

Whitechurch National School
Cappagh
Co. Waterford.



Scoil Náisiúnta Teampall Geal
An Ceapach
Co. Phort Láirge

Code of Discipline

School Discipline:

The Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for discipline in the school under its management and a duty to ensure that a fair Code of Discipline applies therein. This code should be formulated by the Principal and the teaching staff in consultation with parents and be approved by the Board. *Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools (as amended by Circular 7/88)*

Catholic School Ethos and Aims of Code of Discipline.

The following is the Code of Discipline of Whitechurch NS (Roll No. 18108T). It was devised by the Principal and staff in consultation with the Board of Management and parents' representatives.

The Catholic ethos of this school is to establish and maintain high standards of behaviour. This points to the importance of a strong sense of community within the school and the existence of a high level of co-operation among teachers, ancillary staff, pupils, parents, parents' representatives and the Board of Management. The school places a great emphasis on the need to give the children every possible opportunity to develop patterns of good behaviour. The aim is 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 disruption free environment.

Aims of Code of Discipline.

The Code of Discipline aims to achieve three things:

- The efficient operation of the school and the structuring of in-class discipline so that there exists an efficient and stimulating learning environment.
- The maintenance of good order throughout the school and respect for the school environment.
- The development of self-discipline in pupils based on consideration, respect and tolerance for others.

Principles of Discipline Policy.

If the school is to achieve a happy, secure environment in which children can develop their full potential it is necessary to provide a framework which promotes constructive behaviour and discourages unacceptable behaviour. The school code places a greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions and the ideal is that pupils will acquire the skills of self-discipline. There are times however when it may be necessary to impose sanctions in order to maintain good order and to discourage offenders. The school recognises the variety of differences which exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences. School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard to the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community.

At the beginning of each school year each class with the guidance of the teacher agrees on a class code of behaviour. Rules are written on a chart and displayed in the classroom. Rules are kept clear and simple eg:

- Listen to others
- Keep your desk and area organised

- Respect every single person in the school

General School Rules:

If a school is to function efficiently it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and wisely.

1. **Respect and Courtesy:** All pupils are expected to treat staff, their fellow pupils and visitors with respect and courtesy at all times. The use of foul and uncouth language and any form of bullying is unacceptable. Truthfulness and honesty are expected from the children at all times.
2. **Punctuality:** The official opening time is 09.20am. Junior and Senior infants finish at 2.00pm. First to sixth class finish at 3.00pm. No responsibility is accepted for the pupils outside of these hours.
3. **Absences:** Every absence of a child must be accounted for verbally or in written form by a parent / guardian. It may be written in parents section of the homework diary. If a child wishes to leave school early a written note must be given to the class teacher. Messages by phone should only be made in cases of emergency.
4. **Mobile Phones:** Mobile phones are not necessary in our school. Emergency calls may be made using the school phone. If a child brings in a mobile phone it will be confiscated and returned at home time.
5. **Illness:** Any infectious illness should be notified to the school immediately.
6. **Personal Property:** Children should have their names on their coats, tracksuits and other personal property such as school books, copies and lunch boxes. The wearing of jewellery is discouraged for safety reasons.
7. **School Property and School Environment:** pupils must respect and keep the school environment clean and litter free. Defacing school property is a serious misdemeanour. Damage caused by pupils to such will be replaced / paid for by their parents.
8. A policy of **Healthy Eating** is promoted by the school. A balanced lunch is recommended.



Chewing gum is strictly forbidden



No glass bottles are allowed



In the interest of the environment, re-usable containers are suggested.

Behaviour in Class:

1. Pupils must have all books and materials required.
2. Pupils are expected to work to the best of their ability and to present written exercises neatly.
3. Pupils are to show respect for their classmates and to follow their teacher's instructions.
4. Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others, with the smooth running of the class and affects the work of the class is unacceptable.

Behaviour out of Class:

1. Pupils must not behave in any way which endangers themselves and others.
2. Any instructions or directions given by the supervising teacher/adult are to be complied with.

3. Climbing on walls, fences, etc. is forbidden -also cycling within the school premises is not allowed.
4. Children must enter and leave the school building in an orderly manner at all times.
5. Any form of threatening behaviour is unacceptable. If children are being bullied teachers must be told so that the matter can be dealt with effectively.
6. On wet days all pupils are to remain in their own classrooms sitting, reading, colouring, playing board games. No running in classrooms or hallways.
7. Middle and Senior classes must give due consideration and regard to younger children while in and / or playing in the school grounds.
8. The pitch may be used for games only if supervised by a teacher and / or approved coach.

Homework:

1. It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis. Homework assignments may vary from pupil to pupil depending on the curriculum and aptitude of pupil. Learning Support Teacher assigns homework.
2. Parents are strongly encouraged to take an active interest in their child's homework. If homework causes worry for a pupil, parents are asked to contact the teacher. In senior classes any homework not done must be completed during break the following day.
3. Parents should sign homework journal on completion each night and inform teacher if there are any problems or issues with homework.

Reward for Good Behaviour:

1. A points table may be kept on a class to class basis.
2. **Oral and written praise.**
Pupil's journal or copy is used to convey messages of approval. Yearly reports will be made on each pupil.
3. Homework off as appropriate.
4. **Extra privileges** will be given to promote good behaviour.
5. Good behaviour must be seen to be rewarded.

