



CODE OF BEHAVIOUR:

Introductory Statement:

This policy was formulated in September/October 2017, following a review and update of an earlier Code of Behaviour policy. All teachers and our S.N.A. were involved in this review, with later involvement of the Board of Management, children and parents.

Rationale:

It is necessary to review our Code of Behaviour at this particular time because:

- It is a requirement under the Educational 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.
- It ensures an orderly climate for learning in the school.
- It ensures existing policy is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*, (NEWB), 2008.



Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School:

Lisronagh N.S. is committed to providing a safe, caring and happy place of learning for the full development of each child. The ethos of our school reflects this. We encourage the involvement of parents through home/school contacts.

The Code of Behaviour reflects our Mission Statement.

Aims:

Lisronagh N.S. hopes to achieve the following aims by introducing this policy:

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our mission statement
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate their differences
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school
- To outline a standardised approach to behaviour which is available to all partners and is consistent throughout
- To ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment which is secure and caring



Content of Policy:

This policy is address under the following headings and is in compliance with legal requirement and good practice as set out in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008.

1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school
Unacceptable Behaviours.
2. Whole School Approach to promoting positive behaviour among:
 - Staff
 - Board of Management
 - Parents
 - Pupils.
3. Positive Strategies for managing behaviour will be promoted in the following areas:
 - Classroom
 - Playground
 - Other areas in the school
 - School related activities.
4. Rewards and Sanctions:
 - Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour
 - Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour
 - Involving parents in management of problem behaviour
 - Managing aggressive or violent behaviour.
5. Suspension/Expulsion:
 - Suspension
 - Expulsion
 - Appeals
6. Keeping Records:
 - Class
 - Playground
 - School Records
7. Procedures for notification of a pupil's absence from school.



1. Guidelines for Behaviour in the School:

The following are the standards of behaviour expected in Lisronagh N.S:

- It is expected that all children will be on time for school at 9.00 a.m. Supervision will be provided in class from 8.50 a.m. No responsibility is accepted for children arriving before that time.
- It is also expected that children be collected promptly at 2.40 p.m. each day.
- Children must show courtesy and respect to all staff at all times.
- Children must show respect and regard for other children at all times. Older children should be particularly kind and helpful to the younger children.
- Children are expected to be truthful, co-operative, helpful and diligent.
- Everybody is expected to show respect for school property, to help in keeping the school tidy and litter free and to use the bins provided.
- Children should enter the school in an orderly fashion and move quietly in the corridors at all times. On entering the classroom children should go directly to their places and remain seated.
- Children are expected to wear the complete school uniform at all times. Due to health and safety reasons children may only wear stud earrings.

Unacceptable behaviours:

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: *Minor, Serious and Gross*. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour, parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the Principal to discuss their child's behaviour.



Examples of serious misbehaviour:

- Repetitive minor misbehaviours i.e. making noises, disrupting others, refusal to co-operate,
- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Derogatory or insulting comments directed against anyone e.g. different creed, nationality, ethnic background or sexual orientation
- Explicit or inappropriate language
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning

- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Use of abusive language or continued defiance towards a member of staff.

Examples of gross misbehaviour:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil
- Serious theft
- Serious damage to property

2. Whole School Approach to promoting positive behaviour among:

Staff:

Teachers and other staff members can play important roles in the work of reviewing and updating of the code. They bring to this work their professional expertise in understanding the links between behaviour and learning; their experience of what works to help students to behave well; and their knowledge of the school and of the school community (p. 16 Guidelines)

Providing opportunities for staff to deepen their understanding of the factors that affect behaviour and that help students to change behaviour (p. 29 Guidelines)



Staff as a team should have opportunities to confirm that all school policies and practices support the objectives of the code of behaviour (p. 32 Guidelines)

Issues in relation to behaviour may be raised at staff meetings to facilitate staff discussion on areas of concern. All existing, new and temporary staff will be given a copy of the code of behaviour. Staff are expected to familiarise themselves with the policy and to implement it consistently and fairly.

In the event of children who may present with behavioural difficulties arising from their special education needs an IEP or Student Support File with behavioural targets or an Individual Behavioural plan may be used as appropriate.

Teachers will encourage children to take part in all curricular and non-curricular activities which support the ethos of the school.(e.g. local religious activities, school choir, school teams, plays etc.)

Staff are expected to model the standards of behaviour that the children are asked to respect.

The school's SPHE (Social Personal and Health Education) curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship.

SPHE is taught at all class levels and a co-ordinated approach across the school is to be developed for SPHE.

The following activities are used to develop these skills in children: circle time, role play, brainstorming and discussion.



Board of Management:

The overall responsibility for ensuring that a Code of Behaviour is prepared rests with the Board of Management. The Board has particular responsibility for the ethos of the school, as well as having overall responsibility for school policies. The Board will play an active role in exploring the kinds of relationships and behaviours that will reflect the school's ethos and responsibilities. The Board of Management will support the staff in implementing the code of behaviour and provide training for the staff if required. The Board of Management was consulted in reviewing of the code of behaviour at a Board of Management meeting. The Board of Management are responsible for dealing with serious breaches of behaviour as deemed by the staff.

Parents:

Section 23 (4) of the Education Welfare Act states that, prior to registering a pupil, the principal teacher shall provide the parents of the child with a copy of the school's code of behaviour and that the principal 'may, as a condition of so registering such child, require his or her parents to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour so provided is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child'.

Registration of prospective pupils in Lisronagh N.S. is conditional on acceptance of this statement.

Co-operation between staff and parents is encouraged through informal & formal contacts, Parent Teacher Meetings and regular communications from the school.

- The code of behaviour is communicated to parents on the enrolment of their child through attendance at a pre-enrolment meeting and in written communications from the school.
- Parents can support the school in the promotion of positive behaviour and the maintenance of high standards of behaviour by :



- Encouraging their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work
- By being aware of and cooperating with the school's rules and system of rewards and sanctions
- Attending meetings at the school if requested
- Helping their children with homework and ensuring that it is completed
- Ensuring their children have the necessary books and materials for school.

Notes from parents are required:

- (a) Following any absence of a pupil from school.
 - (b) In the event of a parent wishing their child to leave the school before normal times of dismissal e.g. (Medical / Dental appointments, funeral Masses etc.)
 - (c) In the event of a pupil not having completed his/her homework.
- Parents are requested to ensure homework is completed each night. Also to sign their child's homework diary.
 - Children and parents must follow the Healthy Eating Policy of Lisronagh N.S.
 - Appointments should be made with their child's teacher if a lengthy issue is to be discussed. A brief written summary of the issue should be given to the teacher prior to the meeting.
 - Parents are asked to encourage their child to show respect to other children and adults outside of school hours.
 - Parents are asked to ensure their children wear the correct school uniform
 - Parents are asked to contact the school if there is any issue in relation to their child which may affect their performance in school
 - Classes finish at 1.40 (Infants) and 2.40 (older classes), and children should be collected promptly
 - Parents are asked to work co-operatively with the school in trying to resolve any contentious issues
 - Birthday invitation, etc. should be distributed outside of school.



Pupils:

Pupils were involved in drafting the Code of Behaviour through attendance at consultation meetings.

Pupils play a role in the ongoing implementation of the Code of Behaviour by:

- Helping draft rules for the classroom
- Taking part in assemblies
- Student Council discussions.

3. Positive strategies for managing 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).*

- Praise and Encouragement is an integral whole school approach for managing behaviour.
- Rewards which may be used include homework vouchers, stickers, group rewards / individual rewards, individual pupil target charts which are achievable and clear.
- Class Rules created together and signed, using positive language.
- Golden Time
- Group reward systems e.g. prizes for group of the week
- Individual reward systems e.g. star of the week, pupil of the day, merit stickers
- Recognising and rewarding positive behaviour -finding/ highlighting examples of such behaviour
- Positive class rules
- Pupil targets
- Pupil behaviour records: sent home to parents, identifying positive behaviour
- Assemblies to reinforce & reward good behaviour



Classroom:

Children are expected to:

- Remain seated when the teacher is out of the room during breaks on wet days.
Specific Rules Include:
- Taking turns when talking
- Listen when someone is speaking
- Interacting positively with others through words, actions and facial expressions.
- Taking responsibility for their own possessions and classroom property.
- Treating property of others with due care.

Playground(s):

Children are expected to play together co-operatively, inclusively and in a kind manner. Children are expected to play within recognised play areas (c/f our own Playground Rules).

One teacher and one SNA are on supervision per day and a rota is in place. Children are visible at all times and play in the main yard.

All classes have a designated play area. On wet days children are allowed to remain in their classrooms while the teachers and SNA patrol the classrooms and corridors.

Inappropriate behaviour includes:

- Bullying
- Lifting or climbing or Rough Play
- Abusive language towards others
- Failure to follow teacher's instructions
- Damaging property
- Disregarding School Rules
- Bullying of any sort.



Other areas in the school:

Children are expected to:

- Show consideration for each other through appropriate actions, words, thoughts and deeds.
- Transfer to and from class in an orderly manner
- Greet all adults and children in a mannerly fashion
- Use school property with care
- Wear full school uniform.
- Move around school in a quiet, orderly
- Leave school yard promptly

School Related Activities:

For all other school related activities (tours, trips, games) children are expected to:

- Respect equipment
- Be punctual
- Be aware of others physical space
- Sit with seatbelt on bus
- Follow directions of person in charge
- Show respect for environment
- Stay with group partner
- Be orderly and polite

While we encourage pupils to behave at all times, the school cannot take responsibility for a pupil's actions outside the school grounds.

Inappropriate Behaviour includes:

- Abusive language towards others
- Damaging property
- Disregarding Rules
- Bullying of any sort
- Rough Play
- Failure to follow teacher's instructions



General:

- Pupils should be clean when presenting for school, wearing the school uniform.
- One stud earring per ear, in the ear lobe, may be worn
- In the interest of hygiene, hair must be tied back and away from face
- Suitable footwear must be worn for PE
- In the summer term, children are permitted to wear navy shorts and blue polo shirt, depending on the weather.
- Children are expected to change their footwear for indoor use (from Rang I upwards)

4. Rewards & Sanctions:

Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour:

- Good behaviour is publicly recognised and acknowledged in the school through in-class rewards and praise and affirmation.

Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour:

The following strategies may be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour:

- Reasoning with the pupil.
- Reprimand (including advice on how to improve).
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others.
- Loss of privileges.
- Detention during a break or after school hours.
- Prescribing additional work.
- Referral to Principal.
- Communication with parents.
- Suspension (temporary). Three days initially, 10 days for subsequent or more serious offences
- In extreme cases of serious misbehaviour Expulsion is an option.



Sanctions in the Yard:

Stages:

1. Verbal warning and verbal reprimand and reasoning with the child
2. Time out at the wall
3. Principal informed (after third time)

Relevant records will be kept at class level. Investigations of individual behaviour will be done to better understand the motivation for the behaviour. In cases of serious unacceptable behaviour, stages may be skipped. Staff will implement the sanctions on a whole school basis. Communication of sanctions to all staff will be done through items on Staff meeting agendas & informal contacts.

Involving parents in management of inappropriate/unacceptable behaviour:

- When a pupil's behaviour is a source of concern, parents will be contacted, according to our list of sanctions. Previous to this, class teachers may discuss behaviour informally with parents. The Principal is formally involved in our sanctions, although class teachers may have discussed areas of concern before this stage.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour or as per our list of sanctions, parents will be invited to the school, by the Principal, following contact with the class teacher. The initial meeting will endeavour to put parents at their ease in order to maximise a co-operative approach. Depending on circumstances the child may be present for all or part of the meeting.
- Should parents have concerns about behaviour in the school they may request to meet with Class Teachers or the Principal, in the usual manner.



Managing Aggressive or violent misbehaviour:

- Permission will be sought from parents whose children display aggressive or violent misbehaviour for referral for psychological assessment.
- Through the Special Education Needs Officer, appropriate support will be sought from services available e.g. Healthy Service Executive, NEPS, CAMHS, etc.
- In Lisronagh N.S., we recognise that the Code of Behaviour will support the majority of our pupils but we do recognise that for some pupils, further supports will be needed. For these children an individual plan will be written.
- Physical intervention will only be used when there is a threat to physical safety.

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:

- 1. The Right to be heard***
- 2. The right to impartiality.***

When sanctions have been applied the teacher will identify the misdemeanour to help the child to understand the expected behaviour.

To ensure consistency in the application of sanctions regular discussions will take place formally and informally between staff.



5. Suspension/Expulsion:

Suspension is defined as requiring the child to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.

The Board of Management of Lisronagh N.S. has the authority to suspend a child.

Suspension will be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. The decision to suspend a child requires serious grounds such as that:

- The child's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education, development or wellbeing of other children
- The child's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- The child is responsible for serious damage to property.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

Suspensions can give the child time to reflect on the link between their action and its consequences and give staff time to plan ways of helping the child to change unacceptable behaviour.

However, suspension can be counter-productive if used without a clear rationale or without measuring its impact and value. School management will consider the risk of any unwanted outcomes from suspension.



The Factors to be considered before suspending a child as per NEWB guidelines (pg.72) will be used. See attached in appendix 1.

Suspension will be part of an agreed plan to address the child's behaviour.
The suspension will:

- Enable the school to set behavioural goals with the child and their parents
- Give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions
- Impress on a child and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour.

Forms of Suspension:

Immediate suspension:

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the child in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of child or staff of the school, or any other person. Fair procedures must still be applied.

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will observe the following procedures:

- Inform the child and their parents about the complaint/Issue
- Let the child and their parents know about the complaint, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension. Parents may be informed by phone and/or in writing.
- Give parents and child an opportunity to respond
- Parents and child will be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed.
- All of the conditions for suspension apply to immediate suspension also.



➤ **Period of suspension:**

A child will not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the school considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed in order to achieve a particular objective - up to a maximum of 10 days

Appeals:

Parents can appeal a suspension through an appeals process provided by the patron.

Section 29 Appeal

Where the total number of days for which the child has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents, may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Written notification

The Principal will notify the parents and the child in writing of the decision to suspend. 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 study programme to be followed
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the child and the parents (for example, parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)
- The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998, section 29).

Engaging with child and parents

Where a decision to suspend has been made, it can maximise the impact and value of suspension if the Principal and/or another staff member delegated by the Principal meets with the parents to emphasise their responsibility in helping the child to behave well when the child returns to school and to offer help and guidance in this. Where parents do not agree to meet with the Principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.



Grounds for removing a suspension:

A suspension may be removed if the patron decides to remove the suspension for any reason or if the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science directs that it be removed following an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

After the suspension ends:

The school will make every effort to re-integrate the child successfully into the school. A child will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start.

Records and reports:

Records of investigation and decision-making

Formal written records will be kept of:

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

Report to NEWB The Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines (Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, section 21(4)(a)).

The school will review the use of suspension as the need arises or as guidelines dictate.

EXPULSION :

A child is expelled from a school when the Board of Management of Lisronagh N.S. makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school. The Board of Management of a recognised school has the authority to expel a child.

The BOM will only expel a child in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a child.



A proposal to expel a child requires serious grounds such as that:

- the child's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- the child's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- the child is responsible for serious damage to property.

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference is that, where expulsion is considered, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions, and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the child's behaviour.

Expulsion for a first offence:

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a child will be expelled for a first offence. The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the code could include:

- a serious threat of violence against another child or member of staff
- actual violence or physical assault
- supplying illegal drugs to other children in the school
- sexual assault.



