



# Code of Behaviour.

## Introductory Statement:

This policy was formulated by a sub-committee consisting of representatives from the teaching staff, the parent body and the Board of Management. Throughout the document the term Chairperson refers to the Chairperson of Caragh School. The term Principal refers to the Principal of Caragh School.

This policy is prepared in accordance with Guidelines for Schools on Developing a Code of Behaviour, the Education Welfare Act 2000 and the Education Act 1998. The policy is to be read and understood in conjunction with other relevant school policies especially anti-bullying, homework, healthy eating, mobile phones, uniform and school safety statement.

## Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School.

This code of behaviour will assist our school in its aim to promote learning in a safe and caring environment. It is based on the principles of fairness, co-operation, trust and respect.

### Aims:

- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline
- To ensure that behaviour is managed in a consistent manner
- To create a safe environment where learning can take place
- To inform the whole school and to promote home/school links;
- To provide support for the staff
- Having taken into account the differences that exist, these are the rules that we consider to be necessary, fair and reasonable.
- The staff at Caragh School are aware of the factors that affect behaviour. These factors include external and interpersonal factors (such as parent and family patterns and relationships, peer groups/friends and neighbourhood and community factors) and within-person factors (including age and stage of development, personality and temperament, physical and medical characteristics and ability to learn) The staff also believe that students behaviour can change and know what they can do to make this more likely.

## Guidelines:

### Pupils with Special Educational/Emotional Needs

There is an expectation that pupils with special needs will adhere, to the best of their ability, to the school rules. Their role in the schools' Code of Behaviour will be discussed at the home/school meetings between parents, class teachers and the special education team and any necessary modifications to their programme of support will be agreed.

### Strategies to promote positive behaviour and enhance pupils' self-esteem

Caragh NS recognizes the effectiveness of rewarding good work/manners as a means to promoting good behaviour. Therefore, various strategies will be used to promote good behaviour and ultimately enhance pupils' self-esteem. While, in general, class teachers will adapt various strategies to suit their pupils, suggested rewards/strategies could include the following:

- Certificates/Commendations
- Golden Time
- Stickers/Tokens
- Homework Pass
- Edible treats (healthy options where possible)
- Affirmation from other teachers and the Principal
- On the spot praise

Additionally, programmes such as Circle Time, Stay Safe, Talkabout, Working Together Programme etc. will be taught and implemented, as necessary, in order to model positive behaviour for the pupils and to enhance their self-worth.

We also recognise the need to introduce and remind the children, of the school rules, in a way that is age and ability appropriate. Therefore, there will be regular 'Rules Mornings' and class-level assemblies.

Class Teachers will involve their pupils in drawing up rules for their own particular class. These rules will be taught in a manner which is age appropriate to the class-level and will be on display in the class room.

### Recording of Behaviours

- Recording in yard book
- Note home to parents - copy of this note to be kept in pupil's own file
- Teachers own class notebook (see above).
- Recording of complaints of bullying in line with Anti-Bullying policies. Recorded on Incident Recording Template.
- School template for recording serious, gross and ongoing incidents including acts of bullying.

We acknowledge the need to present a balanced record of a pupils' behaviour. Therefore, we strive to record both good and poor behaviour insofar as possible. Incidental good and poor behaviour is recorded in teachers own class notebook.

The recording of serious, gross and ongoing misbehaviours is vital. Ongoing, serious and gross incidents of misbehaviour will be recorded by a teacher in a standardised record system. (Copy attached) The system will record incidents, interventions, and contacts with parents, any resulting meetings and sanctions imposed.

- These records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (amendment) Act 2003. The eight rules of data protection will be on the back of incident recording sheets.

It should be noted that these lists consist of examples only - They are not meant to be a definitive list of misdemeanours and procedural steps. The nature and consistency of the behaviour will determine the strategy taken to deal with it. Misdemeanours that occur on school-organised and supervised trips will be treated under the terms of this Code of Discipline. However, incidents that occur before/after school and outside the school boundary (i.e. on the bus home) are outside the remit of this code except in exceptional cases, as dictated by legislation.

