



St. Finbarr's NS

Code of Behaviour

Introduction

In September 2023, the school began the process of updating its Code of Behaviour. Upon the retirement of the previous principal, the Board of Management at the time decided to survey the staff to ascertain what issues needed to be addressed in the school as a matter of priority. Behaviour in the school was raised as one of those issues. The new principal decided to implement the 'Incredible Years' programme as a way of preempting poor behaviour in class and around the school. Moreover, for disadvantaged students who come from difficult backgrounds, the programme directly targets those children. At the core of 'Incredible Years' is establishing positive relationships with children and looking beyond their actions to understand the underlying reasons for their behaviour. Currently, the school has six teachers trained in the programme with a view to training two more each year. Therefore, the school decided to update its Code of Behaviour in consultation with pupils, parents and staff.

The staff set about writing a new set of school rules which reflected the changing vision for St. Finbarr's. Coupled with this vision, the core values of Incredible Years became the framework for the new behaviour policy. Following dialogue with staff and pupils, an updated set of class rules and staged responses was prepared and presented to the staff. Subsequently, the Code of Behaviour was drafted and sent out for consideration to the school community.

In June 2023, the staff had a consultation meeting on what is working well, why this is working and how we can improve things. The staff received practical tips and advice to help the school safeguard students/staff and to empower the school to face challenging scenarios with confidence. This policy should be read in conjunction with the policies on Behaviours of Concern Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Yard Supervision and Procedures Policy.

Aims

The aims of the Code of Behaviour of St. Finbarr's NS are:

- To provide guidance for pupils, staff and parents on behavioural expectations.
- To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
- To develop pupils' self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.

- Prevent bullying behaviours in the school.
- To foster caring attitudes toward one another and toward the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.
- To empower children to reconsider their actions and how such actions can impact others.

1. Rationale

The St. Finbarr's NS Code of Behaviour was written in accordance with Circular 20/90 of the Department of Education and Skills on school discipline, the Education and Welfare Act (2000), the Equal Status Act of 2004 and Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (NEWB, 2008).

2. Children's Rights

Children have the right to:

- A safe, secure and comfortable environment in which to learn and play.
- Be listened to, express opinions and question.
- Be respected by all members of the school community.
- Grow and be valued as individuals.
- Develop intellectually, emotionally and physically with an understanding of special needs and disability.
- Be included in all aspects of school life.
- Receive feedback and clear information regarding topics and concerns affecting their school life (Including information on the Code of Behaviour).

3. Staff Rights

All school staff, including SNAs, teachers, secretary and caretaker, have the right to:

- Educate/work in a safe and clean environment with minimal disruption.
- Be respected by all members of the school community.
- Support from professional services.
- Support from colleagues, senior management, principal and Board of Management.
- Information about ongoing training and professional development opportunities.
- Adequate resources appropriate to their duties.
- Support and co-operation from parents/guardians.
- Voice their concerns to management about the children's safety, behaviour and academic progress.
- Confidentiality

4. Parents/Guardians' Rights

Parents/Guardians have the right to:

- Be respected by all members of the school community.
- Information regarding the progress of their child or children.

- Feel welcome, to be listened to and to be able to voice their concerns.
- Access to the St. Finbarr's NS Code of Behaviour and all other school policies and procedures.
- Appeal to a higher authority, e.g. Board of Management, Department of Education.
- Confidentiality.

5. Staff Responsibilities

- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- Recognise and affirm good work using Class rewards systems, school assembly etc.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents where appropriate and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

6. Pupils' Responsibilities

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- 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.
- Work to the best of their ability and allow fellow pupils to do likewise.

7. Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
- Be courteous, respectful and polite in dealings with school staff and personnel.
- Refrain from posting or inflaming positions with comments on social media about the school.
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.

- Parents should not communicate with other parents' children, unless they have permission from the parents concerned.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect a child's progress/behaviour.
- Provide up-to-date contact information and current addresses for ease of communication with home.

