

Code of Behaviour : Scoil Mhuire, Davidstown

Development of the Scoil Mhuire / Davidstown PS Code of Behaviour.

This Code of Behaviour is being prepared in accordance with the guidelines 'Developing a Code of Behaviour Guidelines for Schools' published by the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB, 2008). The Code of behaviour also conforms with legislation as required by Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act (2000). Parents and staff are being asked to read this Code and give feedback and suggestions to the office before December 4th 2017. The code of behaviour will be available on the school website. The code of behaviour needs to be read in association with the school's anti-bullying policy, and child protection policy which are available on www.davidstownps.ie. When parents enrol their child in Scoil Mhuire /Davidstown PS, they are agreeing to support the implementation of the code of behaviour and other policies of the school.

Our Vision

The vision for relationship and behaviour in Scoil Mhuire/ Davidstown PS is that each individual through positive learning experiences will be stimulated to reach his / her full potential, face life confidently, find fulfilment in an ever-changing world.

Aims of the Code of Behaviour

The aims of the code of behaviour are to help create a positive learning environment in which every pupil can benefit from the school, to help pupils become self-disciplined and to encourage a good standard of behaviour through the display of consideration, respect, tolerance for others and respect for the school environment.

The code of behaviour not only applies to interactions pupils may have with their class teacher but also in their interactions with all teachers of the school, ancillary staff, outside tutors / trainers and volunteers assisting the school, whether these interactions are in the classroom, on the school premises, on school trips, school tours or on swimming / sports activities etc.

Teachers are expected to take particular responsibility for the pupils of their class and display care and interest in all pupils of the school.

All pupils are subject to the school's code of behaviour. Teachers and management will make reasonable allowance for pupils with special needs.

Promoting Good Behaviour in School

We believe that good behaviour is very important in our school. It enables children to learn, to be self-confident and to enjoy school. It enables teachers to teach efficiently and other pupils to learn. The promotion of good behaviour in the school involves all partners playing their part.

Teachers

Teachers will model good behaviour with their pupils. Teachers will promote good behaviour in a number of ways.

- School rules will be formally taught at the start of each term. Schools rules will be raised in classroom discussion throughout the year.
- SPHE lessons provide opportunities for the development of personal and social skills.
- It is important that good behaviour is recognized, praised and rewarded as it occurs, especially when there have been improvements in pupil behaviour.

- Teachers will develop classroom rules at the beginning of each year with their pupils with a view to developing classroom contracts, as appropriate to the age taught.
- Good behaviour will be developed by teachers when they offer a varied and interesting curriculum related to the child's ability, they promote good teacher/pupil relationship based on care and kindness, and when they maintain a consistent and busy routine in a well-organized and managed classroom
- Teachers offer individual affirmation of pupils when the opportunity occurs.
- All teachers will operate a system of incentives / rewards for good behaviour. These may include the distribution of little prizes / treats for achievement, pupil of the week schemes, stickers, stamps or certificates for good behaviour, 'dojo' system, among other strategies. Homework-off vouchers are not recommended as there is a school expectation that homework is allocated each night, Monday to Thursday. The system of rewards utilized in any classroom is related to the age group being taught.

Parents / Guardians

Parents will model good behaviour with their children. Parents will keep in contact with teachers / school regarding pupil-teacher issues. School life is easier when parents support various school policies/ practices outlined on the website or as explained in the school's newsletter. These include:

- Healthy Eating Practices
- School Dress Code
- Homework Policy
- Parent – Teacher Contact Procedure
- Use of Mobile Phones

Board of Management

The board of management will support the principal and teachers in the promotion of good behaviour. In cases of gross or persistent serious misbehaviour, the board will follow statutory procedures defined by legislation / circulars. Management will avail of assistance from organizations such as HSE, NEPS or various other state agencies as appropriate. Management will financially support professional development if considered necessary.

School Rules

School rules are kept to a minimum. They reflect a common sense approach and encourage positive action on the part of pupils.

- I will come to school everyday. I will bring in a note when absent or if I need to leave the school early.
- I will work to the best of my ability in class. I will present all parts of my homework. I will bring a note from my parents if there has been a problem with my homework.
- I will bring my pencils, rubbers, copy and books to school every day.
- I will come to school in my uniform, wearing suitable footwear.
- I will be kind, fair and honest to other children.
- I will do what the teacher tells me.
- I will behave myself in class, corridors, basketball court and field.

- I will keep the school clean and tidy and mind school property.
- I will take correction and accept penalties without objection.
- I will not take any electronic games or mobile phones into school unless given permission to do so.
- I will not use offensive language in school.