## **School Rules:**

1. Golden Rules
2. Safety: In line with school Safety Statement
3. Yard Rules: as apply to play-times
4. Caring for myself:.....be prepared.....be respectful of all others
5. Caring for others:.....be courteous....be respectful of all others
6. Bullying approaches in line with the school anti-bullying policy.
7. School timetables and rotas.
8. Homework: Homework should be in line with Caragh NS Homework Policy.
9. Uniform: in line with school dress code.
10. Amendments on wearing of jewellery, make-up and uniform as added on Feb 16<sup>th</sup> 2011.
11. Food
  - Lunch and breaks to be kept in line with Caragh NS Healthy Eating Policy.
  - All nuts and nut containing products are forbidden.
  - Chewing gum is forbidden.
  - In keeping with the Green Schools Ethos, lunches should be wrapped in environmentally friendly packaging and all packaging is to be brought home for disposal.

## **General Guidelines for Behaviour:**

### General Procedure to deal with breaches of the Code of Behaviour:

- Verbal reprimand (i.e. speak to the child; remind him/her of rule which is being broken; reason with him/her)
- Removal from the group (in class - i.e. move child to another seat) but not outside classroom, except in gross misdemeanour incidents.
- Withdrawal of privileges (i.e. child not allowed to collect the copies)
- Refer to Pastoral Care Teacher (i.e. a fresh approach from a familiar teacher)
- Pastoral Care Teacher and Class Teacher work together to encourage the pupil to improve their behaviour
- Inform Principal (i.e. inform Principal informally that the child is exhibiting challenging behaviour)
- Refer pupil to Principal/Deputy Principal
- Pupil removed to a safe place in instances of Gross Misbehaviour.
- Inform Parents
- Meeting between Parents and Class Teacher
- Meeting between Parents, Class Teacher and Pastoral Care Teacher.
- Meeting between Principal and Parent - (The Class Teacher may also be included. However, in some cases there may be some sensitive issues which the parent may only wish to disclose to the Principal).
- Formal report to the Board of Management.
- A behaviour modification plan may be used in certain circumstances as appropriate

It should also be noted that the Principal/Deputy Principal may consider it appropriate to advise the parent(s)/guardian that a specialist/professional assessment of the pupil may be advisable in certain cases of unacceptable behaviour. The onus will be on the parent(s)/guardian to locate this professional to assess their child.

### **A. Examples of minor misdemeanours include:**

- Isolated acts of unkindness to any member of the school community, being discourteous, being unmannerly
- Irregular instances of speaking out of turn, interrupting class work, interrupting others and being inattentive
- Isolated instances of being unable to abide by accepted conventions due to special educational/behavioural needs.
- Isolated acts which preventing others from learning.

### Sanctions to deal with minor misdemeanours include:

- Reasoning with pupil
- Verbal reprimand
- Noting instance in yard book if incident happened during break time.

### **B. Examples of serious misdemeanours:**

- Regular acts of unkindness to any member of the school community
- Regular instances of speaking out of turn, interrupting others and being inattentive
- Regularly preventing others from learning
- Being unwilling to abide by accepted conventions
- Defacing or destroying other peoples' belongings or school property
- Directing abusive language at any members of the school community
- Acting aggressively, threateningly or with violence towards members of the school community

- Deliberately refusing to co-operate with instructions and advice.  
Sanctions to deal with serious misdemeanours include:
- Note home to be signed by parent(s)/guardian
- Meeting between parent(s) and the class teacher
- Meeting between parent(s), class teacher and Principal/Deputy Principal
- In the event that efforts by the school to address serious misbehaviours suspension may be considered.

**C** Examples of gross misdemeanours include:

- Deliberately damaging school/other people's property
- Deliberately acting aggressively and violently towards other members of the school community
- Leaving the school campus without permission

Sanctions to deal with gross misdemeanours include:

- Immediate contact between Principal/Deputy Principal and parent(s)/guardians to discuss behaviour
- Removal of pupil to Principal's Office.

