

Our Lady of the Wayside National School



Code of Behaviour

The school has a central role in the children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. In seeking to define acceptable standards of behaviour it is acknowledged that these are goals to be worked towards rather than expectations that are either fulfilled or not.

The children bring to school a wide variety of behaviour. As a community environment, in school we must work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. It follows that acceptable standards of behaviour are those that reflect these principles.

Children need limits set for them in order to feel secure and develop the skills for co-operation. Therefore any rules will be age appropriate, with clear agreed consequences.

Parents can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, by visiting the school and by talking to the members of staff.

A code of behaviour is established to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

Aims of the Code :

1. To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood, through the availability of school policies, our school website, newsletters and an ethos of open communication
2. To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy
3. To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
4. To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
5. To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
6. To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
7. To enable teachers to teach without disruption
8. To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others
9. To facilitate the education and development of every child
10. Ensuring principles of fairness and equity and promoting equality
11. Recognising educational vulnerability
12. Promoting safety and freedom from threat
13. Being mindful of welfare of staff

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Teachers, parents and students have a shared understanding of the factors that influence behaviour.

Reference: Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools:page 26

- A shared understanding amongst staff members
- Sharing insights about behaviour with parents
- Sharing insights about behaviour with students

Responsibility of Adults :

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children. An inclusive and involved school community is essential. The B.O.M., Principal, teachers, SNAs other school staff, parents and students all have responsibilities at different levels for behaviour in the school.

Parents will be expected to model the standards of behaviour in their dealings with teachers, students and each other.

As adults we aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations
- Promote, through example, honesty and courtesy
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all
- Use positive and consistent language

The standards expect all members of the school community to behave in ways that show respect for others.

School Rules :

- Respect for self ,other students ,teachers ,S.N.A.s and all other school staff
- Respect for other's property
- Respect other students and their learning
- Kindness and willingness to help others
- Follow instructions from staff immediately
- Walk quietly in the school building
- Courtesy and good manners
- Readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- Ask permission to leave the classroom
- Do your best in class
- Take responsibility for your own work
- Be fair
- Show forgiveness
- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Help to create a safe positive environment
- Where possible participate in school activities.

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These can be summed up as 6 main rules;

- **Respect/ Be kind**
- **Try your best**
- **Be tidy**
- **Be Safe**
- **Walk**
- **Listen**
- **Show good example to younger children**

Class Rules :

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will teach the playground rules and the school rules. The teacher will then draft a list of class rules with the children. These reflect and support the playground/school rules, and are presented in a way that is understood by the children. The rules will be written in clear simple language and will be referred to regularly. Class rules should be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. They should where possible emphasise positive behaviour. Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

School climate, values, policies, practices and relationships will support the Code of Behaviour.

Our Playground Code

Infant rules:

- **We play safely and have fun**
- **We play with our friends**
- **We always play with kind hands and kind feet**
- **We listen to the adults**

1st to 6th class rules:

- **We play safely and have fun**
- **We show respect to every adult on duty. We follow their instructions straight away**
- **We take responsibility for our actions and tell the truth always**
- **We show respect for the playground furniture and equipment**
- **We let other children get on with their own games**
- **We avoid dangerous games or games that might hurt ourselves or others**
- **We always play with kind hands and kind feet. We never hurt another person.**
- **We say sorry if we accidentally hurt or bump into anyone.**
- **We walk quickly to our lines. We wait in single file until our teacher meets us.**

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Incentives:

Promoting good behaviour is the goal of the code

Part of the vision of Our Lady of the Wayside National School is to help children achieve their personal best - academically, intellectually and socially. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and that similarly children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. All children deserve encouragement to attain their own best. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to at all times by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for school work. Older students will be given responsibility in the school through The Buddy System, Student Council and assisting with supervision of infants during wet lunchtimes.

The following are some samples of how **praise** will be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- A system of merit marks or stickers
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.
- Class reward systems e.g. "golden time", reward charts, homework passes etc.

Unacceptable Behaviour :

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: **Minor**, **Serious** and **Gross**. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher or the teacher on yard duty. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour, parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the Principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Please see attached **grid** categorising **misbehaviour**.

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Guide to addressing misbehaviour	
Misbehaviour	Addressing the misbehaviour
<p>Minor misbehaviour</p> <p>Examples: Once off incidents, interrupting class work, running in the school building, rough play, being discourteous or unmannerly, littering, minor infringement of a playground, classroom, school rules, inappropriate behaviours or gestures, name calling, not completing homework or class work without good reason, not wearing appropriate uniform, not adhering to school policies homework, healthy eating, green schools.....</p> <p>Please note: The above list is not exhaustive</p>	<p>Addressing minor misbehaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasoning • Verbal reprimand • Time out (classroom or yard) • Extra work, lines • Loss of privileges • Note home in journal • Complete a reflection exercise describing what happened and signed by parents
<p>Serious misbehaviour</p> <p>Examples: Repeated incidences of minor misbehaviours, constantly being disruptive in class and or in yard, telling lies, stealing, persistently not working to full potential, persistently breaking rules, damaging property, bullying, answering back, using unacceptable language or gestures, inappropriate use of the internet</p> <p>Please note: The above list is not exhaustive</p>	<p>Addressing serious misbehaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time out (classroom or yard) • Extra work/lines • Note home in journal • Complete a reflection exercise describing what happened and signed by parents • Loss of privileges • Denial of participation in a class activity, for example, school trip or tour • Detention during break • Report to the principal • Formal letter home • Meeting with the Principal, Parents and teacher • Report to the chairperson of the BOM

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<p>Gross misbehaviour</p> <p>Examples: Repeated incidences of serious misbehaviour, vandalism, bringing weapons or dangerous substances to school, smoking or drinking alcohol, leaving the school premises without permission, assault, aggressive, threatening behaviour towards pupils or staff members, deliberately interfering with school property/ school fire alarm/ security system.....</p> <p>Please note: The above list is not exhaustive</p>	<p>Addressing gross misbehaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report to the principal• Report to the BOM• Suspension• Expulsion
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Addressing inappropriate behaviour

Sanctions :

The object of the sanction is to help the student to learn

The use of **sanctions** or consequences will be characterised by certain features;

- It must be clear why the sanction is being applied
- The consequence should aim to relate as closely as possible to the behaviour
- It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions
- Whole class punishment should be avoided as it breeds resentment
- There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences
- It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus

Addressing Misbehaviour at Infant Level :

Sometimes pupils in Junior and Senior Infants present with behavioural issues which take time to analyse. Dealing with behavioural problems at this level will be addressed in a manner appropriate to the age of the child using the same language of correction.

We will use a **whole school approach** to addressing inappropriate behaviour. We aim to follow a **problem solving approach**, as outlined in **Developing a Code of Behaviour Guidelines for Schools figure 8.2 page 48**. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupils devise strategies for this.

We follow this **ladder of intervention**:

1. Reasoning with pupil – using restorative practice questioning
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
3. Loss of some playtime if offence occurred during playtime in yard
4. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class
5. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened and getting this signed by a parent
6. Communication with parents at an early stage
7. Loss of privileges
8. Detention during break
9. Communication with parents again
10. Referral to Principal
11. Principal communicating with parents
12. 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)

However sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour. Therefore a child, who does not do his/her work in class or has not completed homework, may be required to complete it at home.

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Suspension and Expulsion:

Before serious sanctions of suspension or expulsion are used, communication between school and parents will be initiated by the Principal. Communication may be verbal or in writing depending on the circumstances.

For **gross misbehaviour** or repeated instances of **serious misbehaviour**, **suspension** may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to attend a meeting with the Principal and class teacher to discuss their child's case. **Aggressive, threatening 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. 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**. 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**.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the **Rules 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.

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Children with Special Needs :

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents , SNA, class teacher, learning support/ resource teacher, and or Principal .School staff will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will also be considered.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

Methods of Communicating with Parents:

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Parents should be encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour. An appointment may be arranged through the school secretary for a time suited to both parent and teacher.

The following **methods of communication** will be used at all levels within the school:

- Informal parent/teacher meetings and Formal parent/teacher meetings
- Through children's homework journal (infants do not have a homework journal, so parents are reminded to check their child's schoolbag)
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- School notice board
- Monthly newsletter
- School website
- Text messages
- Phone calls

This revised **Code of Behaviour** was discussed with **teachers, pupils, Special Needs Assistants, Parents Association and B.O.M.**

Ratification

The Board of Management ratified this policy in June 2014

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Restorative Practice

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

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- 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 recognize the damage that my poor behavior 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 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 responsibility**
- **Creates a commitment to relationships, impartiality, being non-judgmental**
- **Encourages collaboration, empowerment and emotional articulation**

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

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Engagement – involves individuals in decisions/listening 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 their 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 behavior has had on them.
- A sincere spontaneous 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?
- How could things have been done differently?
- What do you need to do to make things right?

School Group Conferences can be held to deal with issues:

- 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 minimize further harm.

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Respect

Empathy

Safe

Personal accountability

Equality

Community

Trust

January 2020

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COVID 19

Addendum:

During the COVID-19 crisis, we all have a responsibility to keep each other safe and well. In order to do so, we have high expectations of our students to follow the rules and guidelines of the school related to:

- Following any altered routines for arrival or departure
- Following school instructions on hygiene, such as handwashing and sanitising
- Following instructions on who pupils can socialise with at school
- Moving around the school following specific instructions (e.g. one –way systems, out of bounds areas, queueing, lunch routines, etc.)
- Expectations about sneezing. Coughing, tissues and disposal (“catch it, bin it, kill it”)
- Telling an adult if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19
- Rules about sharing any equipment or other items including drinking bottles
- Amended expectations about break and play time, including where children may or may not play.
- Use of toilet facilities.

Students must not spit or deliberately cough on another student or staff member. This will be considered a serious misbehaviour and will be dealt with according to our Code of Behaviour.

Misbehaviour in the yard:

To pre-empt incidents of misbehaviour in the yard, our whole school approach focuses on RESPECT – respect t for yourself, respect for others, respect for the environment. We encourage pupils to take responsibility should they accidentally hurt another child, thus showing respect for that individual.

Reference to other policies:

- **SPHE Plan**
- **Child Protection**
- **Anti- Bullying**

Success Criteria:

This policy will be deemed to be successful when the following are observed:

- *Positive behaviour in classrooms, playground and school environment*
- *Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers*
- *Positive feedback from teacher, parents and pupils.*

March 2021

Policy reviewed by staff April 2021.