Break Times

Pupils are expected to have respect for themselves and others while playing out on yard/ pitch or basketball court.

Time Out: Adults on supervision may require pupils 'Taking Time Out'. This is a temporary separation from peers. This gives the pupil time to calm and reflect on their behaviour. When they are calm, the adult will give the child the opportunity to think through their behaviour. They should be advised on strategies to avoid repeating that behaviour and how to improve.

Time Out will occur if a pupil is involved in

- Fighting or inappropriate physical activity ('mess-fighting')
- Climbing Trees
- Using offensive language
- Refusing to follow adult instruction
- Leaving designated areas
- Behaviour which teachers / supervisors view as dangerous or offensive to other pupils.

Wet Days Pupils are expected to follow well-established procedures which reflect the need for safety at break-time on inclement days. Pupils play board games and chat with classmates. The use of Digital Technologies is not permitted at this time.

Discouraging Misbehaviour

The teachers and principal utilise a range of sanctions to discourage poor behaviour when a pupil has not responded to the main strategies adopted by the class teacher or principal and has broken school rules. These may entail but are not limit to;

- Reasoning with the pupil
- Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others within the classroom
- Loss of privileges
- Detention in the classroom during school breaks. This is for short periods. If it occurs on more than three occasions in a term, the teacher will inform the parent.
- Prescribing additional work
- Communication with parents. This is done by letter or by meeting the parent. Telephone communication on matters of pupil misbehaviour is not general school practice unless it is considered urgent.
- Referral to principal
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Suspension

Suspension is a sanction which may be used in the case of gross misbehaviour or where there has been persistent serious misbehaviour or when there is a serious health and safety concern. Behaviours that may lead to suspension include;

- Physical abuse of children or staff
- Physical assault of an adult
- Leaving the school premises or classroom without permission
- Bringing substances to school or coming to school having abused substances
- Persistent abusive / threatening language directed towards children or staff
- Persistent refusal to take instruction which compromises the right of other pupils to instruction
- Stealing or damaging property
- Bringing a dangerous item to school
- Persistent bullying
- Endangering themselves or others

If suspension is considered warranted, the principal may suspend the pupil for 3 days initially. This power of suspension is delegated to the principal by the school board of management. Details surrounding the suspension will be recorded in the minutes of the board of management. The principal shall seek the permission of the board of management to extend the suspension a further 5 days.

Expulsion

Under Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000, the board of management has the authority to expel a student if the behaviour of the pupil is serious enough to warrant expulsion. Expulsion will take place if all other reasonable interventions to modify the pupil's behaviour have been exhausted. Grounds for expulsion include;

- Repeated / Persistent serious misbehaviour which is a cause of significant disruption to the learning of others.
- When the repeated / persistent behaviour constitutes a threat to other pupils and staff
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property
- A serious threat of violence against another pupil or staff member
- Actual violence or physical assault causing injury
- Supplying illegal substances or using such substances in school

In line with Guidelines from the National Education Welfare Board, the Board of Management of Davidstown PS reserves the right to expel a student for a first offense.

The following procedures will be followed.

- The principal with the staff dealing with the pupil, will outline a detailed history of the behaviours of the pupil and outline the interventions which have taken place. The parents and pupil will be informed of the details outlined and indicate that it could result in expulsion. This will take place at a meeting and details will also be given in writing. If the parents fail to attend the meeting, it will be rescheduled indicating to parents the importance of attending.
- The invitations to meet and the response of the parents will be documented.
- The Principal will form a view that expulsion may be warranted. Parents and the pupil will be informed if the Principal is asking the Board of Management to consider expulsion. Comprehensive records will be provided for the parents and the board

- Parents will be invited to a meeting (giving sufficient notice) of the board to give a written or oral submission. The Board will review the documentation and the investigation procedures. The parents will present a response to the board and the board members will have an opportunity to ask questions of the Principal and the parents. Parents will make their case for the pupil.
- When the hearing is concluded the parents and principal and any other person who has had an involvement with the circumstances surrounding the proposed expulsion will leave the meeting.
- The board will deliberate and make a decision whether to expel the pupil or not
- The parent will be informed of the decision of the board. They will be informed that the Education Welfare Officer will be informed and also that they are entitled to appeal the decision of the board under section 29 of the Education Act. A copy of the wording of the act and of the application form for appeal will be enclosed.
- If the board considers expulsion is appropriate, the Education Welfare Officer will be notified in writing, giving the reasons for expulsion. The expulsion takes place 20 days after the EWO receives notification. The Principal with the school staff will give every support to the EWO to support the pupil in relation to alternative education e.g IEP, details of pupil's development in subjects etc.