Gross misdemeanour, can be dealt with as follows:

- Chairperson and Principal to sanction immediate suspension pending discussion with parents. 0-3 days 4-10 days - plus longer.
- The Chairperson and Principal may exclude a pupil/pupils from the School for a maximum of three school days.
- The Board of Management may exclude a pupil/pupils for a further period up to a maximum of 10 school days to allow for consultation with pupils, parents or guardians.
- The Board may authorise a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed.
- No pupils shall be struck off the register for breaches of discipline without the prior consent of the Patron and advising the Educational Welfare Officer.

PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION

The Board of Management and Staff of Caragh National School will follow the procedures for suspension and expulsion outlined in the Guidelines for School on Developing a code of Behaviour (Chapter 10 - 12).

Fair procedures (i.e. the right to be heard and the right to impartiality) will be applied at all times. Accordingly, pupils and their parents will be fully informed about an allegation and the processes that will be used to investigate and decide the matter and they will be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation before a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed. In exceptional circumstances, the Principal/Board may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary when the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff of the school, or any other person (p73). The Board of Management will also follow the factors to consider before suspending a student (p72) and the factors to consider before proposing to expel a student (p82)

In relation to suspension

- Communication to parents regarding the suspension of a pupil or the possibility of suspension will be in writing and copies of all correspondence will be retained. In some circumstances it may be necessary to contact parents by phone.
- The parent/guardians and the pupil will be invited to meet with the Principal and /or Board of Management to discuss the proposed suspension.
- The Board of Management has delegated responsibility for suspension to the Principal in the event that immediate suspension of a pupil is warranted (Guidelines p73). The parents/guardians and child will be invited to discuss the matter with the Principal and the procedures governing suspension will be applied.
- A written statement of the terms and date of the termination of a suspension will be given to parents/guardians. A suspension will not be for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is necessary in order to achieve a particular objection. The letter will confirm:
  - The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
  - The reasons for the suspension.
  - Any programme of study to be followed
  - The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitment to be entered into the student and the parents (for example, the pupil and parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)
  - The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management the right to appeal to the Secretary general of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 Section 29).
- The suspension will be recorded on the NRW 'Student Absence Report form' (when applicable).
- When a period of suspension ends, the pupil will be re-admitted formally to the class by the principal.
- Where a satisfactory resolution of a problem is achieved, a pupil may be re-admitted to school within a suspension period at the discretion of the Principal and/or the chairperson of the Board of Management.
- If a pupil continues to misbehave he may be suspended for a major fixed period (up to ten days) to allow for consultation with both the pupil and the pupil's parents/guardians to address the issues
- As outlined above, parents/guardians and pupil will be given the opportunity to discuss the issues with the Principal/Board of Management.
- The Education Welfare officer will be informed when a student has been suspended for six days or more cumulatively.
- Section 29 Appeal - when the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days the parents may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act and will be given information about how to appeal.

PROCEDURES FOR EXPULSION - The procedures outlined on pages 83 - 86 of the guidelines will be followed (see steps 1 - 6 below):

- Subsequent to the above suspension procedures and meetings with parents/guardians, if serious/gross incidents of misbehaviour continue, the pupil will be recommended for permanent expulsion by the Board of Management. In exceptional circumstances, pupils may be expelled for a first offence - see p. 81. Automatic expulsion will apply in the event that (particular named offence)

- Step 1 - A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal
- Step 2 - A recommendation to the board of Management
- Step 3 - Consideration by the Board of Management of the principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing
- Step 4 - Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing
- Step 5 - Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare officer
- Step 6 Confirmation of the decision to expel

- A record will be kept in the school of all instances of serious misbehaviour by pupils.
- Breaches of behaviour will be recorded in writing by the class teacher and if necessary by the Principal
- Other relevant school policies (eg. Health & Safety) may be referred to
- The school's Anti Bullying policy is attached to this policy.

### **Absences from school**

The following procedures are to be used in the case of absences from school are concerned. The Education Welfare Act 2000 section 23(2) (e) and section 18 must be fulfilled. Therefore parents are requested to:

- Inform the school in writing about absences.
- When possible this should be prior to absence.
- In case of short illness school should be informed, in writing, on return to school. Contact by telephone can be made on first morning.
- In cases of longer absence due to illness school should be informed, in writing, by third day and by telephone on first day. Both are required.
- Notes should be sent to the class teacher.
- Absence notes will be retained by the class teacher.
- In the case of notifiable illness a doctor's certificate is required stating a return to school date. Pupils may not return to school prior to stated date.

