



Code of Discipline Avoca School April 2022

Purpose of Policy: To promote positive behaviour and to allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious way. The code should also provide clear guidelines for staff, students and parents to follow to ensure that the aims of the code are fulfilled. The code offers a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are utilised by staff and parents. The school uses Restorative Practice as a strategy in promoting the support of appropriate behaviour. See Appendix A

Aims

- To allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious way
- To promote the safety and happiness of all children and staff in the school
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- To increase co-operation between home and school through a clear understanding of the code
- To ensure consistency in the application of rules and sanctions
- To outline the structure of fair and agreed sanctions that will be available to teachers in response to negative behaviour

Code of Behaviour

It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, pupils and parents. This is done by modelling the following behaviours and teaching the children to

- Listen to and talk with others
- Understand other people's feelings
- Express their own feelings appropriately
- Stop and think before they act, and thus
- Make good decisions and choices
- Make and keep friends
- Stand up for themselves positively
- Cope with teasing and negative pressure
- Work in groups and help each other
- Feel better about themselves, their class and their school

To assist the development of such co-operation the following definitions clearly outline the differing roles and expectations of the people involved in the everyday life of the school. Restorative will be used to support individual children who present with behavioural issues or challenges.

Scoil N. Phádraig Naofa uses restorative practices in order to support children in negotiating issues and conflicts that may arise between them.

Expectations of pupils

The school expects that you will:

- Attend school regularly and not miss days without good reason
- Arrive on time
- Not leave during the day without either a written note from home, a dojo message and school permission
- Respect all school property
- Wear the appropriate school uniform. This is to be worn on all school days apart from the P.E. days designated by the class teacher.

- The full uniform consists of the crested teal jumper, grey shirt/grey skirts or trousers, school tie and grey socks or tights.
- The P.E. uniform which is worn on P.E. days only or as directed by the school on other days consists of a navy crested top and navy bottoms. This is worn with a red polo shirt and appropriate footwear. In fine weather navy school shorts of appropriate length only are to be worn. **No other shorts are permitted to be worn on any day**
- **No jewellery to be worn in school.** Where ears are pierced only stud earrings are allowed in school.
- **Dangling earrings, hoop earrings and false nails are not permitted on health and safety grounds.**
- **Facial piercings are not recommended for primary school children. Therefore they are not permitted in the school**
- Show respect for yourself and others
- Avoid swearing, fighting or name calling
- Listen to messages at assembly.
- Participate in school activities within the school and show school spirit when required for sporting activities, quizzes, choir and competitions that are school related but external to the school
- Respect the school green code. Children must keep the physical environment of the school tidy and assist where they can e.g. making sure that their shoes are clean on entry to the school building after breaks.
- Move gently around school, no running in hall and behave in the line. The procedure for moving around the school and in the playground is as follows:
 - All classes to be collected by the class from the front yard in the mornings as soon as the bell goes.
 - All classes to be escorted out by class teachers at both breaks.
 - Infants through their own exit doors

- 1st and 2nd to be escorted out through the front door
 - 3rd and 4th out through the doors onto the old infant yard and from there onto the gravel path.
 - 5th and 6th out the door by 2nd class and onto the gravel path.
 - The teacher and SNA on duty will take the classes from here
 - On the way back from the pitch the classes will line up. All classes will be scored on lining up and walking in. The winning class from Juniors to 2nd will get an extra playtime.
 - The winner from 3rd to 6th will get a class homework pass.
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- Repeated rough play and disrespectful behaviour to be noted in a small notebook by the teacher on the yard. Repeat offenders will be kept indoors for detention during the second break on Wednesdays
 - All children to walk on the right- hand side of the corridors. Staff walk on the left. They need to be reminded to respect and stand back for all adults on the corridors and in doorways. The teacher on duty leads the way down after break and the SNA locks the pitch gate.
 - The 3rd and 4th class teachers collect their classes from the oil tank and escort them into the classrooms.
 - The 5th and 6th class teachers collect from the path outside the 2nd class exit door and escort back to the classrooms.
 - 1st and 2nd can be collected from the yard and asked to wait at the front door until their teacher is ready to lead them in through the hall.
 - The children in the junior yard are not permitted on the grass next to the shed or on any of the grassy slopes around the school. They can use the flat grassy area going up from the yard in the direction of the pitch. The SNA on duty brings out 4 small round cones to mark out this area.
 - Behave appropriately when on school tours, or representing the school at quizzes, sporting events etc.

Your teacher expects that you will:

- Show him/her courtesy and respect

- Accept teacher's authority and right to impose sanctions on those who behave badly
- Come to school on time and have all the necessary materials
- Do your homework carefully and completely
- Listen when others are talking
- Avoid distracting behaviour
- Participate in all class activities

Your fellow students expect that you will:

- Not bully them
- Show acceptance and respect their differing personalities
- Never insult or belittle them because of difference
- Respect their property
- Share equipment and resources with them
- Allow them to be part of the group
- Speak to them with courtesy and respect

Expectations of School

Children expect that school will be:

- Safe
- Happy

- Suited to their learning style
- Encouraging and supportive
- Affirming of children of all abilities
- Able to deal with bullying and supportive of victims

Parents expect that school will :

- Provide a safe and happy environment for their child
- Recognise and provide for the individual differences of pupils
- Support children
- Be fair and consistent in the way children are dealt with
- Provide an atmosphere of support and inclusion rather than criticism
- Contact them at an early stage to inform them of any problems
- Be willing to listen to their viewpoint
- Help with suggestions and support about problems in school

Teachers expect that in school there will be:

- Mutual support and encouragement
- Co-operation to achieve the schools aims and objectives
- A fair and consistent implementation of the school's discipline policy
- A consistent approach to handling challenging behaviour
- An atmosphere that encourages professional development and a willingness to learn and change

Expectations of Parents

The school expects that you will:

- Be familiar with the various policies and codes of the school and the expectation of pupils
- Show support for teachers in the implementation of the school's behaviour policy
- Support your child in school and homework
- Interact with school staff respectfully.
- Observe the timings for on line communication on platforms such as Class Dojo
- Ensure the punctuality and regular attendance of your child
- Ensure he/she has the necessary materials
- Ensure that your child has a positive attitude and abides by the school rules
- Never undermine the authority of school or teachers
- Promote respect for teachers and other school personnel
- Give a contact number where you can be reached in an emergency
- Inform the teacher in writing when you intend to collect your child early for appointments and collect your child from the classroom. If it is an emergency and you have had not time to notify the teacher that morning, please send a follow up Dojo message to the class teacher explaining the reason for the early pick up. Please fill in the signing out sheet, stating the reason why your child is being collected from school prior to dismissal.
- Provide written information for school attendance file when your child is absent from school
- Be available to discuss a problem

- Make appointment with teacher or principal when you wish to discuss something

Your child expects that you will:

- Look after his/her basic needs
- Be interested in, support, praise and encourage his/her work in school
- Show fairness

Other Parents expect that you will:

- Support the school in implementing its code of behaviour
- Expect firm discipline in cases where your child's behaviour is having a negative impact on the behaviour of others

School Rules

The rules of S. N. Phádraig Naofa are kept to a minimum and presented in a simple format that makes them easy to understand for all pupils:

1. School reception time commences at 9.20 a.m.
School finishes at 3p.m.
2. Children leaving the premises at other times should bring a note.
Parents should present themselves at the office window to collect their child during school time.
3. School uniform or tracksuit should always be worn in school.
The uniform should be worn correctly with pride and tracksuit on P.E. days only.
4. Courtesy to others at all times.
5. No bad language.
6. Healthy lunches in line with Green School Policy (no crisps, gum or fizzy drinks).
7. Bullying in any form is strictly forbidden.
8. No phonecalls during class, phone for emergencies only and strictly no mobile phones, smart watches/phones, electronic devices in any form or computer games in school.

