



Code of Behaviour Policy Corpus Christi Primary School

Introduction:

The entire staff of Corpus Christi Primary School is committed to establishing an atmosphere throughout the school, in which children feel safe, secure and happy and in addition, have a maximum opportunity to learn. To ensure commitment to the ethos of the school, staff members were involved in drawing up this policy.

The overall responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within the school rests with the Principal. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom, whilst sharing a common responsibility for the good order within the school premises. A pupil will be referred to the Principal for serious breaches of discipline and repeated incidents of minor behaviour.

Rationale:

All policies need to be reviewed on a regular basis, to ensure that they meet the current needs of the school. The Code of Behaviour Policy was reviewed because:

- it is a requirement under Department of Education and Science Circular 20/90 on school discipline.
- the existing policy is due for review and amendment.
- it is a priority area identified by staff and Board of Management.
- it is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 23 (1) which refers to the obligation on the school, to prepare a Code of Behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school.
- to ensure policy is in compliance with legal requirement and good practice, as set out in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008.

The Guiding Principles of this Policy:

- Corpus Christi Primary School strives to create a safe, caring and happy learning environment for pupils, teachers and staff.
- A statement of the expected behaviour in the school is necessary. Everyone, children, parents and teachers need boundaries and need to know what is and what is not acceptable. Knowing what is expected, helps us to achieve our goal. These expectations are expressed in the class rules and in the school rules.
- The children, parents and teachers work together to decide on what behaviour we

expect from each other.

- Positive behaviour is recognised and acknowledged.
- Everybody's positive behaviour is recognised and acknowledged, regardless of what the child's behavior has been like in the past.
- The teachers in Corpus Christi Primary School focus on positive behaviour. They aim to give at least five positive signals for every negative signal. Sometimes, these signals will be non-verbal e.g. a smile, thumps up, high five, wink etc.
- While positive behaviour is encouraged, there are consequences for negative behaviour. These consequences are graded and become more severe, as unwanted behaviour becomes more frequent and serious.
- Each class teacher will talk to the children in his/her class on a regular basis about behaviour expectations, the acknowledgement of positive behaviour and consequences for negative behaviour.
- Parents will be given a copy of the behavioural policy and will be given the opportunity to comment on the policy annually.
- The staff of Corpus Christi Primary School are open to taking on board the ideas of children and parents, in relation to the behavioural policy.

Aims of Policy:

The key values underlining the school's ethos are to encourage pupils to develop independence, by accepting responsibility for their own behaviour and by promoting self-discipline and self-control. Interpersonal skills are also developed, which help pupils to work co-operatively, solve problems and resolve conflicts appropriately.

The aims of this policy are:

- To allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious way.
- To enhance the learning environment, where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for everyone.
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, **recognising the differences** between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- To promote the safety and well-being of all members of the school community. (See separate Health and Safety Policy).
- To assist 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 the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- To promote a strong sense of community and co-operation among staff, pupils, parents and Board of Management.
- To prevent, identify and deal with bullying (see separate Anti-Bullying Policy).
- 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.

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, positive behaviour will be emphasised using the Incredible Years Behaviour Programme 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.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Staff:

In accordance with the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers (Teaching Council 2012), the staff are expected to treat all children with respect and dignity and to implement the Code of Behaviour in a fair, consistent and reasonable manner.

The school's Social Personal and Health Education Curriculum is used to support the Code of Behaviour. It aims to help the children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship – New staff and substitutes are briefed on all policies and practices within the school, by the staff mentor. Staff will regularly make the children aware of the Code of Behaviour and will remind them of the expectations throughout the school year.

Board of Management:

The overall responsibility for ensuring that a Code of Behaviour is prepared rests with the Board of Management. The Board of Management appoints a sub-committee to review and draft the Code of Behaviour, in consultation with the whole school community. The Board of Management will ratify the Code of Behaviour and will continually monitor its implementation, by making adjustments as necessary.

Principal

The Principal is responsible for promoting a positive climate in the school, ensuring that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner and arranging for a review of the code, as required.

Parents:

The Code of Behaviour is drawn up in consultation with the parents.

When making an application for enrolment, parents will be given copies of the Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies. On receiving an offer of a place for their child, parents will be required to confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policy and any subsequent changes is acceptable to them and that they will make every effort to ensure compliance by their child.

Parents will support the school in the promotion of positive behaviour by:

- ensuring their children attend regularly and punctually.
- encouraging their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work.
- co-operating with the school's rules and system of rewards and sanctions.
- attending meetings at the school, if requested.
- helping their children with homework and ensuring that it is completed and signed.
- ensuring their children have the necessary books and materials for school.
- ensuring their children always wear the correct school uniform.
- sharing any relevant information with the school, which may affect a pupil's behaviour.