### **Procedure for the Resolution of Complaints:**

Complaints are taken under guidelines laid down in agreement between CPSMA and INTO. Guidelines available in school or on internet.

### **Success Criteria:**

- Positive feedback from the whole school community
- Observations of behaviour in the class, yard, toilets and corridors.
- School atmosphere
- The number of recordings in the yard book

### **Roles and Responsibility:**

#### A. Principal, Deputy Principal and Staff

- To co-ordinate, monitor and the implementation of the policy and in partnership with teachers.
- To model positive behaviour
- To manage the classroom in such a way that children are positively engaged.
- To involve the pupils in drawing up rules for class-room.
- To teach the school rules in a way that is appropriate to each class level.
- To display rules in classroom.

#### B. Ancillary Staff operating under the guidance of the Principal and Deputy Principal.

- To model positive behaviour
- To co-operate with principal teachers in the implementation of the code.

#### C. Parents/Guardians

- To encourage their children to keep the school rules
- To co-operate with the school in the implementation of this and other policies.
- To model positive behaviour

**Implementation Date:** From 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2009 onwards.

**Timetable for Review:** Review at end of 2009 - 2010 school year and each year thereafter.

### **Ratification and Communication:**

- Ratified by the Board of Management
- Circulated to members of Parents' Council
- Circulated to teaching staff, SNAs and ancillary staff
- Circulated to all parents/guardians via internet and CNS Newsletter
- Published on school website.
- Class meetings with parents at beginning of school year.
- General meetings of parents.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management by: .....Date.....

## ADDENDA TO CODE OF BEHAVIOUR.

FEBRUARY 2011.

Rule: Regarding **jewellery and make-up**. Only studded earrings and a watch (boys and girls). No rings, bangles. Chains and necklaces must be worn inside clothing. No make-up (Nail varnish acceptable).

### Approach for dealing with **make-up** breaches

First breach: Remind child of rule and ask them to remove make up at home when they go home.

Second breach: Send a reminder home, in set format note, to parents informing them of rule and that their child has breached it.

Third breach: Teacher contacts parents in person and verbally reminds them of the requirements of the Code of Behaviour.

### Approach to dealing with breaches of **Jewellery Code**

First breach: Ask child to remove the jewellery and ask them to either put it in a safe place in their bag (ie provide zip-lock bag) or on the teachers desk

Second breach: Ask child to complete step 1 above and then send a reminder home, in set format note, to parents informing them of rule and that their child has breached it.

Third breach: Teacher contacts parents in person and verbally reminds them of the requirements the Code of Behaviour.

### ***Clothing and footwear:***

**C. Uniform**

- Infants-Second Class: Tracksuit everyday
- Second Class -Sixth Class: Full school uniform to be worn except on PE/Swimming/Activity days. When skirts are worn they must be worn to knee-length.

**If rule is broken:**

1st offence: Remind child of rule and ask them to wear the appropriate clothes on the appropriate days. Inform child that if this should happen again, a note will be sent home.

2nd offence: Note home, in set format, informing the parents of the event and reminding them of the requirements of the Code of Behaviour.

3rd offence: Contact parents in person to discuss this ongoing issue.

**All pupils:** Only non-marking runners to be worn in the GP Room. If child not wearing the appropriate sports equipment (ie tracksuit and non-marking runners), they cannot take part in the lesson.

***Differentiation in Code Application:***

Breaches of the Code of Behaviour by pupils with documented special needs will be managed on a case by case basis, taking their documented individual needs and requirements and the advice of the relevant professionals, into consideration. A behaviour plan may be included in the pupil's IEP"

Breaches of the Code of Behaviour by pupils with suspected/perceived special needs will be recorded and managed on a case by case basis, taking individual circumstances into consideration. Where appropriate, these records of behaviour will inform a programme of support"

All aspects of above apply to male and female pupils.

Signed:.....Chairperson of BOM

Dated :.....

