

Le Chéile Educate Together National School

Behaviour Policy 2011

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1. Rationale

This policy was devised to ensure an orderly climate for learning in the school.

It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000 Section 23(1) which refers to the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in Section 23(2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:

- A. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
- B. The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
- C. The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
- D. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and
- E. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

"The ethos or climate of a school is a major factor in establishing and maintaining high standards of behaviour and discipline" (Circular20/90)

- This code of behaviour expresses the vision, mission statement and values of the school and its patron.
- The standards of behaviour reflect values such as respect, kindness, good manners, fairness and forgiveness.
- The standards describe the commitment that the school expects from students to their own learning and to that of their peers e.g. working hard, keeping the rules, attending school every day etc.

2. Aims

In implementing the code of behaviour in our school we hope:

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our mission statement
- "To promote a philosophy of education in which no child is considered an outsider; which promotes the fullest development of ability irrespective of gender, class or stereotype; and

which encapsulates this ethos in a democratic partnership uniquely combining the involvement of parents with the professional role of teachers”

- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline
- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community
- To ensure that the systems of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school

3. Guidelines for behaviour in the school

Le Chéile ETNS has one underlying fundamental rule;

Respect yourself, others and property

Following on from this we have 6 sub-headings to ensure that standards of behaviour are observed by each student;

- **Be gentle** - Don't hurt anybody
- **Be kind** - Don't hurt anybody's feelings
- **Be safe**- Don't put yourself or others in danger
- **Be honest** - Don't cover up the truth
- **Work hard** - Don't waste time
- **Listen** - Don't interrupt

4. Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour

- Staff

- School rules will be displayed on walls`
- Staff will model positive behaviour throughout the school
- Staff will be consistent in their approach to school rules, rewards and sanctions
- Staff will refer to the rules on a regular basis
- All staff will praise positive behaviour throughout the school
- All classrooms will have posters, signs, decorations promoting positive behaviour on display
- Class teachers will involve the pupils in drawing up their own class rules
- The school's SPHE and Learn Together curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour
- As the policy is updated and as the school matures the staff and other partners will add to this policy

- **Board of Management**

“Boards of Management and Principals have positive roles to play in fostering understanding and co-operation between teachers, parents and pupils and in helping to adapt to the needs of the pupils” (Circular 20/90)

- The Board of Management supports the code of behaviour in the school on an ongoing basis
- The Board of Management supports the staff in implementing the code of behaviour
- The Board of Management are familiar with the procedures in the school as serious breaches of the behaviour policy will involve them

- **Parents**

“Schools need the support of parents in order to meet legitimate expectations with regard to good behaviour and discipline” (Circular 20/90)

- As is our ethos, parental involvement is essential in the development of the school
- The Behaviour Policy is communicated to parents on the enrolment of their child and is also available on the school’s website
- Parents can help to promote positive behaviour in school by doing the following:
 - ensure children are on time and attend regularly
 - encourage children to do their best
 - co-operate with the school’s rules and system of rewards and sanctions
 - attend meetings if requested to do so
 - ensure homework is completed
 - ensure children have all the books/materials required for school

- **Pupils**

- Pupils are actively involved in drawing up class rules.
- Pupils are active in the ongoing implementation of the behaviour policy. This may include;
 -signing a charter for rules for the classroom
 -taking part in assemblies
 -working on Student Council
 -buddy system
- Pupils are aware of the rules, rewards and sanctions
- Pupils review the code of behaviour by adding their suggestions. These are discussed at student council meetings annually.

It is vital that a whole school approach to promote good behaviour is taken and the following details ways in which a caring, safe and positive school environment is created.

School Environment

Welcome sign at the front of the school
School mission statement and charter on display in reception
Classrooms neat, orderly and in good repair
Equipment, furniture and facilities in good repair

In the classrooms

Classrooms are aesthetically pleasing and student centred
Social skills are valued and taught
Appropriate instructional strategies and pedagogies are in place
A variety of rewards are used e.g. lucky dips, stickers, stamps, prizes, group points, raffles
Records of good behaviour are kept

Learning

Appropriate flexible curriculum
Engaging instructional strategies
Pedagogy which caters for different learning styles and individual needs

Lunch time activities

Extra staff supervises play activities on yard and equipment such as skipping ropes
Chess practice takes place during lunch time
In the final term senior pupils have opportunities to participate in athletics and outdoor games

School-based Presentations

End of year attendance awards
Certificates for effort during Seachtain na Gaeilge
Certificates of Appreciation for outgoing Students' Council members
Graduation Ceremony and celebration for sixth class pupils with class photograph

External competitions or awards

We enter various academic or sporting competitions and participate in the local Credit Union Quiz
We have school choir and also take part in interschool music festivals or competitions
We have regular school productions

Public acknowledgement of student achievement

School newsletter
Articles in local newspapers
Displays of art/ project work around the school
Local festivals
Pupils are referred to the principal and/or teachers with examples of good work
School website

Giving pupils responsibility

Students' Council
Have regular meetings and participate in assemblies
Organise events and have roles in special events
Fundraise and wear Le Chéile t-shirts
Children in senior classes volunteer to act as buddies on middle and junior yards, they wear luminous vests when they do so

Parents

Coffee mornings
PTA
Fundraising Committee
Help maintain school equipment
Family Fun Day
Library Committee

Social Events

Annual tours
Class outings
Resource children go on short trips as part of social skills training
End of term parties
Sports Day with staff races
Dress up Day before the autumn mid-term break
Seachtain na Gaeilge performances
Talent Show

5. Positive Strategies for managing behaviour

The goal of this code is to promote good behaviour. "The most effective methodology that teachers develop in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place". (Managing Challenging Behaviour, Guidelines for Teachers INTO 2004:5).

Positive strategies are used throughout the school to promote good behaviour and to prevent misbehaviour particularly

- the classroom setting
- the yards
- the general school environs

External events such as tours, participation in competitions etc. are also subject to the code of behaviour.

Classroom

Our school rules are consistent with our ethos. We use the following guidelines for creating classroom rules at an age appropriate level.

- They should be consistent with the existing school rules
- Try to limit the number of rules. There is no need to duplicate existing school rules
- Allow pupils to participate in the formation of school rules
- Try to keep rules positive
- Display rules prominently
- Ensure pupils know what the consequences of breaking rules are
- Review or add rules as necessary
- Teachers ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave

Class systems of acknowledgement and rewarding good behaviour and sanctions for misbehaviour are in place. While each teacher has his/ her own style of management the following steps are used as guidelines for managing classroom behaviour

Tactical Ignoring: tactically ignore those who are doing the wrong thing and respond to those who do the right thing

Proximity Praise/ Reward: where a pupil is misbehaving praise another pupil close by who is doing the right thing

Catch the pupil doing something good
Check if the pupil is coping with the task
Ask the pupil why he/ she is misbehaving

Rule Reminder: Refer to the displayed classroom rules

Warning-verbal reprimand:

State the problem and the required behaviour

Use assertive language and I statements. Caution the behaviour and tell the pupil what sanction will apply if it continues

Issue the sanction or consequence:

Loss of privilege
Name and behaviour recorded
Isolate the pupil within the class temporarily
Class withdrawal
Time-out
Inform parents

Classroom management techniques and consideration of the timetable ensure that a variety of activities and methodologies are used to sustain pupil interest and motivation.

We acknowledge the need to differentiate class rules for children with special educational needs and use a ladder of intervention which will be discussed under our whole school approach to inappropriate behaviour.

Yards

We use positive strategies to promote good behaviour, to prevent behavioural difficulties and to deal with incidences of unacceptable behaviour.

Our playground rules emphasise positive behaviour and make it clear what activities are permitted. A copy of these rules is available in the yard books. They are communicated to new staff through our mentoring system. At the first meeting of the year the rules are reviewed and discussed. They are also communicated to the pupils by the class teachers.

Expectations are communicated to children and by the principal at assembly or by speaking to a class directly. Children are regularly reminded of these, particularly at the start of the year and at the start of terms.

The Students Council are involved in the creation of these rules and in communicating issues arising on the yard.

For arrangements for supervision in the play ground and on wet days see Supervision Policy.

We recognise a need to supervise more closely the behaviour of certain age groups and individual pupils for example, infant children and those with allocated Special Needs Assistants. This is organised by having three distinct yards and by having one supervising teacher and one Special Needs Assistant on duty on each yard at every break.

Teachers will ensure that children are supervised from the time that they leave their classrooms until they enter their own yards.

Arrangements for the supervision of children who leave the playground to use the toilets:

Firstly, every child must ask the teacher supervising the yard for permission to go to the toilet

1. Junior and Senior Infants: They are accompanied by a yard buddy (identifiable by hi-vis jacket) to the door of the toilets outside P.E. hall. The buddy waits for the child until he/she is finished and then re-accompanies them to the yard.
2. Children on the middle yard (1st to 3rd) are accompanied to the toilet in the main school building by two buddies.
3. Senior children (4th to 6th) go in twos to the toilet in the main school building.

The role of the SNA on the yard

- The primary role of the Special Needs Assistant is to assist the child with Special Needs in the yard
- Prior to coming to the yard the Special Needs Assistant collects a supply of ice-packs and the first aid kit from the staffroom to be used as required on the yard
- The SNA assists in administering minor first aid- cuts, bumps and bruises are attended to
- The SNA assists the teacher in supervising the children in the yard
- She helps to identify the children experiencing difficulty either socially, physically or emotionally

- The SNA may be requested by the supervising teacher to withdraw a child from the yard for a particular reason
- The SNA acts as a liaison person between the yard and the school building. She may go to inform the principal/deputy principal should a serious incident occur
- The SNA is last to leave the yard as she checks that every child has gone
- On wet days the SNA remains in class with her allocated pupil until the teacher returns from lunch break

Procedure for supervision of children on the yard

The teachers on duty are responsible for the safety and acceptable behaviour of the pupils in the yard they are supervising.

They should be punctual and carry their yard book with them. Incidents of misbehaviour will be written in the book.

For minor breaches of the school rules some of the following strategies will be used:

- Call the pupil aside and motivate them towards acceptable behaviour
- In the case of an infant or junior child they may be asked to walk for a period of time with the teacher or SNA- a cooling off period
- Stand the pupil out. On the infant yard this will be at the wall near the door of Junior Infants. On the middle yard and senior yard this will be at the Time-Out Zone on the red spots, for one minute per year of the child's age.
- All misbehaviour will be reported to the class teacher
- In a situation where behaviour is deemed to be dangerous either to the pupil themselves or others, the teacher on duty may immediately send for the principal or acting principal to assist with the removal of the pupil. The teacher on duty may seek the assistance of the SNA on duty if restraint is required.
- The principal or acting principal must be readily available during yard-time and the teachers on duty should be aware of who is in charge.

Mutually respectful relationships are cultivated in Le Chéile and we strive to balance empathy and warmth with objectivity, fairness and consistency. This can be explored formally and informally with pupils through a variety of means e.g. Circle Time, Discussion, Students' Council, questionnaires etc.

Standards and rules contained in the Code of Behaviour apply in any situation where pupils are still the responsibility of the school. Pupils are expected to follow the school and yard rules during school tours, games, extracurricular activities and any other school-related events.

6. Rewards and Sanctions

Teachers use a variety of different rewards to acknowledge and promote good behaviour in their individual classrooms. This diversity is welcomed. Rewards should be:

Fair, given for effort and achievement

Consistent i.e. pupils know what they are given for

Age appropriate and meaningful to the children

Inclusive and non-discriminatory

In line with the school ethos and other school policies e.g. healthy eating policy

The time spent on rewards should be proportionate and not impact negatively on the curriculum

Rewards should be perceived as symbols of success and not means of control

The following are some of the ways in which good behaviour is publicly recognised and acknowledged in school:

- Verbal comments in public and/ or in private
- Stickers
- Stamps
- Stars
- Pens, pencils, rubbers, rulers
- Lucky dips
- Visit the principal or another teacher
- Help out in another class
- Merit certificates
- Extra computer or recreational time/ golden time
- Puzzles, games
- Play music in class
- Watch DVDS- U or G rated only
- Note home/ letter or commendation
- Keeping track of good behaviour, prizes for reaching certain levels
- Raffles
- Prizes or tokens for individuals, groups for reaching certain levels
- Asking pupils what they would value as a reward
- Class teachers may present end of year rewards
- Pupil attendance is acknowledged with certificates presented at assemblies
- Discretionary Principal's Award for individual outstanding work or effort. Teachers will inform the principal of a child who deserves commendation.
- Good behaviour will be communicated in letters or notes home in journals, parent- teacher meetings and in end of school year reports.

The Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 23, states that a school must outline “the measures that may be taken if a student fails to observe the standards of behaviour that the school has outlined”

Sometimes a child may not follow the rules and therefore there are consequences for “breaking” these rules. Offences can be minor or serious. Minor offences are generally dealt with in class by the class teacher or the supervising teacher but more serious offences may involve the Principal, parents, the Board of Management and in some cases Gardai and the H.S.E.

Examples of Minor Misbehaviour:

- Interrupting class work
- Running around the building
- Leaving seat without permission at lunch time
- Leaving litter around school
- Being discourteous, unmannerly, argumentative
- Not completing homework without good reason
- Endangering self/ fellow pupils

- Attention seeking and disruptive behaviour in class

Examples of Serious Misbehaviour:

- Regular repetition of any of the above
- Telling lies
- Stealing
- Damaging other pupils property
- Bullying and harassment
- Back answering a teacher
- Leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission
- Using unacceptable language
- Bringing inappropriate toys, weapons, literature or photographs of a violent or pornographic nature to school
- Deliberately injuring a fellow pupil or defacing property
- Deliberately leaving taps turned on
- Deliberately setting off fire alarm
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards another pupil or any member of school personnel
- Defacing school property

Misbehaviour on the yard that puts the safety of self and /or other pupil(s) at risk may result in the child(ren) being removed for a determined period of time

The following measures will be taken for children breaking the rules:

- (a) A verbal warning
 - (b) A second verbal warning/ picture based warning which outlines the consequences of breaking the rule again
 - (c) Loss of privilege e.g. golden time, a sticker, a stamp, a star
 - (d) Additional loss of privilege including loss of playtime(1 minute per year of child's age),additional homework, note home to parents/ guardians, temporary isolation in the classroom, time out in another classroom for a set time
 - (e) Referral to Principal
 - (f) Communication with parents
 - (g) Discussion with parents and child about supplemented behaviour system (may involve class teacher, special education teacher, SNA, NEPS psychologist. Parents and Principal)
 - (h) Formal Report to Board of Management
 - (i) Suspension
 - (j) Expulsion
- *Where an unacceptable behaviour is repeated a teacher may progress from (b) to (e) where she/he sees fit or may go straight to (e) if warranted*
 - *In the case of children with special needs a consultative approach will be taken in an effort to remediate the behaviour involving class teacher, special education teacher, SNA, Parents/ Guardians, NEPS psychologist and Principal*
 - *Children will be expected to observe the same behaviour code when out of school on tours or trips. Should a child misbehave when on a school trip the teacher will accompany the child for a period of time or all of the time during the trip, as he/she deems necessary. On return to school serious incidents will be reported to the Principal and /or parents.*

It is essential that all staff ensures consistency in the application of sanctions

Involving parents in the management of problem behaviour

“Parents should be kept fully informed from the outset of instances of serious misbehaviour on the part of their children. It is better to involve parents at an early stage than as a last resort” (Circular 20/90)

- Usually it is best if parents are contacted by the class teacher. However, in cases of serious misconduct, the principal teacher may be asked to contact parents.
- When parents are invited to the school they will be put at their ease and treated with respect.
- The child will not be present at the meeting unless he/she is required to offer clarity. They may then only be present for part of the meeting.
- A record of proceedings will be taken
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have concerns. They should arrange to meet teachers outside of school time, as far as possible, so as not to interrupt the workings of the class.

Managing aggressive or violent behaviour

- Serious emotional or violent behaviour will be dealt with in conjunction with parents. A supplemented behaviour plan will be made in conjunction with parents so that consistency is reached in the management of good and bad behaviour at home and at school.
- Children who are emotionally disturbed may be referred for psychological assessment.
- Through the Special Educational Needs Organiser, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. H.S.E., N.E.P.S. etc.
- Professional development is made available to staff e.g. SESS, Colleges of Education, Education Centres, and H.S.E.
- In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil himself/ herself or the safety of other pupils or staff, the school must take extra steps e.g.
 1. The child is sent home for the rest of the day(or for a number of days until agreement of appropriate behaviour is accepted by child and parents)
 2. Temporary exclusion while consultation with SENO and /or EWO takes place about appropriate resourcing, alternative placement.

7. Suspension/ Exclusion Procedures:

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, stipulates that a code of behaviour shall specify.... “the procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned ” and “ the grounds for removing a suspension in relation to a student” (Sections 23 (20 c, d)

Right to fair procedures:

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend or expel a student. The requirement for fair procedures derives from the Constitution of Ireland, international conventions and case law.

Fair procedures have two essential parts:

- The right to be heard

- The right to impartiality

Refer to Developing a code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, p.67

Suspension:

The Principal shall inform the Education Welfare Officer, by notice in writing, when a student is suspended from a recognised school for a period of not less than six days.

(Section 21 (4) a)

Circular 20/90 states that “Parents should be informed of their right to come to the school and be invited to do so in order to discuss the behaviour with the Principal teacher and/or the class teacher. This should always be done when the suspension of a pupil is being contemplated”.

The school’s procedure in relation to suspension and expulsion require the following steps be taken:

1. When a child reaches stage (h) in our policy or a serious misdemeanour(outlined above) occurs, a child may be temporarily excluded from school
2. The Board of Management will authorise the Principal or the Chairperson to exclude a pupil from the school for a maximum initial period of three school days
3. This will only occur if procedures were followed to ensure fairness when excluding a pupil and the following criteria have been acknowledged:
 - Have all other means of dealing with the behaviour been tried?
 - Has there been previous communication with parents regarding misbehaviour?
 - Have parents been made aware that the next step is suspension?
 - Has a fair investigation taken place, taking parents’ and pupil’s perspective into account?
 - If the Board of Management is likely to reach a decision to exclude a pupil, how will it ensure the decision will be reached in an unbiased manner? c.f. NEWB Guidelines for Developing School Codes of Behaviour, p.72
 - If a child is to be temporarily excluded from school, a form is filled in and signed by parents, principal and chairperson. The form outlines the dates when the child has been excluded from class and is stored in his/her permanent record.

Forms of Suspension:

- Immediate Suspension

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider immediate suspension to be necessary when the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would present a serious threat to the safety or staff of the school, or any other person including him/ herself. Fair procedures must still be applied.

- “ Automatic” suspension

Certain behaviours may result in automatic suspension e.g. smoking or drug taking on the school premises. Again, fair procedures must still be applied.

Appeals:

Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current year reaches twenty days, the parents may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act 2007.

At the time when parents are being formally notified of such a suspension, they and the student should be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, and should be given information about how to appeal.

After Suspension:

When the period of suspension is over, the pupil(s) and staff is expected that the incident is not used to “pigeon-hole” the child. He/ she should come back to a “clean sheet”.

Expulsion:

Under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, “A student shall not be expelled from a school before the passing of twenty school days following the receipt of notification under this section by an educational welfare officer” Section 24 (4)

It is the right of a Board of Management to take “....such other reasonable measures to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school concerned and that the safety of students is secured” Section 24 (5)

Grounds for Expulsion:

The expulsion of a student is a serious step and one that should only be taken by the Board of Management in the case of serious unacceptable misbehaviours and when all other steps to address the misbehaviours and to avoid expulsion have been taken.

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as:

- The student’s behaviour is a persistent case for disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- The student’s continued presence in the school constitutes as a real or significant threat to the safety of others
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property

Automatic Expulsion:

There may be exceptional grounds where the Board of Management decides that a student should be expelled for a first offence.

Grounds for such an expulsion may include:

- A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
- Sexual assault

Factors to consider before expelling a student:

Refer to page 82 of Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB

Procedures for Expulsion:

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the Education Welfare Act 2000, when proposing to expel a student.

Steps for Procedure are as follows:

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
- A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal
- Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing
- Board of Management deliberations and actions following hearing
- Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer
- Confirmation of decision to expel

Appeals:

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills against some decisions of the Board of Management, including:

1. Permanent exclusion from a school, and
2. Suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in one school year

Accordingly, schools should advise parents of the right to appeal and associated time frame if it has been decided to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student. (See Circular 22/02)

Parents are given a copy of Circular 22/02 and related forms if they wish to appeal a decision. The Chairperson of the Board of Management will prepare a response if and when an appeal is being investigated by the Department of Education and Skills (Section 12, Circular 22/02-Processing of an Appeal)

8. Record Keeping

A standardised record system will allow the school to track an individual student's behaviour and to check whether efforts to change behaviour are working. All interventions aimed at helping the student to deal with unacceptable behaviour will also be recorded, including contact with parents or referral to other agencies. Positive responses by a student, and evidence of changed behaviour, will be recorded, as will any sanction used, together with the reason why the sanction was imposed.

Students will be told when a record is being made about their behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record.

Records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amended) Act 2003. The eight rules of data protection apply to personal records kept in the school:

1. Obtain and process information fairly.
2. Keep it only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purposes.
3. Use and disclose it only in ways compatible with these purposes.
4. Keep it safe and secure.
5. Keep it accurate, complete and up-to-date.
6. Ensure it is adequate, relevant and not excessive.
7. Retain it for no longer than is necessary for the purpose or purposes.
8. Give a copy of their personal data to an individual on request.

Records will be kept in school by the class teacher, the teacher supervising the yard and by the Principal.

Class Records:

Teachers will record information which is relevant to the behaviour witnessed in the class. This may be for the purposes of commendation or may relate to the teachers observation of unacceptable behaviour. It may be part of a behaviour modification plan, possibly in tandem with the special education teacher or Principal or external agencies.

Teachers will communicate their observations to parents and or the Principal verbally or in written form.

Minor incidents will be recorded and communicated to parents via the child's homework journal or by phone.

More serious incidents will be recorded in the class teacher's notes or by the Principal or both. A letter will be sent home to parents by the class teacher or the Principal. When an incident of a very serious nature occurs it will be brought to the attention of the Board of Management and recorded in the minutes of the Board of Management meeting. A letter may follow from the Board of Management to the parents of the child in question.

Where there are ongoing difficulties with a child's behaviour a record may be made of this in his/her school record/ report card.

All school reports will record an observation of a child's behaviour in school.

Yard Records:

The supervising teacher in the yard carries a record book at all times. In it, incidents which occur in the yard are reported. At the end of the recreational period these incidents are reported to the class teacher whose responsibility it is to deal with the relevant behaviour.

Where an incident is considered to be of a serious nature the Principal may be asked to become involved. Should this occur the Principal will record it also and it will be communicated to the child's parents, either by telephone call or by letter depending on the seriousness of the incident.

Principal's Records:

The Principal will make a note of all incidents reported to her. Where they are of a serious nature they will be recorded in the "Incident Book" which is stored in the office. Such incidents will be discussed with the parents of the child/children in question either by telephone, by letter or personally, whichever is appropriate.

The Principal may decide to report an incident to the Board of Management. This may be verbal or by letter. Such a letter will be kept on file and verbal reports will be recorded in the minutes of the Board of Management meeting.

Board of Management Records:

As stated above, incidents which are brought to the attention of the Board of Management at meetings are recorded in the minutes. In addition, letters will be kept on file and notes made of verbal reports.

In the event of a serious incident or series of incidents relating to a particular child a dedicated file may be opened. This is particularly true in relation to a child who may be suspended or who may be facing expulsion.

Records of procedure followed will also be kept by the Board of Management in relation to serious behavioural issues.

9. Absences

Notification of a child's absence from school

It is important that the parent informs the school of their child's absence for any reason. The parent may telephone the school on the day/ s of absence.

When a child returns to school having been absent he/she should give a written note to the class teacher detailing the child's name, the date/s of absence and an explanation for absence/ late arrival/ early leaving.

Where a child has had a prolonged absence from school due to illness a doctor's certificate will be required. Where it is anticipated that a child may be absent for a prolonged period of school due to hospitalisation or similar, notice must be given to the school in writing. If a child is to be absent for a prolonged period of time from school due to familial work commitments or otherwise, notification must be given to the Board of Management in writing in order to ensure retention of the child's place in the school.

Parents have been informed of the Education Welfare Act 2000 regarding pupils who are absent for 20 days or more. A standardised letter is posted by the principal to the child's home and the Welfare Officer is informed.

Section (21) (9) of the act states that: "a pupil absence can only be authorised by the principal when the child is involved in activities organised by the school or in which the school is involved". The school principal cannot authorise a child's absence for holidays during school time. However, it is essential that parents inform the school of such arrangements.

Record Keeping:

Attendance records are kept through the roll book

Teachers are responsible for recording attendance

Teachers are responsible for recording absences and retaining notes to inform the principal of frequent absences

Parents will be informed by letter when their child has been absent for twenty days

Homework journals may be used to correspond with parents/guardians

Teachers complete the monthly attendance record which is collected and filed by the post-holder. Absences are counted and where a pattern or significant number of absences exists the principal will contact the family and/or the Welfare Officer.

Strategies for promoting good school attendance:

See Attendance policy - Policy revised: Academic year 2010-2011

Ratified by Board of Management: 25th May 2011 - To reviewed- academic year 2014-2015