



Drumfad National School

Drumfad Lower, Kerrykeel, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal

Tel./Fax: (074) 9159399 E-Mail: drumfadbally@gmail.com

Ref: 2017

The School Code of Behaviour

Fostering Good Behaviour and Relations

- The policy of the school is to encourage openness between parents and teachers to discuss the safety, welfare and wellbeing of all pupils in a respectful manner.
- It is in the interest of pupils, parents and teachers that good relations should prevail between school and home.
- It is essential that a positive approach to the school, its staff and environs is adopted by all who use it.
- Negative misgivings about the school community should not be discussed within a child's hearing.
- Encouraging high standards of behaviour among pupils and creating and maintaining an orderly atmosphere conducive to learning in the school will involve the use of praise and reward for good behaviour, sound relationships between teachers and pupils and effective teaching and learning procedures.
- It will also involve, in some instances, the application of sanctions to register disapproval of unacceptable behaviour. When sanctions are involved, pupils should understand that what they have done is unacceptable and that it is the misbehaviour that is rejected, not the pupil.

Aims and Objectives

- To ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in an environment free of disruption.
- To foster a self-esteem and self-worth in children by developing self-respect, respect for peers, for those in authority and for the environment of the child.
- To achieve a high standard of behaviour through a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation between staff, pupils and parents.
- To produce responsible pupils who will learn from the good example set by those within the school environment.
- To create in the children an understanding that they have rights but also that with these rights come responsibilities.
- To devise school rules so that the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community are protected.

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 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. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted.

General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour

- 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.

- Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
- Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.
- Pupils are expected to obey a teacher's instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present both their school work and homework neatly.
- Pupils are expected 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 (standard school absence form).

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.

School Rules

Definition of Misbehaviour & Gross Misbehaviour

The following actions shall be considered as misbehaviour:

- (a) Climbing on trees, walls, or gates in the school environs
- (b) Lifting or carrying of any children, by any children in the school yard
- (c) Leaving school grounds during school hours
- (d) Playing of dangerous games or mock fighting
- (e) Use of impolite or inappropriate language
- (f) Disruptive behaviour

The following actions shall be considered as gross misbehaviour:

- (a) Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour
- (b) Bullying
- (c) Defacing of school property
- (d) Inappropriate use of mobile phones (see Mobile Phone Policy)

Playing area

- Any area outside the school yard and around the front entrance to the building is out of bounds during break times.
- Due to the confined space in the yard, children running about should take due care.

Games

- Football and all ball games which may be allowed must be played with consideration for others.

School Property

- School property and equipment must be treated with respect.
- Broken windows or damaged property will be paid for by those who have caused the damage.

Supervision

Children are expected to obey school rules and co-operate fully with the person in charge.

Medical

Permission to attend doctor or dentist must be sought by parents in writing to class teacher and the child must be collected at the classroom door

Disciplinary Procedures

The Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for discipline in the school. The Principal has overall responsibility for the execution of this code within the school community.

Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises.

Discouraging Misbehaviour through Restorative Practice

An important part of our school approach to behaviour is the concept of 'Restorative Practice'. Our Code Behaviour is focused on the positive aspects of behaviour rather than on punishments or sanctions, although these are included in the appropriate section of our policy.

We promote the notion of a school community where everything we do is based on mutual respect. 'We sail our ship together'.

Pupils are expected firstly to respect themselves and then to treat each other and staff members with respect. Teachers and staff members are expected to treat children with respect. We take the view that pupils (other than some pupils with very special needs) choose their behaviour to a great degree – they always have an alternative. Therefore, they must take responsibility for their behaviour. If they treat others poorly, they may be acting out their own anger and frustrations, but they can also learn to choose differently and more positively. We ask children to treat others as they want to be treated themselves.

The Rules of Anger are:

It's ok to be angry.

When I become angry:

- I don't hurt others
- I don't hurt myself
- I don't hurt (damage) property
- I talk about how I feel.

Mending Relationships – Rationale:

If I become angry and hurt someone with my words or actions, I must try to make things right. I will do this by talking with the person I hurt, and I must be prepared to offer an apology, and I must be prepared to guarantee that I will not hurt that person again. I must try to realise myself what it feels like to be hurt with words or with actions and I must try to recognise the damage that my poor behaviour can do to others. In this way, I help myself to mend and I help my victim to mend.

What does 'Restorative Practice' involve for our school?

Restorative Practice is a process to involve, to the extent possible, those who have a stake in a specific offence and to collectively identify and address harms, needs and obligations, in order to heal and put things as right as possible .

Resource : www.transformingconflict.org

Restorative Practice:

- Creates an ethos of respect, inclusion, accountability and taking responsibility
- Creates a commitment to relationships, impartiality, being non-judgemental
- Encourages collaboration, empowerment and emotional articulacy

Key Skills of Restorative Discipline are:

- Active listening
- Facilitating dialogue and problem-solving
- Listening to and expressing emotion
- Supporting others in taking ownership of problems

An important element in Restorative Practice is Fair Process:

Expectations - everyone knows what is expected of them

Engagement - involves individuals in decisions/listens to views

Explanation - clarify how decisions are reached

‘Individuals are most likely to trust and co-operate freely with systems – whether they themselves win or lose by those systems – when fair process is observed’.

Kim & Mauborgne , Harvard Business Review, July - August 1997

People who have been harmed need:

- Someone to listen to my story
- Time to calm down
- A chance to ask – why me? What did I do to deserve that?
- The person concerned to understand and acknowledge the impact their behaviour has had on me
- A sincere apology
- Things put right, if possible
- Reassurance it won't happen again

Offenders are asked the following questions:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
- What do you need to do to make things right?

School Group Conferences can be held to deal with issues, if deemed appropriate:

- Offenders tell what they did
- Everyone talks about what impact this has had on them
- The group reaches a shared understanding of the harm that has been done
- The group negotiates an agreement about how to repair the damage and minimise further harm

Where restorative practice is deemed unsuitable by staff, sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development. These may include:

The following procedures are used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour:

- (a) Reasoning with pupil and restorative practice
- (b) Advice on how to behave
- (c) Reprimand
- (d) Communication with parents
- (e) Loss of privileges
- (f) Temporary separation from peers and friends
- (g) Prescribing additional work for home or school

- (h) Detention
- (i) Recommendation for professional assessment
- (j) Suspension

In the incident of gross misbehaviour, the following procedures will be followed:

- (a) Verbal reprimand and advice on how to behave
- (b) Report will be recorded by pupils involved, and will meet with the principal
- (c) Communication with parents
- (d) Dismissal from school

Communication with parents will be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances. The parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss the situation involving their child.

Where there are repeated instances of misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be invited to meet with the Principal, the Chairperson and the class teacher or any combination of the above as appropriate.

If the parents and, where appropriate, the pupil, do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a temporary period.

Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of RULE 130 (5) of the RULES FOR NATIONAL SCHOOLS. This rule provides for an initial period of suspension if the situation is not resolved.

In the case of serious misbehaviour the Board may authorise the Chairperson and/or the Principal to sanction an immediate suspension pending discussion of the matter with the parents.

In the case where a child is believed to be emotionally disturbed the school may recommend a psychological or a psychiatric assessment. If professionally advised, the child will be placed according to his/her needs. The school will make every effort to support parents in obtaining help for their child.

In the administration of this section of the code of conduct, it is essential to point out that it is the child's behaviour which is being rejected, not the child. It is extremely important that the dignity of the parent, child and teaching staff is respected at all times.

Success Criteria

Success may be observed by members of the school community if the school community reflects the values promoted in this Code of Behaviour eg.

- respect for self and others
- kindness and willingness to help others
- courtesy and good manners
- fairness
- readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- forgiveness.
- attending school regularly and punctually
- doing one's best in class
- taking responsibility for one's work

- keeping the school rules
- willingness to participate in creating a safe, positive environment
- respecting staff
- respecting other students and their learning
- participating in school activities.

Responsibilities:

Board of Management 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 fairly.
- 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

Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.

- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- 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.

Procedures for Complaints (See code of conduct for Parents for further information)

If a parent is concerned about his/her child – either academically or socially within the school, it is imperative that any problem should be resolved as soon as possible. The procedure will be as follows:

Seek an appointment with the Class teacher.

If unresolved, seek an appointment with the Principal.

If still unresolved, seek an appointment with the Chairperson of the Board of Management, along with the Principal.

Review

This Code of Behaviour shall be reviewed annually or as and when the need arises.

Ratified by Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____ for The Board of Management

Dated: _____

Procedures for Complaints (See code of conduct for Parents for further information)

If a parent is concerned about his/her child – either academically or socially within the school, it is imperative that any problem should be resolved as soon as possible. The procedure will be as follows:

Seek an appointment with the Class teacher.

If unresolved, seek an appointment with the Principal.

If still unresolved, seek an appointment with the Chairperson of the Board of Management, along with the Principal.