**Code Of Behaviour Policy**

**Scoil Cholmcille Junior,**

**Ballybrack**

**Roll No: 19641T**

**Introduction**

In Scoil Cholmcille Junior, we aim to provide a safe and happy school environment where each individual child can learn and develop to his/her fullest potential. Good behaviour is necessary to provide this safe and stimulating environment. In reference to the school’s Child Protection Policy, Health and Safety Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy, we recognise that the protection and welfare of all children is of paramount importance.

**Rationale**

All children bring to the school a wide variety of behaviour and as a school community we must work towards standards of behaviour based on honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. Children need limits set for them, firstly to feel secure and secondly, to develop skills for co-operation.

Parents can greatly assist and work 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.

Above all, this Code of Behaviour acknowledges the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

**Aims of the Code**

* To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
* To facilitate the education and development of every child
* To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
* To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
* To enable teachers to teach without disruption
* To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood and to create an ethos of open communication between home and school
* To encourage the involvement of parents and staff both teaching and non-teaching in the implementation of this policy

**The Policy In Action**

**Responsibility of Adults**

The Staff of Scoil Cholmcille has 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.

The Staff will aim to:

* Create a positive, 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 or ability.
* Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all
* Ensure that the rights of the children are upheld.

**School Rules**

Follow instruction from any member of staff immediately

Walk quietly in the school building

**Punctuality is important.** Children who arrive late not only miss class time, but they also disrupt others. School starts at 8.50am. All children must line up on the yard in the morning and wait for the class teacher to collect the class. **In the interest of safety, children are not permitted to walk through the car park**. Parents are asked not to park in the staff car park. . On rainy mornings the doors will be opened ten minutes early and children may sit quietly in their own classroom.

Children are not permitted to go home alone unless agreement in writing has been signed by the parent/guardian. **Please ensure your child is collected at the correct time, 1.30pm for Infants and 2.30 for 1st and 2nd class**. Children get upset if they are not collected on time. If you wish to take your child out of school before the normal finishing time, for legal reasons you will need to sign a form in the Secretary’s office.

Children are expected to wear their uniform and present themselves cleanly and tidily. The school uniform consists of grey skirt/trousers, grey/white blouse/shirt, wine jumper/cardigan with the school crest. School tracksuit and runners are to be worn only on days when P.E. is timetabled. Early Start children wear a navy tracksuit with the school crest. Coats, jackets, tracksuit tops should have the child’s name on them. Bags, pencil cases, and pencils, rulers and sharpeners etc., should also have the child’s name printed on them.

It is school policy that children eat a Healthy Lunch in school and drink water or milk. Only one treat such as a chocolate bar or cereal bar or chocolate spread sandwich is allowed **and only on Friday**. Popcorn and crisps are not allowed as it increases the workload of the Cleaning Staff. Children are requested to bring uneaten or partially eaten lunches and plastic containers home. Parents/guardians are requested not to send celebration/birthday cakes or party bags to the child’s class during the school year. Teachers often organise small festive parties at Hallowe’en, Christmas and Easter. Please inform the school if your child has any specific food allergies.

For insurance reasons and in keeping with the school’s First Aid Policy, the staff has been instructed not to administer medicine to children. However, if your child is on daily medication, please discuss the situation with your child’s class teacher and the school will facilitate parents/guardians to come in and give medicines in school. If your child has medical needs it is important that the school is informed so that we can support your child in school.

In keeping with the school’s Mobile Phone Policy, children may bring a mobile phone to school but it must be switched off during school hours. If you need to make urgent contact with your child please ring the school and the message will be passed on.

**Class Rules**

Teachers help children to devise their own class rules at the start of each year so that they understand the need for rules and learn to co-operate. All class rules are age appropriate.

At Infant level rules are very clear and specific, for example,

* Sit on your seat
* Raise your hand to speak
* Work quietly
* Be kind to others
* Take turns
* Be neat and tidy

At 1st and 2nd class rules may be listed in poem/rap form

We keep our classroom tidy and neat

We use our voices soft and sweet

We are helpful friendly and fair

We take our turn and always share

We raise our hands to speak

We work quietly in our seat.

**School Yard**

Playing together is vital to social and emotional development. All children need to feel happy and secure when playing on the school yard. The yard is well supervised and any child who is hurt physically or emotionally by another child must tell any member of staff immediately. Parents need to reassure their child that the teacher on yard duty will listen to them and if a serious incident occurs, the class teacher will further investigate. **Under no circumstances should parents encourage their child to hit back.**

All children need to be supervised at all times during school hours. As the yard is well supervised, the school cannot provide extra supervision for children to stay in the school at yard times, unless in extreme circumstances, for example if your child has a broken arm but is able to return to school.

**Rules of the yard**

* Follow instruction from any member of staff immediately
* Kicking, hitting, throwing stones or sticks, hair pulling, scraping, biting, spitting, pinching etc. will not be tolerated.
* A group of children ganging up on a child will not be tolerated
* Abusive language in the Yard to any child or adult will not be tolerated.
* Games that involve physical contact such as ‘Mess Fighting’ or Wrestling that cause injury or hurt to other children are not acceptable in the yard
* Teasing and name-calling are unacceptable
* Children must get permission from the Teacher on Yard duty to go to the toilet and will be accompanied by an adult.