Pupils:

In drafting this Code of Behaviour, the senior classes in the school were consulted. All children are involved in the drawing up of classroom rules.

Pupils are regularly made aware of the Code of Behaviour e.g. at the beginning of each school term/prior to school outings etc. and at different times through various subject areas, discussions and assemblies.

Standards of behaviour expected from pupils:

- each child is expected to be well behaved and to show consideration and respect to other children and adults in school and in all school related activities e.g. school tours, sports outings, theatre/cinema trips, swimming, Church outings and any other out of school activities etc.
- each child is expected to show respect for the property of other children, the staff, the school, and their own belongings.
- each child is expected to comply with Homework policy, school and classroom rules.
- each child is expected to wear the correct school uniform and adhere to requirements regarding jewellery.
- each child is expected to attend school regularly and to be punctual.

It is recognised that certain factors may influence a child's behaviour e.g. bereavement, trauma, educational needs, medical condition, etc and will be taken into consideration.

Managing everyday incidents:

- Clear rules displayed in classrooms.
- Children are familiar with structures and routines within the classroom and school.
- Praise and encouragement.
- Good behavior named and encouraged.
- Consistency.
- Graded Consequences.
- Proactive teachers: avoiding/preventing by being one step ahead.
- Behaviour booklet from 3rd to 6th and simplified behaviour contract used from Junior Infants to 2nd.

Encouraging correct behaviour:

Our policy seeks to encourage good behaviour, rather than simply punishing inappropriate behaviour. Corpus Christi's reward system not only rewards good work, but also rewards

behaviour. Behaviour's such as "being kind", "sharing ", helping others" are recognised and rewarded. Good behaviour is commented on, praised and encouraged. The behaviour is named. Stickers, rewards and 'well done, tickets are given for good behaviour. A 'well done' raffle is held each month, to encourage positive behaviour. During school assemblies, there is a focus on good behaviour and children are reminded of and encouraged to follow school rules. Parents are given a copy of the behaviour booklet/behaviour contract. They are expected to go through the booklet/contract with their child(ren) and return it signed to the class teacher.

General Rules:

Rules are stated in a positive manner, ensuring children are aware of the expected and acceptable behaviour.

- **Kind Words:** Verbal abuse of other pupils, teachers, staff and visitors is not allowed. Children must not use bad language to anyone in any part of the school grounds, or during any school activity. We stand in our lines quietly.
- **Kind Feet:** Children must not kick anyone in any part of the school grounds, or during a school activity. We play safely. Children must not leave the classroom or the school, without a teacher's permission. We stand in our lines quietly. We walk in the school. We never leave the school grounds, without permission.
- **Kind Hands:** Children do not hit anyone in any part of the school grounds, or during a school activity. Children must not throw stones, bottles or any other objects in any part of the school grounds, or during a school activity. Children must not take or damage the property of the school, or the property of another person. We treat all property with respect. Parents will be asked to pay for any willful damage caused deliberately by pupils. Some younger children may not understand, that taking things is wrong. In these incidents, parents will be responsible for returning any such property. We always use the bin. We keep the school grounds tidy. We have all the necessary equipment in school for swimming, cookery and woodwork. Sports gear, I pads, tablets, DVDs and other personal items that children bring into school, are to be looked after by themselves. The school does not accept responsibility for any personal property. Pupils are not allowed to use a mobile phone during school hours. The use of camera phones is an invasion of others privacy and is not accepted. Pupils found using their phones, or having their phones on during school hours, will have their phone confiscated for the day.
- **Kind eyes:** Children do not stare or glare at others.
- **Listening ears:** Children are expected to follow teacher's directions. Children are expected to do as they are asked by all/any teachers and SNAs on the yard.
- **Looking eyes:** Children are expected to pay attention in class, looking at their books, copies, whiteboard, etc.
- **Thinking Brains:** Children are expected to try their best. Children are expected to do

their schoolwork and their homework.

Children are expected to wear the school uniform/school tracksuit.

Children are expected to follow our healthy eating policy, therefore fizzy drinks chewing gum, sweets, chocolate, or crisps are not allowed.

Admitting parents/visitors to the school:

Meeting and communicating with parents is actively encouraged at Corpus Christi Primary School. Meetings should be pre-arranged, by phoning the school secretary. When parents want a quick word with teachers, they meet them on the yard in the morning, or at the gate when school finishes.

In urgent cases, where pre-arrangement of an appointment is not possible, parents should in the first instance report to the Principal. Care should be taken where possible, to ensure that parent/teacher meetings are not held during teaching time, or within hearing of other pupils or parents. Verbal or physical abuse by parents, will be dealt with by the DES Circular 40/97.

Consequences for negative behaviour:

We accept the need for sanctions, to register disapproval of unacceptable behaviour. The system of sanctions is graded suitable to pupils' individual needs and circumstances. They do however contain a degree of flexibility, to take account of individual circumstances. It is expected that parents/guardians will communicate any information about their child, which can affect their behaviour to the school.

