DROMAHANE NATIONAL SCHOOL

Draft Code of Behaviour

Circular 20/90 of the Department of Education requests Boards of Management to draw up a ‘Code of Behaviour’ under their jurisdiction. The Board has ultimate responsibility for discipline in the school and has a duty to see that a fair code applies therein.

**Aims**.

1. In devising the code, consideration has to be given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. The aim is to create an ordered and orderly environment in which pupils can, through developing self-discipline, feel secure and make progress in all aspects of their development.
2. Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school.

**Principles**.

1. The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to tolerate these differences.
2. 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, parents and pupils.
3. Every effort will be made to ensure that the ‘Code of Behaviour’ is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner.

**School Rules**.

**Safety**: **For your own safety and for the safety of others**.

* + Children should be careful coming to and going from school.
  + Children should always walk while in the school building or moving between school buildings.
  + Bring a note of explanation following absences.
  + Children should never leave the school without the permission of the Principal or teachers on yard duty on the day.
  + Children must not enter the school grounds before 9.10a.m and must leave directly after school.
  + Children must not play in the grounds after school except when supervised by a teacher.
  + Children must not enter the school grounds at weekends.
  + At the end of school breaks, children must cease play and go to their room immediately or line up in a designated area.
  + Children must be signed out when leaving early.
  + Children are not encouraged to go home for lunch.

**Caring for Myself**.

1. Children should respect themselves and their property, always keeping their school bag, books and copies in good order.
2. Children should always be in school before 9.20a.m but should not be on the school grounds before 9.10am.
3. Children should show respect for their school and be proud to wear the complete school uniform every day and school tracksuit on designated days.
4. Children should always be aware of their personal cleanliness.
5. Children should always bring a sensible, nutritional lunch to school. Crisps, minerals, sweets or chewing gum are not permitted.
6. Children should always do their best in school by listening carefully, working as hard as they can and by completing their homework.

**Caring for Others**.

1. Children should be kind and respectful to teachers and fellow pupils by being mannerly and polite in class.
2. Children should behave well in class, so that their fellow pupils and they themselves can learn.
3. Children should always keep their school clean by bringing unfinished food and drink cartons, wrappers etc. home. Children should show respect for the property of their fellow students, the school buildings and grounds.
4. Children should be truthful and honest at all times.

**Bullying**.

Children should never bully others. They should never allow others to bully them and if it happens they should tell their parents and their teachers. Bullying is always unacceptable.

***Dromahane National School is a ‘BULLY FREE’ zone!***

**Homework**.

It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis. Parents are strongly advised to take an active interest in their child’s homework and to sign the homework journal each night (ensuring that it is done). If there is a particular reason

for homework not being done, teacher should be informed by way of a note in the homework journal.

**Strategies**.

**Praise may be given by means of any one of the following**:

* + A quite word or gesture to show approval.
  + A comment in a pupil’s exercise book.
  + A visit to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation.
  + A word of praise in front of a class or group.
  + Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
  + A mention to parent through written or verbal communication.
  + Various class/individual reward systems
  + Homework pass.

**Disapproval of unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with as follows**:

(The nature of the behaviour will determine the strategy)

* + Reasoning with pupils
  + Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
  + Prescribing extra work
  + Communication with parents
  + Temporary separation from peers and/or loss of privileges
  + Referral to Principal / deputy principal
  + Note to parents
  + Take note of unacceptable behaviour
  + Consultation with parents
  + Referral to Board of Management
  + Suspension / expulsion (in accordance with Section 23 of the Educational Welfare Act 2000)

**Procedures**:

The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross will be judged by the teachers and / or Principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity / frequency of such misdemeanours, as follows:

**Examples of minor misdemeanours**:

Interrupting class work / arriving late for school / running in school building / leaving litter around school / not wearing correct uniform / being discourteous / unmannerly / not completing homework without good reason / not having homework signed by a parent / endangering self / fellow pupils in the schoolyard at the break time.

**Examples of steps to be taken by teachers when dealing with minor misdemeanours:**

Verbal reprimand / reasoning with pupils

Noting instances of misbehaviour

**Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with regular occurrences of minor misdemeanours**

**Phase 1 (within the classroom)**

Extra written work to be signed by parent

Note in homework journal to be signed by parents

Temporary separation from peers

Sending to another teacher

Note to parents concerning further misbehaviour

**Phase 2**

Send to Principal / Deputy Principal

Class teacher meets with one / both parents

Principal / Deputy Principal meets one / both parents

Chairperson of Board of Management informed

**Examples of Serious Misdemeanours**.

Constantly disruptive in class / telling lies / stealing / damaging other pupil’s property / bullying / back answering a teacher / frequenting school premises after school hours without appropriate permission / leaving school premises during school without appropriate permission / not working to full potential / using unacceptable language

**Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with serious misdemeanours**:

Send to Principal/Deputy Principal

Principal meets with one / both parents

Chairperson of Board of Management informed

**Examples of Gross Misdemeanours**

Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher / assistant / pupil

Deliberately damaging school property

Bringing weapons to school

Deliberately injuring a fellow pupil

Sexual assault

Having illegal drugs in their possession

Behaviour that is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process

**Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with gross misdemeanours**

1. Chairperson / Principal to sanction immediate suspension pending discussion with parents
2. Expulsion will be considered in an extreme case in accordance with Rule 130

**It should be noted that these lists consist of examples only.**

**It is not meant to be a totally comprehensive list of misdemeanours and procedural steps.**

**This code will be reviewed annually.**

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

**The Board of Management encourages meaningful communication between parents and teachers in resolving difficulties by first approaching the class teacher and then the Principal and ultimately the Board of Management.**

**Procedure for Suspension**

This procedure is used in the case of gross misbehaviour and /or health & safety grounds:

1. If there is a single incident of gross misbehaviour the Principal requests a meeting with the parents. If considered warranted the Principal reserves the right to suspend the pupil for 3 days initially. This power of suspension is delegated to the Principal by the school Board of Management.
2. In exceptional circumstances the Principal may consider immediate suspension. This will occur if there is a serious threat to the safety of any pupil/pupils, a staff member or any other person. Again this power of suspension is to be delegated to the Principal by the Board of Management.
3. In certain circumstances the Principal, with the approval of their Chairperson of the BoM, may suspend a pupil for 5 school days
4. A meeting of the BoM may authorise further suspension up to a maximum of 10 days. Suspension will be in accordance with Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

**Appeal**

Parents of a pupil who has been suspended for 20 school days or more are entitled under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 to appeal such a suspension.

# Procedures for Expulsion

1. Detailed investigation by Principal
2. Recommendation by Principal to BoM
3. BoM considers Principals recommendation and holds hearing
4. BoM decides if expulsion is appropriate. If BoM recommends expulsion, the BoM will propose a date which will allow a 20-day cooling off period
5. Education Welfare Officer is informed of proposal to expel pupil and effective date of that proposal
6. Parents of the pupil are informed of rights to invoke a Section 29 appeal under the Education Act 1998
7. Education Welfare Officer arranges consultations
8. Confirmation of decision

# Automatic Expulsion

BoM may sanction automatic expulsion for certain prescribed behaviours:

1. Sexual Assault
2. Possession of illegal drugs
3. Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
4. Actual violence or physical assault
5. Serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff.

# Conclusion

The essence of our code of behaviour is valuing people and encouraging them to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and to develop self discipline.

**In all matters regarding conduct, suspension and/or expulsion the Board of Management, Principal and staff shall be guided by the NEWB Publication ‘*Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools’.* A copy of this publication is available for viewing in the school office.**