8. General Guidelines

- Show respect, courtesy and co-operation towards all children, teachers, other staff and parents, in the classroom, the playground and on school outings.
- Show respect towards personal property, school property and the environment.
- Show respect for other people's personal space, i.e. no verbal or physical violence, aggression, or any form of bullying behaviour.
- Show respect for other people's feelings.
- Children should behave in an orderly fashion in the classroom, moving around the school, going to and from the playground, if travelling as part of a school trip or if representing the school at any event.
- Children should bring all books, copies and materials necessary to do their class work properly each day.
- Children should complete all assigned work (written and oral) both at school and at home.
- Children should listen to others and take turns to speak in class.
- Children must not behave in any way which endangers themselves or others and should always take care of their younger pupils.
- Children should not exclude others from games.
- Children must stay within the designated playground boundaries during break time. · Children must not leave school grounds without permission from the teaching staff. · Chewing gum is not allowed on the school premises, and children must follow the healthy eating policy.
- Children may not have mobile phones on school grounds unless the principal grants permission.
- Items which could be dangerous or might cause harm are not allowed at school.

9. Bullying

Bullying is repeated verbal, psychological or physical aggression by an individual or group against others. The most common forms of bullying are aggressive physical contact, name-calling, intimidation, extortion, isolation and taunting. Bullying will not be tolerated, and parents will always be expected to cooperate with the school in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Bí Cinealta Policy.

10. School Rules

School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If a school is to function efficiently, rules and regulations must be clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly.

Class Rules (*Junior Infants – 2nd Class*)

These rules are based on the ‘DINO rules-Show me Five’ for junior classes as set out in the Incredible Years Programme

1. Hands to self
2. Eyes on teacher
3. Inside Voice
4. Quiet hands up
5. Listening Ears

Class Rules (*3th – 6th Class*)

The rules from 3rd class to 6th class are broadly the same in each class as laid below.. Each class will have the 3 different levels on display in the classroom, and the children are expected to know that each level will be consistently adhered to.

1. Show respect for others
2. Listen to the teacher
3. Follow instructions
4. Quiet hand up to speak
5. Stay seated until the teacher says otherwise
6. Do your work and let others do theirs

The following table illustrates the steps to follow in the event of poor behaviour in the classroom and the school environment.

Level 1:	Type of Behaviour	Action By:	Sanctions	Teacher Role
<p>Level one means children who are misbehaving in the class, yard and other areas of the school. This also includes school trips. These types of misbehaviour are low-level incidents which can be dealt with by the teacher.</p> <p>A basic premise for encouraging positive behaviour in the class is the relationship between a teacher/SNA and the child. A positive relationship precedes discipline strategies. Each class needs to have well-defined rules, structured routines and clear consequences for misbehaviour.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking back/cheeky to adults. • Minor disruption in class, including humming, making noise, whistling etc. • Moving around the class. • Laughing and sneering at other children. • Purposely do not apply any effort to their work. • Interfering with other children's property. • Name-calling in the yard • General misbehaviour in the yard (swinging on the bars, mess fighting) • Excluding children from a game. • General misbehaviour in the line. • Running and shouting in the corridor. • General misbehaviour in places other than school i.e. breakfast club. 	<p>Teacher</p> <p>Learning support teacher</p> <p>Consult with parents</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use of 'Time Out' in the Junior classes. Some type of visual timer for children is essential because they don't understand the concept of time. 2. Follow through on sanctions. If a child misbehaves in PE, they will miss PE the following week. This is a logical consequence. 3. Removal of the child to another class in the case of ongoing misbehaviour. This sanction is to be used sparingly. 4. Ongoing repeated level 1 misbehaviour, parents need to be phoned by the teacher. Phone calls need to be made on the day the child has repeatedly misbehaved. Phone calls have to be recorded on Aladdin. 5. Inform the Principal that a phone call has been made to the parents/guardians. 6. Inform parents of potential further sanctions. 	<p>The class teacher is the front-line source of help for students. The classroom teacher and the SNA have a strong influence on a child's behaviour and can employ a number of strategies to minimise further interventions. Parents must be aware of their children's behaviour in class. The class teacher can also seek support from the Learning Support team in managing behaviour. The aim is to have positive and collaborative relationships with students and parents in order to address the child's educational, emotional and social needs.</p>

Level 2	Type of Behaviour	Action By:	Sanctions	Role
<p>Level two arises when all interventions put in place at level one have been exhausted. Teachers must ensure that all interventions at Level one have been attempted, including a phone call to parents. Level two is behaviour of a more serious nature that is targeted and purposely done to cause distraction in the class, yard, school premises and school-related activities. The children in the school must be aware of the difference between Level 1 and level 2. Level 2 involves parents being involved in their child's behaviour. They will be informed of their behaviour and updated at the end of the 'check-in'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeated misbehaviour that has escalated from Level One. Being disrespectful of all adults in the school. This includes purposely ignoring adults, being rude and evasive. Damaging property in the school, purposely defacing toilets and equipment. Using inappropriate language towards other children in the school. Personal comments about others in the school. Mess fighting on the yard, which escalates to serious fighting. <p>Making hurtful comments about other children during mandatory programmes like RSE/Stay Safe.</p>	<p>Teacher</p> <p>SNA</p> <p>Learning Support Teacher</p> <p>Deputy Principal</p> <p>Principal</p> <p>Outside agencies</p>	<p>The teacher will alert the type of misbehaviour to the Deputy Principal and Principal.</p> <p>The Principal will re-emphasise the expectations of the student in line with the code of behaviour.</p> <p>The Deputy Principal or Principal will inform parents that their child will engage with a 'check-in' system each day for one week.</p> <p>The child will 'check in' with Management each day twice a day at 11.00 and 2.00. A student must receive a tick for each day. Therefore, a student must receive 10 ticks for the whole week. If a student receives fewer than 8 ticks, the student has to stay in for a big break with a penalty sheet in the office.</p> <p>Parents will be informed of their child's progress and phoned on Friday of the 'check-in'.</p> <p>All incidents will be recorded on Aladdin</p>	<p>The Principal and Deputy Principal have the responsibility to ensure an orderly, secure and healthy learning environment in the school. As such, the Principal and Deputy Principal will support teachers and SNAs in promoting positive behavioural strategies in St. Finbarr's NS.</p>

Level 3	Type of Behaviour	Action By	Sanctions	Role
<p>Level 3 is an escalation from level 2.</p> <p>This is the most serious level of poor behaviour.</p> <p>Children and parents need to know how serious level 3 is and the consequences for children at this level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homophobic comments • Threatening behaviour towards staff and students • Physical behaviour towards staff and other students • Vaping • Phone usage, including (recording audio clips of staff, pictures of staff, videos of staff and any material deemed inappropriate by using a phone). This includes any software, like smart watches, that have the same function as phones. • Physical fighting on the yard • Persistent misbehaviour in the school. 	<p>Teacher</p> <p>Deputy Principal</p> <p>Principal</p> <p>BOM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate detention in the Principal's office. • Each child will write out a penalty sheet to be signed by their parents/guardians. • Parents will be notified of the behaviour of the child and brought into the school to discuss the consequences of their behaviour. • For serious breaches of behaviour, the BOM will be informed and further action may occur. <p>All incidents will be recorded on Aladdin.</p>	

Children whose behaviour is unsafe or persistently disruptive must have support in place in parallel with escalating sanctions. These can be chosen from the following, non-exhaustive list:

- An individualised behaviour plan, usually accompanied by targets and a behaviour tracker with associated rewards.
- Behaviour is tracked and checked every day by assistant principals.
- The child reports to the principal at agreed intervals to monitor behaviour. The children 'check in' with the principal.

11. Promoting Good Behaviour

Some strategies/incentives used in the St. Finbarr's NS to promote good behaviour.

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.

Most strategies are rooted in the 'Incredible Years' programme, which aims at preventing any escalation of poor behaviour before it starts.

- The use of the Positive Book, which highlights positive behaviour around the school. All staff are encouraged to comment on a child's exercise book.
- Positive notes home to parents praising their child.
- Positive phone calls to parents or a positive comment to a parent at the school gate.
- Dina's school rules-'Show me Five'
- Positive messages from the teacher every Friday for 'Most Improved' and 'Student of the week'.
- A visit to another class or principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of the class group.
- Individual class merit awards, points award or award stamps.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Involving children in school activities
- Involving children in committees such as the Green Schools Committee, the prefect system, the Student Council, Well-Being Ambassadors, and Picker Pals - our litter wardens.
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12. Special Educational Needs.

This Code of Behaviour applies to all members of our school community. Pupils with special educational needs will be provided with appropriate support and help to ensure they understand our school rules. As part of this support, individual behaviour plans may be developed, in collaboration with parents, to promote and reinforce positive behaviour. Pupils in the Autism Class have individual plans in the event of dysregulation or to reduce behaviours of concern.

13. Suspension

Procedure in respect of suspensions (as per P.77 of the NEWB guidelines)

- Investigation of the facts to confirm serious misbehaviour.
- Parents will be informed by phone or in writing about the incident.
- In the case of an immediate suspension, parents will be notified by the Principal/Deputy Principal and arrangements made for the pupil to be collected immediately. The child will be supervised away from his class in the interim.

If suspension is still decided upon, the Principal will notify the parents in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm:

- The period of suspension, including beginning and end dates.
- The reason for suspension.

- Any study/work to be completed during the suspension.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments that the pupil and parents must follow.
- The provision for appeal to the Board of Management or Secretary General of the DES, if appropriate (where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year has reached 20 days)
- A pupil will not be suspended for more than 3 days. In exceptional circumstances, where the Principal considers that a suspension period longer than three days is necessary, they will refer the matter to the Board of Management for consideration. A period of 10 days' suspension will be the maximum period imposed by the Board of Management in such exceptional circumstances.

Formal written records will be kept of:

- The investigation (including all notes of interviews held)
- The decision-making process
- The decision and rationale for the decision
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code, and the Board of Management 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.

14. Expulsion

Procedures with respect to expulsion (as per P. 82 of the NEWB guidelines)

i. A detailed investigation is carried out under the direction of the Principal. The Principal will:

- Inform the pupil and their parents/guardians about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- Give parents and students every opportunity to respond to a complaint of serious/extreme misbehaviour before a decision is made and a sanction is imposed.

ii. A recommendation is made to the Board of Management by the Principal. The Principal will:

- Inform the pupil and their parents that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expelling the pupil.
- Provide the Board of Management and parents with comprehensive information regarding the investigation and the grounds for possible expulsion.
- Notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing.
- Advise the parents that they can make an oral and written submission to the Board of Management.
- Ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing
- Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing (P84, NEWB guidelines)

iii. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing (P.85, NEWB guidelines)

□ If the Board of Management believes the pupil should be expelled, they must notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing. The student cannot be expelled before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification. However, the Board of Management may consider sanctioning suspension during this period, should the pupil's continued presence in the school be likely to seriously disrupt the learning of other students or pose a threat to the safety of other students and staff.

□ The Board of Management should inform parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process.

iv. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

□ Within the 20 days, the EWO must make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, parents, student and anyone else who may be of assistance. □ Convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend. The purpose of the above is to examine the possibility of the pupil continuing in the school or to explore alternative educational options.

v. Confirmation of the decision to appeal.

□ When the 20 days have elapsed, the Board of Management will meet to decide whether to expel the pupil.

□ Where the Board of Management remains of the view that the pupil should be expelled, a formal record of the decision will be made.

□ Parents will be informed immediately, in writing, that the expulsion will now proceed. □ Parents and students will be informed of their right to appeal and provided with the standard form on which to submit their appeal.

vi. Appeals

□ A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act 1998, Section 29). The NEWB may also bring an appeal on behalf of a student.

□ The appeals process begins with the provision of mediation by a mediator nominated by the Appeals Committee (DES).

Ratified by the Board of Management on 28th September 2023

Review date 5 years

Ratified: 

Signed: 