Teachers have a graded system within their own class, for inappropriate behaviours, ranging from

- ignoring,
- proximal praise,
- look at child,
- change tone of voice,
- quiet reprimand,
- ask a question,
- stand near the child,
- time out etc,
- loss of break time,
- loss of privilege,
- Etc.

Further consequences for negative behaviour, are as follows:

- Time-out from class and placement with a paired teacher for a specific time.

- 'Golden Time' revoked. You can earn your time back, with good behaviour.
- Teacher/Parent contact to discuss misbehaviour.
- Involve Principal: - may link with parents to negotiate solutions.
 - possible recommendation for counselling.
 - child may be removed from school.
 - reduced school day.

- Suspension (in line with Guidelines of the Department of Education and Skills (Rule 103.5)).

A key objective is to help pupils learn from the incident. They are encouraged to operate independently, should a similar problem occur. Pupils are encouraged to use assertive strategies, by saying – “Please don't do that. I don't like it”. Pupils will be encouraged to express their opinions and feelings, as to why they are upset, giving the other pupil a chance to apologise. Pupils will be encouraged and facilitated to talk to others involved, to try to consider alternative behaviour in future. Pupils will be listened to separately or together, as appropriate. Adults dealing with the incident, may suggest strategies to help in a similar context. Anger management or other approaches will be used as appropriate. Sanctions will be according to the child's understanding and in keeping with this policy. If necessary, sanctions for persistent misbehaviour will be carried out at home e.g. missing T.V., pocket money and removal from afterschool clubs.

Applying sanctions:

If irate, the pupil should be given space and time to cool off and to respond to request. When calm, the behaviour will be discussed with the pupil, as well as considering alternative positive outcomes and behaviours.

The adult applying the sanctions, should try to ensure that the pupil understands the consequences of negative behaviour and what is expected of them. The pupil should not be left unsupervised at any time. Ridicule, sarcasm or remarks likely to undermine the pupils' self-confidence, are not to be used in any circumstances.

Sanctions are employed to stop unacceptable behaviour and to redirect it to more acceptable behaviour. The ultimate purpose of a sanction, is to communicate to the pupil that she/he has broken a rule or gone beyond the boundaries of acceptable behaviour and to help the pupil, to find a better way to act in the future.

Reporting:

Persistent or serious incidents are recorded in the incident report forms. The behaviour

including the circumstances giving rise to it, are recorded. This is used to help to identify any patterns of behaviour. The Incident form is photocopied and the original is given to Principal and the copy is given to the pupils' class teacher. Other colleagues are informed, as all staff are responsible for being vigilant, to prevent further incidents. Parents are informed and offered a constructive course of action: Parent's concerns are listened to.

Some students may need more active intervention, to help them to manage their behaviour. Without additional help, they may be at risk of failing behaviourally, socially and educationally.

In consultation with parents, additional inputs or interventions might include:

- Referral to the Care Team, who will implement a support plan under the supervision of clinical psychologist Dr. Declan Aherne.
- Involving the Learning Support/Resource team.
- Setting targets for behaviour and monitoring them with the student, in a supportive way.
- Behaviour contracts/plans with individualised strategies.
- Bespoke and individualised parenting programmes with Dr. Declan Aherne.
- Onward referral to the National Educational Psychology Services (NEPS), HSE Community Psychology Services, the National Council for Special Education and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) may be deemed necessary by the Care Team, in consultation with parents.

Managing serious or persistent problems.

Sanctions make the distinction between minor and more serious misbehaviour.

Parents are informed from the onset of instances of serious misbehaviour.

The teachers and Principal will keep a written record of all incidents of serious misbehaviour, as well as a record of improvements in behaviour of disruptive pupils.

As a staff, we accept that the behaviour is the problem and not the pupil. The behaviour of the pupil giving cause for concern, will be assessed. An individual behaviour plan will be drawn up with the pupil and parents. Parents will be informed of progress.

Writing Individual behaviour plans:

- Objectives are identified and addressed one target at a time.
- Strategies are included where appropriate, for managing the environment where misbehaviour has occurred.
- There is an emphasis on teaching the pupil alternative positive behaviour.
- Name and specify the behaviour that is not acceptable and the consequences for that behaviour.
- Include some form of self-assessment, to encourage personal responsibility.

- Include timetable for review.
- Decisions taken are applied consistently by all members of staff. Substitute teachers are to be made aware of the individual behaviour plan.

Serious incidents:

The most serious form of misbehaviour is assault, on teacher, staff member or another pupil. The guidance by the INTO leaflet 'Assaults on Teachers' should be followed, in the case of an assault by a pupil.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, or an attack on other pupils or staff, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed. The parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school, to meet the Chairperson and the Principal.

