of general good behaviour

Staff

It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure the school's Code of Behaviour is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils. However each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school.

Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class. They will:

- Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in an age appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year.
- Ensure the class rules are understood in the classroom.
- Encourage self-discipline and positive behaviour.
- Ensure there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times.
- Implement the reward/sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner.
- Keep a written record of all incidents of continued, serious or gross misconduct. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and, the consequences of its repetition.
- Inform pupils when instances of misbehaviour on their part are being recorded.
- Report repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the Principal.

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive Behaviour in school. Parents/guardians can assist the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, encouraging punctuality and regular attendance and by ensuring that homework is given due time and effort.

Should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child's behaviour they are welcome to make an appointment to discuss their concerns.

In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour parents will be invited to participate in the intervention process. It is understood by accepting a place for your child in the school, you are consenting to abide by the code and policies of the school.

Homework: It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis cf. Homework Policy in Plean Scoile. Parents/Guardians are strongly encouraged to take an active interest in their child's homework. If homework causes worry for the pupil parents/guardians are asked to contact the teacher.

PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

As a general rule the school will endeavor to create an environment where positive behaviour is reinforced through praise and reward. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school, so that positive behaviour is instantly recognised and positively rewarded. Special attention will be paid to pupils who have previously been associated with poor behaviour so that not only good behaviour but also improvement in behaviour is acknowledged.

REWARDS FOR GOOD BEHAVIOUR

Good behavior must be seen to be rewarded and this will be up to the discretion of the teacher. For example, oral and written praise; yearly reports; small prizes; merit lists; merit stars; certificates; and extra privileges such as jobs, video at Christmas, etc.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. The Code also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed.

Level 1: Minor Breaches

Failure to wear school uniform/tracksuit, except when excused for a good reason with a written note from parents/guardians, or on special occasions. Failure to get homework/notebook signed. Careless presentation of schoolwork. Failure to complete homework. Playing in the wrong yard. Careless about not putting litter in bins provided. Willful damage of a minor nature, e.g. breaking another child's ruler, cheating. Failure to follow of the class teacher, ancillary staff or yard supervisor.

Level 1 :Sanctions: Correction by class teacher, other teacher, ancillary staff or special visitors. An apology from pupil.

Repeated Minor Breaches: Repeated instances of the above.

Further Sanctions: Further correction by class teacher, other teacher, ancillary staff or special visitors. Note to parents/guardians. Detention, Lines or writing out of a page, to be signed by parent/guardian. Referral to Principal.

Level 1 Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

- Classroom-based interventions, such as Circle Time or class meetings, with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members)
- Discussion of behaviour with the child
- Informal notes regarding incident/intervention/date. This information would be useful should a problem persist.

Level Two

Level 2: More Serious Breaches

Use of foul or offensive language. Careless use of school property. Rough play. Repeated failure to complete homework. Disruption of class. Disrespect towards staff/ancillary staff. Disrespect towards visitors to school or towards other children. Bullying. Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin. Use of a mobile phone by a pupil on school grounds during school hours. Possession of any item likely to be injurious to the child or others, or likely to damage school property. e.g. knives matches, cigarette lighters, etc.

Level 2: Sanctions

Referral to principal. Detention. More formal contact with parents/guardians if a child is in detention four or more times in a month. Withdrawal of privileges. Confiscation of dangerous items. Confiscation of mobile phone during school hours and/or a letter home to parents. Written apology from pupil. Cleaning up so as to restore school buildings, grounds or furnishings to correct state, where applicable.

Level 2: Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

- Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Deputy Principal or Principal.

Level Three

Level 3: Gross Misbehaviour

Repeated instances of above after warning regarding future conduct. Use of threatening language or behavior towards teachers or others. Any act of willful violence towards other pupils, teachers, ancillary staff or special visitors. Stealing. Possession/supply and/or use of alcohol, cigarettes, illegal drugs and/or other harmful substances.

Bullying; Willful damage or attempted willful damage of school property, property of teachers, ancillary staff, other pupils or special visitors. Leaving school grounds during school hours without permission of principal and notification from parents/guardians. Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions towards another person or group involving race, gender, religion disability or ethnic origin

Level 3: Supportive Interventions

- Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Education Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education.
- Referral for a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent).

Level 3: Disciplinary Actions

- Immediate contact with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Written assurance of proper behavior from child and parent(s)/guardian(s)

Behaviour at Level 3 may involve suspension from school and contact with the Garda Siochana after parental involvement if illegal activity was involved. The length of the suspension will depend upon the severity and frequency of the specific Behaviour. Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension is contained in this document. Level 3 responses:

- **Suspension from school for one to five days:**

This response will occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour or Level 2 behaviour of significant severity. The Principal following due process and procedure, can issue a suspension.

- **Suspension from school for five to ten days:**

This response will occur with the repeated incidence of Level 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this Behaviour. A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management.

The rules will also apply to all and any school-related activities either within or outside the school, during normal school hours or outside these hours if the school-related activities necessitates this, e.g., sporting fixtures, educational trips, etc. Breaches by pupils from Junior Classes will be treated on a level more appropriate to their age, but the general expectation of good behaviour will apply to all pupils.

PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSIONS & EXPULSIONS

Suspension

Definition of Suspension:

'Requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days'

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

Authority to Suspend:

The Board of Management of *St. Nessan's N.S.* has formally and in writing delegated the authority to impose an '**Immediate Suspension**' to the Principal Teacher. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally and in writing delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an '**Automatic Suspension**' for named behaviours detailed in this policy. An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

The Board retains its authority to suspend a student in all other cases/circumstances.

Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension

An 'Immediate Suspension' will be deemed to be necessary where after a preliminary investigation the Principal reaches the determination that the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety and wellbeing of pupils or staff of the school. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

An 'Automatic Suspension' is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of *St. Nessan's N.S.*, having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by Health & Safety Legislation, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur 'Automatic Suspension' as a sanction;

- Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff
- or
- Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension by telephone, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected. In no circumstance will a student be sent home from school prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will issue in due course, but no later than 2 school days after the imposition of the suspension. Such a notification will detail:

- The duration 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 pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be completed no later than 2 school days after the incident the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss;

- The circumstances surrounding the suspension,
- Interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.

The Board of Management of *St. Nessan's N.S.* acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given;

- i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.

Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions:

In cases other than those of Immediate or Automatic Suspension the following procedures will apply;

Where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious mis-behaviour that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management of *St. Nessan's N.S.* will initiate a formal investigation of the matter.

The following procedures will be observed;

A written letter containing the following information will issue to Parent(s)/guardian(s);

- i. Details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
- ii. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled **no later than 5 school days** from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.

The Board of Management of *St. Nessan's N.S.* acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

- ii. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- iii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Where a decision to suspend has been made the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision. The letter will confirm:

- The duration 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 pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.

Expulsion

Definition of Expulsion:

'A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.'

Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

Authority to Suspend:

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will apply:

- a) A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required)

As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s);

- iii. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
 - iv. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than **5 school days** from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond
- b) The Principal (or BOM Nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management

Where the Principal (or nominee) forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal (or nominee) makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

In this event the Principal (or nominee) will:

- i. inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- ii. ensure that parent(s)/guardians have records of: the allegations against the student; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- iii. provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)

c) Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's (or BOM's Nominee) Recommendations & the Holding of a Hearing

If, having considered the Principal's report, the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student a hearing will be scheduled.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing

- i. As to the date, location and time of the hearing
- ii. Of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- iii. That they may if they so choose be accompanied at the hearing

The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that;

- i. The meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
- ii. The principal (or BOM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other's presence
- iii. Each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party
- iv. The parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose

d) Board of Management Deliberations & Actions following the Hearing

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled the Board

- i. Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.
- ii. Will not expel the student before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification
- iii. Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
- iv. Will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer
- v. Will suspend the student, if it is deemed likely that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils or staff.

e) Confirmation of the Decision to Expel

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing that the expulsion will now proceed. They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of St. Nessian's N.S. acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

- i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- ii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

NOTIFICATION OF A CHILD'S ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should adhere to the following procedures when notifying the school of a pupil's absence;

- The school should be notified of the absence on the first day the pupil returns to school
- The reason for the absence should be notified to the class teacher
- The absence should be notified in writing by *letter / using the school journal*
- Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided
- Significant absences caused by ill health (i.e. absences longer than 10 school days) should be certified.
- Parents/Guardians need not ring the school on the morning of a child's absence, but should contact the school immediately if the child is diagnosed as being ill due to a contagious condition, e.g., measles, chicken pox, etc. A **written note** must be sent to your child's teacher if your child has to leave school for any reason before the normal school closing time. A phone call will **not** suffice except in emergencies cf. Attendance policy in the Plean Scoile.

The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more and/or where the child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, and/or where attendance is irregular and/or when the pupil is removed from the school register.

RECORDS

For pupils who repeatedly misbehave a standardised record system will be used to track an individual pupil's Behaviour. Such records will contain;

- Incidents of misbehaviour,
- interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
- Evidence of improved behaviour
- Any sanctions imposed, and the reasons they were imposed

Pupils will be told when a record is being made about their behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained.

All records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003.

Appendix 1

School Uniform:

Formal Uniform - Boys	Formal Uniform - Girls	Tracksuit - All	Optional Extras
<u>All Classes</u> Navy Trousers Blue Shirt Navy Tie – Red/Blue Stripe Crested Navy Jumper – red/blue stripe on ‘v’ .	<u>Juniors – 2nd. Class</u> Navy Pinafore Blue Shirt Navy Tie – Red/Blue Stripe Crested Navy Cardigan <u>3rd. Class – 6th. Class</u> Navy Skirt Blue Shirt Navy Tie – Red/Blue Stripe Crested Navy Jumper – red/blue stripe on ‘v’ . <u>All Classes</u> Navy trousers may be worn as an alternative.	<u>All Children</u> Crested Navy Top – red trim Navy Track ends – red trim Crested Red / White / Navy T-shirt	<u>All Children</u> Crested Navy/Red Rain Jacket Navy shorts may be worn in summertime. Neither of the above is compulsory.
Shoes / Boots	Shoes / Boots	Runners – non-marking soles.	

Stockists of crested items and ties:

Shaws- Crescent Shopping Centre, Limerick

Noel’s Menswear, Wickham Street, Limerick