It is school policy to keep a written record of serious incidents that occur in the yard. In extreme circumstances, where a child persistently breaks the yard rules, parents/guardians may be asked to assist in the supervision of their child during yard time.

**Physical Restraint**

Staff understands the importance of listening to and respecting children to create an environment which is generally calm and supportive especially when dealing with pupils who may have emotional and behavioural needs. All staff and adults with responsibility for children's safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving aggressive or reckless behaviour, and only use physical intervention as a last resort, in the interest of safety for the child and others. Staff intervening with children will seek assistance from other members of staff at as early a stage as possible.

Examples of physical intervention include:

• Physically interposing between pupils

• Blocking a pupil's path

• Leading a pupil by the hand or arm

• Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back

• In extreme cases using restrictive holds

The Principal will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity of any incidents where restraint was used. Parents will be informed after a non-routine incident where physical intervention is used with their child.

**Praise and encouragement throughout the school.**

The Staff uses a range of strategies to promote and develop routines that foster good behaviour. 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 good behavior as well as by personal achievements for their work.

The staff praise by:

* Awarding stickers or certificates
* A quiet word of praise for effort
* A comment in a pupil’s copy book
* A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for congratulations
* A word of praise in front of a group or class
* ‘Golden Time’, (where children play board Games or watch a film etc) for class efforts
* Giving some special job or responsibility
* A note or phone call to parent from the teacher or Principal

**Sanctions**

The Staff use sanctions to prevent inappropriate behavior so that all children and staff can operate safely and happily in a relatively disruption free environment. When sanctions are being used Staff makes it clear that it is the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus. Each child will be told clearly why the sanction is being applied and what is required to avoid future sanctions.

The following steps will be taken when the children behave inappropriately. They are listed in order of severity with one being for a minor misbehaviour and nine being for serious or gross misbehaviour. The list is by no means exhaustive.

The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupils devise strategies for this.

1. A reminder of the rule the child is breaking
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
3. Temporary separation from peers to a table on his/her own within class
4. Temporary removal to another class
5. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened
6. Excluded from board games or from watching a film for a certain amount of time.
7. Communication with parents
8. Referral to Principal
9. Principal communicating with parents

Occasionally, if a child’s behavior is deemed to compromise his or her health or safety or the health and safety of other children and/or staff, the principal, acting on behalf of the Board of Management may exclude the child from going on school outings or tours, as this puts too much risk and responsibility on staff.

All the sanctions are used in conjunction with the praises and encouragement listed above. The Staff will always aim for a balanced approach and will look out for opportunities to ‘catch children being good’ especially if they have received sanctions. In this way we give children ample opportunities to try again and succeed.

**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. 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.

**Examples of minor misbehaviour:**

* Not following instructions from members of staff
* Being disrespectful to other children
* Not listening/paying attention

**Examples of serious misbehaviour:**

* Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
* Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
* Threats or physical hurt to another person
* Damage to property
* Theft

**Examples of gross misbehaviour:**

* Assault on a teacher or pupil
* Serious theft
* Serious damage to property

**Anti-Bullying**

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression whether it is verbal, psychological or physical, which is conducted by an individual or a group against others. It is behaviour which is intentionally aggravating and intimidating. It includes behaviour such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, exclusion or extortion by one or more pupils against a victim.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying. Procedures for noting, reporting, investigating and dealing with bullying are outlined in the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy.

**Suspension and Expulsion**

Before serious sanctions such as detention, suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child’s case. .

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

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 for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

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

**Communicating with Parents**

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children**.** In reference to the school’s Child Protection policy, we encourage openness with parents as well as parental involvement in their children’s education. **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.

Parents are 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. Unless it is an urgent issue, parents should avoid talking to the class teacher first thing in the morning as the teachers are busy with large numbers of children.

By making an appointment to meet the class teacher, you will get the teacher’s undivided attention and strategies can be worked out mutually without interruption.

Alternatively, you may speak to the Home School Community Liasion teacher, or the Deputy Principal, Suzanne Norton or the Principal, Irene Connor.

**Review Process**

This policy was reviewed and amended by the staff during September- October 2011 in line with NEWB Guidelines.. All parents were invited to a discussion of the changes to the policy on 14th December 2011. The reviewed policy was ratified by the Board Of Management in December 2011.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

The strategies within this Code of Behaviour will be discussed and evaluated annually at Staff Meetings in an effort to ensure that good behaviour is constantly promoted throughout Scoil Cholmcille Junior and is the norm in the school from the youngest to the oldest children. The strategies are rooted in a whole school approach following staff discussion. Each staff member has a copy of these agreed strategies that have been approved by the Board of Management.

**Review Procedure**

The policy will be reviewed regularly in the light of experience. It will be reviewed by the full staff and Board of Management every year. Any staff member, board member, parent, guardian or student who is unhappy with the content or the implementation of any school policy may request a review at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible