



Roxboro National School Code of Behaviour

Our framework for positive behaviour is based on our Mission Statement, which reads:

Roxboro N.S. is a co-educational, Catholic primary school which strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure environment where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral, emotional and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and nurtured.

We strive to create positive circumstances for pupils and adults to achieve their full potential and to develop the capacity to face life with confidence and to be respectful of others and the world.

In Roxboro N.S. we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school. We work to "RAISE THE PRAISE & MINIMISE THE CRITICISE"

The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school and is strongly committed to its successful implementation. Within the school, the overall day-to-day responsibility for behaviour rests with the principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.

Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for positive behaviour and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school.

Aims of the code

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- 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
- To foster an atmosphere of courtesy towards others
- To facilitate the education and development of every child
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption
- To promote respect for the property of others
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the availability of this policy and an ethos of open communication
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy
- To encourage the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community, as well as caring for the school and its environment

Responsibility of Adults

Our policy is based on the principles of caring, firmness, respect, tolerance, compassion and courtesy. If our school is to achieve a happy and secure environment where children can develop and learn to their full potential, a positive, friendly, caring and encouraging atmosphere will provide a framework. This will promote constructive behaviour and discourage unacceptable behaviour which may be dangerous to oneself or others, or which may be disruptive or anti-social.

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.

As adults we should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations
- Promote positive behaviour, 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. However, for children who may present with behavioural difficulties arising from their needs, all staff, professionals and parents/guardians will liaise regularly to develop behavioural targets for such children
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all
- To discourage physical aggression and encourage kindness
- The SPHE curriculum also supports our code of behaviour. This curriculum helps children to develop communication and problem solving skills while fostering self esteem

Role of Board of Management

- The Board of Management of Roxboro N.S. has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Code of Behaviour is prepared and revised in line with current legislation
- The Board will be informed by the principal of any changes and revisions which may need to be addressed
- The Board of Management has particular responsibility for the ethos of the school and overall responsibility for policies. The Board will play an active role in exploring the kind of relationships and behaviours that will reflect the school's responsibilities and ethos
- The Board will ensure that members of the school community have the opportunity to be involved in work and revisions of this code. It will formally record the adoption of the Code of Behaviour, the commencement date and decisions about when the code will be reviewed
- The Board of Management will also deal with serious breaches of the code by meeting with all parties concerned. A number of strategies may be developed arising from such meetings and these may include suspension and/or expulsion. The Board gives permission to the principal to suspend a pupil for no more than 3 days, after which formal procedures will be adopted.

Role of Parents/Guardians

- Positive relationships are built from the start with parents/guardians and they are encouraged to take an active role in the development of their child. Teachers work in collaboration with parents/guardians to develop any specific behaviour plans needed for their child.
- Parents/Guardians are given a copy of the Code of Behaviour with their application for enrolment. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to share information about anything that may affect their child's behaviour in school
- Parents/Guardians are notified early if there is a concern about their child's behaviour, so that ways of helping the pupils can be discussed and agreed.

Role of Students

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- Avoid any behaviour in class that disrupts learning.
- Show respect for all members of the school community, i.e. (Staff, parents, fellow pupils and

- any visitors to the school).
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow school and class rules including during remote learning.
- Speak to a teacher if they feel anything is wrong.

School Rules for all School Related Activities

1. We show respect for self and others
2. We show respect for our own property and the property of others
3. We show respect for other students and their learning
4. We are kind and willing to help others
5. We follow instructions from staff immediately
6. We walk quietly in the school building
7. We show courtesy and good manners
8. We try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
9. We do our best in class
10. We take responsibility for our own work
11. We wear the appropriate uniform
12. We follow our Healthy Eating Policy

These can be summed up as 6 Golden Rules:

1. We listen. We don't interrupt.
2. We are gentle. We don't hurt others.
3. We are honest. We tell the truth.
4. We are kind.
5. We work hard. We don't waste time.
6. We look after property. We don't damage things.

These 6 "Golden Rules" will be the main ones used for infant classes. School Rules 1-12 above will be put in the homework diaries for First to Sixth classes, to be signed by the children each year. Rules apply during school-time and during all school related activities.

Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children, based closely on the "Golden Rules". Class rules will be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Where possible they emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. 'Walk' and not, 'Don't run'). 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/guardians will be contacted at an early stage.

Incentives/Reward

Part of the vision of Roxboro N.S. is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and, similarly, that children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Children of all abilities and talents will be encouraged, praised and listened to 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 work.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal
- A visit to another member of staff or to the principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class

- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A Class Dojo reward point
- A mention to parent/guardian, written or verbal communication
- ‘Bualadh Bos’ in class or special mention at assembly.
- Individual class reward systems

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 supervising teacher at break-times. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour parents/guardians 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 UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

General misbehaviour in class

Continuously talking, disruption of class work, shouting answers/comments out of turn, disrespect, distracting others, out of seat without permission, ignoring teacher instructions, ignoring class rules.

General misbehaviour in the playground

Fighting, kicking, climbing, rough play, foul language, name-calling, entering the school building during break times without permission, entering prohibited areas of the playground, ignoring teacher instructions.

Serious misbehaviour

Bullying, truancy, stealing, aggressive/threatening or violent behaviour towards another pupil or member of staff, defiant behaviour towards a teacher, leaving school grounds without permission.

Gross misbehaviour

Persistent and deliberate defiance, continuing to fight when asked to stop, deliberate damage to school property, breaking the law, continued bullying.

Bullying is repeated aggression – physical, verbal or emotional - conducted by an individual or group against another or others.

PHYSICAL: includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping, etc.

VERBAL: name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates.

EMOTIONAL: threats or persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Threats to extort money or possessions. Cyber bullying.

The school takes particular care to intervene early in responding to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner. Issues in relation to bullying are explored continually during SPHE lessons and using Circle Time, Drama etc.

*Should a parent/guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed with a teacher, all staff members are more than willing to facilitate a meeting, made through the proper channels i.e. a phone call to the office, or a note to the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties. **The first person to be informed should be the class teacher.** The Principal may become involved if the situation is not resolved.*

This arrangement ensures that all concerns are dealt with in a dignified, meaningful manner, without infringing on valuable teaching time.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying. Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same manner as breaches of discipline.

In the case where a parent/guardian reports a bullying incident, the school reserves the right to inform the relevant parties of the identity of the person making the complaint, when this is deemed necessary.

Our school Anti-Bullying Policy deals with these matters in greater detail.

Sanctions

For any incidents of misbehaviour the school will ensure that fair procedures of investigation will be adhered to. The two essential parts of a fair procedure are the right to be heard and the right to impartiality, i.e. the absence of bias.

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in the Code of Behaviour
- signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
- keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The list is by no means exhaustive and steps may not always be taken in order. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the circumstances involved. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and, if necessary, to help the pupil devise strategies for this.

1. Reasoning with pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
3. Pupil apologises to the injured party
4. Temporary separation from peers
5. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened
6. Loss of privileges
7. Detention during break
8. Communication with parents/guardians
9. Referral to principal
10. Principal communicating with parents/guardians
11. 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)

Sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

When an incident of inappropriate behaviour occurs, the following procedure is followed:

Step 1

The class teacher/supervising teacher deals with the incident using the following procedure:

- The teacher explains to the child why his/her behaviour is unacceptable.
- The child's seating arrangement may be changed and the child may be temporarily separated from the class group.
- A note/comment may be written in the child's homework notebook to be signed by parents/guardians.
- A pupil may be given a written assignment relating to his/her inappropriate behaviour to be signed by parent/guardians.
- If a pupil's behaviour is a source of disruption or danger to him/her or others, he/she may be removed from the activity in which he/she is involved.
- A pupil may be referred to the Principal.
- If a child damages, loses or steals school property, recompense is expected to be made by the pupil/parents/guardians for same.

- The behaviour incident will be recorded by the teacher if he/she feels that it is significantly serious or if it is part of ongoing inappropriate behaviour.

If the incident occurs in the yard, the child will be corrected by the supervising teacher and separated from the other children if necessary. All incidents will be recorded by the supervising teacher in an incident report book. The class teacher will be made aware of the incident.

Step 2

If the sanctions at Step 1 fail to resolve the problem or if the teacher feels that the incident warrants it, he/she will request the parents/guardians of the child to meet with him/her to discuss the child's behaviour. The teacher will have a written record of the behaviour incident(s) to show the parents/guardians. The teacher will inform the principal of the behaviour issue and that a meeting with the parents/guardians is taking place. The class teacher will write a report documenting the issues discussed at the meeting with the child's parents/guardians. This report will be stored on the child's pupil file. If the parents/guardians refuse to meet with the class teacher the principal will be informed and Step 3 of the process will be implemented. The class teacher will record this on the pupil file.

Step 3

If the child continues to behave inappropriately or in the case of serious misbehaviour, the teacher and principal will meet the parents/guardians to inform them that their child's behaviour at school is inappropriate and unacceptable. The class teacher, principal and parents/guardians will meet regularly along with the child to discuss progress or otherwise in their behaviour. Details of this meeting will be documented and stored in the child's file.

Step 4

If the procedures followed in Steps 1 to 3 have proved unsuccessful and the child continues to behave in an inappropriate and unacceptable manner the principal teacher may decide to suspend the child. The procedures for suspension and expulsion are outlined below:

PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Suspension and expulsion are extremely grave sanctions, and we regard them very much as a matter of last resort. However, under the terms of Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000, we outline below the procedure to be followed.

1. Repeated incidents of serious misbehaviour or an incident of gross misbehaviour may cause the Principal to recommend to the Board of Management that a child be suspended from school for a period of up to 3 days. If the Board decide to confirm the suspension, the parents of the child will be informed in writing of the reason(s) for their child's suspension. If this initial suspension fails to address the situation, a further period of suspension may be necessary.
2. If suspension does not resolve the issue, the Board may consider permanent exclusion (expulsion). Expulsion will only be carried out with the consent of the School Patron.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. The procedures are as follows:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the principal.

3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberations and action following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision.

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act 1998, Section 29). An appeal may also be brought by TUSLA on behalf of a student.

Parents have the right to appeal a suspension to the Board of Management and to put the child's side of the story.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parents/guardians 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.

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/guardians. The class teacher, learning support/resource teacher, Special Needs Assistants and/or principal 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 be invaluable.

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.

Physical Intervention and Restraint

In the following situations staff must judge whether or not physical intervention would be reasonable or appropriate when dealing with inappropriate pupil behaviour:

- Risk to the safety of staff, pupils or visitors.
- Where there is a risk of serious damage to property.
- Staff will view physical intervention or restraint of pupils as a last resort to maintaining a safe environment.
- If pupils are behaving disruptively or anti-socially, every effort will be made to manage behaviour positively to prevent a deterioration of the situation.
- Staff intervening with children will seek assistance from other members of staff at as early a stage as possible since single-handed intervention increases the risks of injury to both parties and does not provide a witness.
- Staff will be aware of the need to tell the pupil being restrained, in a calm and gentle manner that the reason for the intervention is to keep the pupil and others safe. Staff will explain that as soon as the pupil calms down, he/she will be released.
- Staff should take care that their actions should in no way be capable of being interpreted by the pupil as aggression.

Communicating with Parents/Guardians

Communicating with parents/guardians is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children's behaviour. Parents/Guardians 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. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents/guardians have been established and are reviewed regularly. Parents/Guardians 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.

The following methods of communication are to be used within the school:

- Informal/formal parent/teacher
- Through children's homework journal/ folder
- Written communication from school to home and from home to school
- Newsletters/school web-site/e-mails/Class Dojo
- Text service.

This Code is given to all parents/guardians after an offer of enrolment has been accepted, as part of the registration process.

Review

The Code is subject to review every three years. This, however, may be brought forward if any aspect needs review. The highlighting of any such aspect is the responsibility of all parties – parents/guardians, staff, pupils, B.O.M. It should be brought to the attention of the principal.

Ratification

This Code was provided to the Parents' Association for review in September 2020.

This reviewed Code was ratified at a meeting of the Board of Management in Term 1 2020/2021.