Categories of Misconduct.

Misdemeanour

1. Talking in class
2. Messing in class
3. Not paying attention
4. Eating during class time
5. Homework not done without good reason - senior children remain in at break to do previous night's homework
6. Leaving school yard (without permission)
7. Disobedience
8. Not doing class work
9. Telling lies (white lie - self preservation)

Serious Misbehaviour

1. Continuous talking in class
2. Continuous messing in class
3. Eating in class after recent warning
4. Repeatedly not doing homework
5. Repeated disobedience

6. Not doing class work after warning
7. Blatant bad manners
8. Disrespect
9. Fighting
10. Bullying
11. Defiance
12. Answering back
13. Insolence
14. Theft
15. Deliberate lies
16. Bad language

Gross Misbehaviour

1. Bad language to staff
2. Questioning of teacher's authority, decisions
3. Repeated or serious theft
4. Serious disrespect
5. Serious insolence
6. deliberate damage to property
7. Continuous bullying
8. Deliberate injury to another pupil
9. Threat to staff member / pupil
10. Deliberate injury to staff member
11. Deliberate lies against other pupils' / staffs' characters

Strategies and Consequences of Poor Behaviour and Suggested Sanctions

1. Reasoning with pupil
2. Verbal reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
3. Temporary separation from peers, friends and others (may be sent to another classroom)
4. Loss of privileges
5. Detention during breaks with work to complete (this work will be set by the class teacher)
6. Prescribed extra work to be completed at home and signed by parents.
Informal note to parents, informing them of the misconduct, and inviting them to discuss the issue with class teacher.
Children may complete the 4W sheet:
 - What I did
 - Why I did it
 - Which rule I broke
 - What I intend to do to make this right
 - Signed by parents.
7. Referral to Principal
8. Children may be asked to write an account of the incident, giving both sides of the story and an apology. This is also to be signed by the parents.
9. Behaviour record is kept by each teacher.
 - Pupil is warned at being put on written report
The record notes the following

- Incidents of poor behaviour
- Record of improvement
- Record of discussion with parents
- Sanctions/consequences used. This may take the form of a notebook to be sent home each week and returned to the school, signed by the parents/guardians with comment where appropriate.

Communication with Parents:

1. Where there are a number of serious misdemeanours a note is sent by the Principal or class teacher to the parents, to be signed and returned.
2. The parents are invited to school to discuss the issue and help deal with their child's behaviour

Suspension:

1. Teachers shall keep a written record of all serious misbehaviours as well as a record of improvements in the behaviour of disruptive pupil.
2. **Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour including bullying the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend a meeting with Chairperson and the Principal or a selected member of the Board of Management.**
3. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the child will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may have to be suspended. If the parents fail to attend the meeting or fail to provide a reasonable excuse for not doing so the child may be suspended until they do so.

NB

4. The Board of Management makes provision in the code of discipline to deal with continuously disruptive pupils or with a serious breach of discipline **by authorising the Chairperson or Principal to exclude a pupil or pupils from the school. The maximum initial period of such exclusion shall be three school days.**
5. A special decision of the Board of Management is necessary to authorise a further period of exclusion up to a maximum of 10 school days to allow for consultation with the pupil and pupil's parents/guardians. In exceptional circumstances the Board of Management may authorise a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed.
6. When a period of suspension is over the pupil should be re-admitted formally to the class by the Principal.

Note 1: In the implementation of these sanctions it will be made clear to the child that it is the behaviour that is being rejected not the child.

Note 2: In line with the school's policy on dealing with bullying, all acts of bullying, aggressive or threatening behaviour towards pupils or teachers shall be considered a **major breach of discipline.**

Note 3: The steps outlined above may be **by-passed** at the discretion of the class teacher in consultation with the principal should they **consider an incident serious enough to merit it.**

Expulsion:

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil in an extreme case (see p. 80/81/82, Developing a Code of Behaviour; Guidelines for Schools) e.g. where repeated incidents of serious misbehaviour interfere with the educational opportunities of fellow students or where there is a threat to the health and safety of either students or staff. Where expulsion is considered the school authorities will have tried a range of other interventions and will have formed the opinion that they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour. This sanction would be imposed under the terms of the Education Welfare Act (2000). Suspension/expulsion procedures are in accordance with the Education Act (1998)

Role of Parents:

The Code of Discipline will not work without the support and co-operation of the parents. Parents will be informed at an early stage if problems occur and not simply at the stage where sanctions need to be enforced. Parents are invited and encouraged to keep in close contact with the school with regard to all aspects of their child's progress.

Review of Code:

A copy of this code has been made available to all parents. All parents have studied the code, signed and returned the form appended to the code indicating their agreement with the terms. It is a condition of attendance at this school that pupils abide by the rules and regulations in this Code of Discipline. The code has been drawn up following a process which involved consultation with all teachers, parents and the Board of Management. It will be reviewed at regular intervals.

This code will be reviewed annually.

Please keep this code in an accessible place as the signed form indicates you and your child's acceptance.

It may be referred to during your child's schooling in Whitechurch National School.