Repeated aggressive pupils will be referred with the consent of the parents to other agencies, to access the pupil's social and emotional needs and to determine how these needs can be best met.

If parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future and the behaviour continues, the pupil may have to be suspended for a temporary period. The Chairperson or Principal is authorised to exclude a pupil for a maximum initial period of three days, for being continuously disruptive, or for a serious breach of discipline.

Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130(5) of the Rules for National Schools and will follow the guidelines, as laid out by INTO/DES as set out below:

Guidelines with regard to suspension:

(As per INTO/DES recommendations)

- The principle of natural and constitutional justice must apply.
- Parents/guardians should be invited to discuss serious incident of inappropriate behaviour and their co-operation enlisted.
- Where possible prior to suspension, a full review of the case should be undertaken.
- In the event of a single incident of gross misbehaviour, a pupil may be suspended immediately.
- Communication with the parents/guardians should be in writing and a copy retained.
- A written statement of the terms of the suspension should be given to the parents/guardians.
- For suspensions of six or more days, the Education Welfare Officer must consult the pupil, parents/guardians, Principal and other appropriate person and make

“reasonable efforts to ensure that provision is made, for the continued education of the child”.

- Parents should be informed of their right to appeal in accordance with Circular 22/02.
- When suspension ends, the pupil should be re-admitted formally by the Principal.
- A behaviour plan if necessary, should be organised for the pupil when re-admitted.
- The decision to suspend/exclude a pupil is only taken when a range of alternative strategies has been tried and failed, or the pupil is a potential serious threat to him/herself or others.

Expulsion:

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with Rule 130(6) and only after

- All other sanctions have been invoked.
- The EWO/NEWB has been put on notice of the intention to expel.
- The decision is afforded to pupil and parents/guardians.
- Due process is afforded to pupil and parents/guardians.
- A fair and impartial hearing is given to parents/guardians, by the Board of Management.
- The Board considers carefully the position of the parents/guardians and note any assurances provided to comply with the Code of behaviour.
- The Board state reasons for expulsion.
- Communication in relation to expulsion should be in writing and sent by registered post, where possible.

Every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed pupil referred for Psychological/Psychiatric assessment, without delay. Help will also be sought from support services within the wider community, e.g. Community Care services provided by the HSE.

Physical containment/Restraint:

It must be emphasised that the vast majority of pupil misbehaviour in Corpus Christi Primary School, can be managed without any use of containment/restraint. Restraint/containment is used as a last resort and only according to the guidelines below.

The question of whether a pupil should be restrained or contained, if they pose a danger to themselves or to others, is clearly defined in the DES Circular 1999/0 Pastoral care: Guidance on the use of reasonable force or control of pupils.

“Article 4 of the 1988 Order authorises teachers to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent the pupil from:

- Committing an offence.
- Causing personal injury to or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself).
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school, or among any of its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

The interventions might include holding back a pupil who runs out into traffic, intervening between two pupils fighting, or restraining a pupil who is a danger to her/himself or others.

The following principles must be considered before any use of physical restraint:

- Physical intervention carries the possibility of being interpreted as an assault.
- Physical intervention may carry the risk of injury to the pupil, or to the adult involved.
- Any consideration of the use of restraint or containment should only occur as a last resort, where no other intervention is feasible or effective.
- The intention of any physical intervention must be clear.

In short, teachers and staff should only intervene physically, to restrain or contain a pupil:

- Where there is a clear danger to the pupil or others.
- Where all other interventions have failed, or are not feasible.
- With the clear intention of removing the child from danger.
- With the minimum force required to ensure the pupil’s safety.

Conclusion:

Every effort is made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to behaviour in the school. Corpus Christi Primary School places a greater emphasis on rewards, rather than on sanctions, in the belief that this will in the long run, give the best results.

All pupils are entitled to an education free from frequent disruptions, in a safe secure environment. The Board of Management has a duty to ensure that the school is a safe and healthy workplace for all pupils and staff. The Board must also support the Principal and Staff in implementing and ratifying the code. Where pupils are engaged in extracurricular activities organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management, pupils are expected to behave in accordance with the school behaviour policy, during these times.

The Principal is responsible for promoting a positive climate in the school, ensuring that the code of behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner and arranging for a review of the code, as required.

Teachers are responsible for the implementation of the school's code of behaviour by

- creating a safe working environment for each pupil.
- recognising and affirming good work.
- preparing school work and correcting work done by pupils.
- recognising and providing for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- being courteous, consistent and fair.
- keeping opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- dealing appropriately with misbehaviour.
- keeping a record of instances of serious misbehaviour, or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- providing support for colleagues.
- communicating with the Principal and parents when necessary and providing reports on matters of mutual concern.

All parents and guardians are encouraged to co-operate with staff and management, by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules and by visiting the school, when requested by the Principal or Teacher.