The Factors to be considered before expelling a child as per NEWB guidelines pg. 82 will be used. See attached in appendix.

Procedures in respect of 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 child. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

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

The school will refer to the NEWB guidelines pg. 83-86 for specific procedures in relation to expulsion.

Appeals:

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 section 29). An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a child.

The school will review the use of expulsion as the need arises or as guidelines dictate.



6. Keeping Records:

Teachers shall keep a written record in the school incident book of all instances of serious or gross misbehaviour in the classroom as well as the playground. A record will also be kept, by the class teacher, of continuous minor misdemeanours and/or disruptive behaviour. Improvements in the behaviour of disruptive pupils shall also be recorded. Communication with parents will be utilised at an early stage rather than as a last resort. In this regard we welcome and encourage regular visits from parents to enquire about their child's progress. Attendance at parent teacher meetings is **essential**. On the end of year school report a comment may be made regarding the child's behaviour.

In line with the school's policy on record keeping, and data protection legislation, records are kept in relation to pupils' behaviour for the statutory period of time. Records are written in a factual and impartial manner.

Class level:

- Teachers are expected to maintain class behaviour records for their classes. There a standard format for reporting incidents in the school's incident book and folder
- Serious misbehaviour must be reported to the principal immediately or in her absence, the Deputy Principal.
- The end of year report may include a reference to behaviour. A consistent understanding of what constitutes excellent - poor behaviour is agreed among the staff. Parents will be kept up to date during the year regarding behaviour issues, informally and formally at Parent/Teacher Meetings or specially convened meetings.



Playground:

- Supervising staff keep a record of misbehaviour in the Incident Book.
- Class teachers and the principal are kept informed through both formal & informal meetings with colleagues.
- To encourage consistency in the application and interpretation of the rules the Code of Behaviour will be discussed regularly at formal & informal meetings.

School Records:

- Incidents will be recorded in an incident book for the school and each teacher will keep individual records.
- Formal record kept at school level include factual reports of particular incidents, communication between school and home, with outside agencies & Board of Management.
- Documentation pertaining to appeals under Section 29 will be kept securely in the school.

7. Procedures for Notification of Pupil Absences from School:

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (2)(e) states that the code of behaviour must specify,

"the procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school."

Section 18 stipulates that parents must notify the school of a student's absence and the reason for this absence.

- The school's policy on attendance includes use of the following strategies to encourage school attendance e.g.
 - Creating a stimulating and attractive school environment
 - System for acknowledging/rewarding good or improved attendance
 - Adapting curriculum content and methodologies to maximise relevance to pupils
 - Adapting the class and school timetables to make it more attractive to attend and to be on time
 - Making parents aware of the terms of the Education Welfare Act and its implications.



- The school's policy in relation to explanation of pupil absences requires parents/guardians send in a note informing teachers in writing of their child's absence from school and the reason for this absence. These notes are signed and dated and are kept until the end of the school year.
- The school uses "Aladdin" to report pupil absences to the NEWB (Túsla) through its online system.

Reference to Other Policies:

School policies that have a bearing on the Code of Behaviour include the following policies:

- SPHE Plan
- Anti-Bullying
- Harassment
- Enrolment
- Health & Safety

Success Criteria:

Practical indicators of the success of the Policy include the following:

- Observation of positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment
- Practices and procedures listed in this Policy being consistently implements by teachers
- Positive feedback from Teachers, parents and pupils.

Roles & Responsibilities:

Responsibilities for implementation of the Policy include:

- The Principal & Staff
- Board of Management
- Pupils
- Parents



Implementation Date:

This Policy will be implemented in November 2017.

Timetable for Review:

The Policy was reviewed and updated in autumn 2017. It will be reviewed in three years.

Ratification & Communication:

The Board of Management ratified the reviewed Policy at its meeting on

The ratified Policy will be circulated through established channels to all staff and will be available to the school community for inspection.

Signed:

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date:
