

HOLY CHILD BOYS' NATIONAL SCHOOL

Code of Behaviour and Discipline / School Rules



Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school.

In Holy Child Boys' School, we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school.

The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.

Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school.

Aims of the code

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others
- To facilitate the education and development of every child
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption

Students at Holy Child Boys' National School have the right to an education which offers them the best opportunity to attain their potential. The Principal and teaching staff attempt to create the appropriate circumstances for this to happen, while the support staff assists in the process. It is the right of every student at Holy Child to fully benefit from such an education without being hindered by others. Students are more likely to benefit from their education and to be happy in a structured environment where high standards of behaviour are expected and adhered to.

For teachers to effectively teach and for pupils to effectively learn (thereby benefiting from the educational process and developing to their full potential) the effective school / classroom is one in which:

- (a) the authority of the teacher to organise and manage pupils' learning and behaviour is accepted by the pupils
- (b) teacher-pupil relationships are characterised by mutual respect and good rapport and
- (c) the classroom-climate is one of task-oriented purposefulness and confidence in learning.

Any intentional behaviour which interferes with the work of the teacher in the course of exercising his or her duty towards pupils, or which effectively disrupts the learning process as outlined above is both unacceptable and regarded as misbehaviour.

Responsibility of Adults

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations.
- Promote positive behaviour, through example, honesty and courtesy.
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment.
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others.
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.
- To discourage physical aggression and encourage '*Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet*'.

The Teaching Council sets a code of conduct for all teaching staff.

Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children. Class rules will be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Where possible they emphasise positive behaviour. Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage. Our agreed school rules are as follows:

1. I will raise my hand when I want to speak
2. I will raise my hand when I want to leave my seat
3. I will respect others and their property
4. I will always listen and try my best
5. I will use kind hands, kind words and kind feet

Incentives/Reward System

Part of the vision of Holy Child Boys' School is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and similarly that children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Our reward system seeks to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication
- 'Bualadh Bos' in class or special mention at assembly

Examples of reward systems which are being used in Holy Child BNS include

- Tick systems
- Homework passes
- Group of the week
- Good behaviour notes to parents
- Monthly trackers
- Pupil of the week
- Class Dojo

Field trips, annual school tours and our end of year special event will be reserved for those who have consistently strived to behave well.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross.

Examples of minor misbehaviour include:

Bringing electronic equipment or mobile-phones to school;
not wearing appropriate uniform; bringing in chewing-gum;
not following instructions; talking in class; not lining up correctly;
once-off yard incidents; bad language; forgetting homework

Examples of serious misbehaviour include:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Bringing dangerous equipment to school
- Leaving school/school grounds / school activities without permission.
- Continuous messing / disruption in class
- Constant rough play
- Being disrespectful to staff members
- Purposely hurting another child

Examples of gross misbehaviour include:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil (verbal or physical)
- Serious Theft
- Serious Damage to property
- Serious or repeated episodes of bullying
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, vapes, weapons

Sanctions

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour
- signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
- keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the circumstances involved. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupil devise strategies for this.

1. Reasoning with pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class / removal from yard
4. Prescribing extra work / weekend work / lines etc.
5. Loss of privileges e.g. football / class trips
6. Detention during break
7. Communication with parents
8. Referral to Principal
9. Principal communicating with parents
10. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000)

Usually sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

Suspension and Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as detention, suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Where it is proposed to detain a pupil after school hours, the parents or guardians will be notified. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

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 Principal 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.

Children with Special Needs

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning support/ resource teacher, and or principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

Communicating with Parents

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a

high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life (in the past or present), which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following methods of communication are to be used within the school:

- Informal/formal parent/teacher meeting
- Email / telephone call
- Aladdin
- Through children's homework journal
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school (please check bags for notes)
- Newsletters/school web-site/twitter

Bullying

Bullying is **repeated** aggression – physical, verbal or emotional - conducted by an individual or group against another or others.

- **PHYSICAL:** includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping, etc.
- **VERBAL:** name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates.
- **EMOTIONAL:** threats or persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Threats to extort money or possessions. "Cyber/text" bullying.

The school takes particular care to intervene early in responding to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.

Issues in relation to Bullying are explored continually during SPHE lessons and the Stay Safe programme.

Should a parent/guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed with a teacher, all staff members are more than willing to facilitate a meeting, made through the proper channels i.e. a phone call to the office, or a note to the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties. The first person to be informed should be the class teacher.

This arrangement ensures that all concerns are dealt with in a dignified, meaningful manner, without infringing on valuable teaching time.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying.

Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same manner as breaches of discipline – already outlined in our Code of Behaviour.

In the case where a parent reports a bullying incident, the school reserves the right to inform the relevant parties of the identity of the person making the complaint, when this is deemed necessary.

Our anti-bullying policy deals explicitly with the area of bullying and is available to parents.

School Rules

Children are supervised from 8.45a.m. until 2.40p.m. 1st Class finish at 2.30p.m.

Boys should be prepared for school each day e.g. having pencils, copies etc., and full uniform (except for PE days when school tracksuit should be worn).

Once a child enters the school premises he may not leave it again without the express permission of the Principal.

For the safety of all boys, a parent must always explain the reason for a boy's absence from school, either through the school's Aladdin, verbally or in writing. If a boy is absent for 20 days or more, the school has to inform Tusla Education Support Service (TESS).

A parent / legal guardian wishing to take a pupil out of class during school hours must either notify the school on Aladdin or via phone call/email. For safety reasons a boy's word is not sufficient. The school must be informed if someone other than a parent / legal guardian is collecting the child.

Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour, whether it is verbal, physical or online, will generally be regarded as serious misbehaviour.

Rough or dangerous play is not allowed. In the interest of the safety of all no boys should be involved in any activity or play which might hurt, harm or injure himself or anyone else.

In the interest of safety, children should never climb up on railings, walls or gates.

The use of bad or inappropriate language is deemed as misbehaviour.

It is expected that school property and equipment will be treated with respect at all times and that children understand that defacing or damaging of such is forbidden.

We have an active mobile phone policy which explains that phones are only allowed in school in exceptional circumstances which must be explained by a parent. In this instance the phones will be kept by the teacher until the end of the school day. Our mobile phone policy is available to view in full on our website.

We have a Healthy Eating Policy in the school which offers advice on healthy eating. It lists the many healthy options available to the boys and also mentions the types of food not allowed. There is a strict ban on nuts and nut products due to allergies.

Boys must wear their school uniform every day. For our Junior class pupils (1st to 4th) this is the school tracksuit with polo shirt and runners every day. Senior classes (5th and 6th) wear their full uniform every day except on PE days when they wear the school tracksuit. Their full uniform consists of grey shirt, grey trousers, wine jumper (school crest), school tie and black shoes. Black runners (**without coloured logos / stripes**) may also be worn. If a boy is not wearing his uniform for any reason he must have a note from his parent / guardian to explain why. We advise parents to label school jumpers and tracksuit tops as they frequently get lost or mislaid. Boys are not allowed to wear jewellery such as earrings and rings in school for safety reasons.

Boys are expected to be neat and tidy in dress and hair style, appropriate to a Boys' School. Extreme styles are not allowed.

Senior classes (4th, 5th & 6th) exit at the barrier gate. Junior classes exit via the main front gate. Boys who are getting on the school bus must wait at the yellow box inside the main front gate until the bus stops for them.

Boys travelling by bus are expected to behave in a reasonable manner, for the safety of all. Boys causing problems on the bus will be reported to their parents.

Boys travelling to and from school or while in their uniform are expected to represent the school with good behaviour.

It is school policy that boys usually would have homework each evening. Homework should be signed by a parent / guardian.

All the above rules are designated in the best interest of all the pupils in the school so that they may learn and play in a safe, healthy and happy environment.

The co-operation of teacher, parents and child is the best way to ensure that every child will progress well and be happy in school. In this regard we ask parents to keep in regular contact with their boy's class teacher.

Cathy Timmons
Principal