Sports Rules

The sports rules were devised by pupils and staff to ensure safety and security at sport:

1. Courtesy to fellow players and teachers always.
2. No jewellery or long nails.
3. Please wear your school tracksuit and appropriate footwear for all sports activities.
4. Follow the team rules and listen respectfully to your teacher or instructor
5. No gymnastics, handstands, leapfrog or trains in the playground.
6. No rough play of any description.

Responses and Sanctions available to Teachers and School:

The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal Teacher. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises.

The school community places emphasis on rewards and endorsement of positive behaviour. Each class and class teacher agrees on a chosen system appropriate to the interests and the ages of the children in her class at the beginning of the school year.

On a whole school basis there is also a monthly reward for pupils who display consistently appropriate behaviour in all areas of school life.. Such rewards include 'no uniform day', table quizzes, 'Who wants to be a millionaire' and external trips.

In the case of repeated bad behaviour the following steps are followed to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour:

- (a) Reasoning with pupil
- (b) Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
- (c) Temporary separation from peers, friends or others (this may be a change of position in class or the pupil may be sent temporarily to another class)
- (d) Loss of privileges (this could involve exclusion from a class trip or a reduced period of outdoor playtime)
- (e) Detention during a break. Some written work will be given at this time.

- (f) Referral to Principal Teacher
- (g) Communication with parents
- (h) Suspension
- (i) Expulsion

Teachers' Records

Teachers shall keep a written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour as well as a record of improvements in the behaviour of disruptive pupils. Before resorting to serious sanctions, e.g. suspension, the normal channels of communications between school and parents will be utilised. Parents will be involved at an early stage. These incidents/ diary will be recorded on Aladdin (our internal web system) All information is stored in compliance with the GDPR regulations.

In line with the school policy on bullying the school also maintains a file that records incidents of bullying as reported by staff, students or parents.

Communications

Communications with parents will be verbal,by email or by the Class Dojo App depending on circumstances. The parents concerned will be invited to the school to discuss their child's case.

All staff at Scoil N. Phadraig Naofa are committed to teaching and re enforcing positive behaviour through the use of positive strategies.

Sanctions and Procedures

Serious misbehaviour may be defined as assault on another pupil, threatening behaviour or aggressive bad language.

Gross misbehaviour may be defined as assault on a member of staff, repeated incidents of serious misbehaviour or where a child presents as a danger to themselves or others.

Where there are repeated incidences of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend the school to meet the Chairperson and Principal Teacher. If such a meeting does not result in an improvement of the pupil's behaviour then the pupil may have to be suspended for a temporary period for an initial maximum period of three days.

In the case of gross misbehaviour the Board will authorise the Chairperson or Principal Teacher to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with parents. Where an incident of gross behaviour involves assault on a member of staff the guards will be informed.

In the event that a pupil, on returning to school, continues to commit incidences of serious or gross misbehaviour a special decision of the Board of Management may be necessary to sanction suspension in excess of the initial three days and increased at the discretion of the board.

The Board of Management reserves the right to take such other reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school and that the safety of students and staff is secured. If the rights of the other pupils or staff are endangered then expulsion may be considered. Such a sanction would only be exercised with the prior consent of the patron and when all avenues have been exhausted including consultation with the National Educational Welfare Officer (see "National Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 24).

Every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed child referred for psychological assessment without delay. Help will be sought, also from support services within the wider community e.g. Community Care Services provided by Health Boards and Lucena Clinic.

When Suspension Occurs

Parents will initially receive verbal communication informing them of their child's suspension. This will then be followed by written confirmation of the suspension.

The formal letter of notification of suspension to parents should be understandable to the student and the parent and should include:

1. Notice of suspension

2. Effective date of suspension
3. Duration of suspension
4. Reasons for suspension
5. Expectations of student while on suspension (study programme may be attached)
6. Importance of parental assistance in resolving the matter
7. A statement that the student is under the care and responsibility of the parent/s while on suspension
8. A statement that the Educational Welfare Board has been informed is of any duration including a reduced day timetable.
9. Information on appeal rights
10. Requirements which need to be in place when the student returns if consideration has been given to proceeding to expulsion.

Appeals Procedure

If a Board of Management suspends or expels a student then the parent may appeal the decision to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (DES) and the appeal will be heard by an appeals committee.

The procedure for the hearing of appeals must ensure that :

- The parties are helped to reach agreement, if possible
- The appeal is conducted in the most informal way possible
- Appeals are dealt with within thirty days, but the Secretary General may extend the time by a further fourteen days.

See **Oasis, Information on Public Services** website for further information.

Success Criteria of Policy

The success of the policy will be measured through practical indicators such as :

- Positive feedback from those involved i.e. students, staff and parents
- An improved perception of behaviour in the classrooms, yard and general school environs as observed by students, staff, visiting coaches, parents and other visitors

Roles and Responsibility

The main responsibility for coordinating and implementing this revised code of behaviour lies with the Principal of the school in her/his pivotal role as communicator with each agent of the school community.

In support of the principal each member of the teaching staff will take responsibility for discipline and good behaviour in their own classroom and also on the yard when they are supervising.

While the principal undertakes responsibility for implementation of the policy on a day to day basis the ultimate responsibility for discipline and decisions relating to suspension and expulsion in the school lies with the Board of Management(BoM) as representative of the patron.

Implementaion Date

The original policy was compiled during the Autumn term of 2005. The draft policy was presented to parents and students for comment and input after the Halloween break. It was originally ratified by the Board of Management (meeting 19th June 2006). Since then it has been reviewed, discussed and ratified by the current Board on the 11th of December 2012. It was ammended twice in March 2015 and April 2019. This policy will be reviewed at the February 2022 meeting of the Board of Management and will be implemented from Term 3 (Monday 25th of April) of the 21-22 academic year.

Timetable for Review

The code will constantly be reviewed in an informal way by the members of staff who implement it on a daily basis. A more formal review will take place as new legislation in the area of child welfare and education arises.

Communication

The policy will be circulated via email to all families currently in the school. It will then be supplied to all new applicants prior to enrolment.

The policy will also be accessible to all members of the school community in the principal's office and on the website www.avocaschool.ie

Signed:
Valerie Twomey (Chairperson)

Date: February 2022

References

- Circular 20/90 on Discipline (DES website www.irlgov.ie/educ)
- Circular 22/02 Appeals Procedures Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998.
- Oasis, Information website on Public Services
- Education Act, 1998, Section 15 (DES website)
- Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 Section 23(1-5), 24(1-5) (DES website)
- Management Board Members' Handbook. Revised 2004. CPSMA
- Code of Behaviour guidelines SDPS website www.sdps.ie
- INTO website www.into.ie
- County Wicklow Vocational Educational Committee (VEC) guidelines on Behaviour Policy for 2nd Level Students
- Sample Codes of Behaviour from school websites

Appendix A

Scoil N. Phádraig Naofa,

Avoca,

Co. Wicklow.

Roll No 18198A

Restorative Practices Policy

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'*.

At Scoil N. Phádraig Naofa, Avoca, 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, 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 recognise the damage that my poor behaviour 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 Practices is a process to involve, to the extent possible, those who have a stake in a specific offence and to collectively identify and address 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 taking responsibility
- Creates a commitment to relationships, impartiality, being non-judgemental
- Encourages collaboration, empowerment and emotional articulacy

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

Engagement - involves individuals in decisions/listens 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 my 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 behaviour has had on me
- 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?
- 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 minimise further harm

Review and Ratification

This policy was reviewed and ratified at a BoM Meeting in March 2017. It was then further reviewed and ratified in February 2022. It will be implemented from the 25th of April 2022

Signed

Valerie Twomey **Date: February 22**

Valerie Twomey

Chairperson, BoM, Scoil N. Phádraig Naofa, Avoca, Co Wicklow

Mary Cahill **Date: February 22**

Mary Cahill

Principal , BoM, Scoil N. Phádraig Naofa, Avoca, Co Wicklow

16/2/22