



St. Helen's S.N.S.
Portmarnock

A large, faint, light-grey watermark of an open book is centered on the page. The left page of the book contains the text "Bibhinn Beatha on Scaldire". The right page features a crest or emblem. The book is slightly curved, suggesting it is open.

Code of Behaviour

Ratified by Board of Management

2016

St. Helen's S.N.S.

Code of Behaviour

Introduction

The aims of primary education can be briefly stated as follows:

- To enable the child to live a full life in a caring and safe environment
- To equip him/her to avail of further education so that he/she, as an adult, can contribute to society
- To prepare a child for further education and life long learning

Our aim is to provide a happy and secure environment for our pupils, where there is a sense of order and discipline. This is achieved by having guidelines to direct behaviour for the good of all our pupils. Every effort is made to ensure that our code is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner.

A high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within our school and to achieve this, we maintain a high level of co-operation among all the staff and between staff, pupils and parents.

Aims

The aims of this Code of Behaviour are:

1. to enhance the learning environment where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.
2. to create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
3. to promote positive behaviour and self discipline recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
4. to assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures in our code and to seek their co-operation in their application.
5. to ensure that our systems of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
6. to allow the school function in an orderly and harmonious way.

General Guidelines

Each person in our school community is expected to show consideration, respect, good manners, and courtesy to other children and adults.

Guidelines for pupils:

Each pupil is expected to

- show respect for the property of the school, other children's property, parent's property and their own belongings
- be punctual and regular in their attendance.
- participate in school activities.
- do their best both in school and for homework
- uphold the school's code of behaviour while on school tours and representing the school at various out-of-school activities.

School Rules

1. Pupils must show care and respect for others at all times (no fighting, no bad language, no bullying, no disobedience).
2. Pupils must show respect for property (no litter, no vandalism, belongings kept neat and tidy).
3. Pupils must remain seated when teachers are not present.
4. Pupils are not allowed to chew gum.
5. Mobile phones and electronic gadgets are not allowed in school. *
6. Pupils must walk on the corridors
7. Pupils must be in time for school and wear their uniform each day. Track suits are only worn on days when children have P.E.

*In the case of mobile phones exceptions may be made on receipt of a written request from parents. Pupils who have been given permission to have a mobile phone must keep it in their school bags, switched off at all times, until they leave the school premises. The school accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to these phones.

Yard Rules

1. Fighting is strictly forbidden. Mess fighting receives a warning.
2. Pupils may not leave the yard without permission.
3. Eating and drinking is not permitted in the yard.
4. Pupils will play on the tarmac unless they have been designated to play on the grass.
5. Ball games are not permitted on the tarmac.
6. Pupils will line up when the bell rings.
7. Pupils must play fairly and safely on the grass field.

Pupils must tell the teacher on yard if they are aware of fighting or bullying behaviour.

Strategies promoting positive behaviour:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's copy
- A visit to another member of staff or the principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Delegation of some special privilege or responsibility
- A mention to parent either written or verbal
- Pupil of the Month Certificate.
- Night off homework
- Stay Safe Programme
- Social Personal and Health Education lessons.
- Intervention by Learning Support & Resource Teachers
- Different incentives throughout the year to promote positive yard behaviour. Reviewed and adapted periodically

Rewards

Rewards will be at the discretion of individual teachers.

- Praise,
- Stickers, tokens
- Comment in child's copy or journal.
- Special privilege e.g. sent on messages
- Award as "Pupil of the Month"
- Night free from homework
- Permission to go on school trips.
- Whole school incentive programmes

Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour

- Reasoning with the pupil
- Pupil helped to reflect on behaviour, consequences and alternatives
- Reprimand
- Prescribing additional work
- Referral to another teacher or adult who can work with the student
- Behaviour contracts
- Discipline Sheets
- Setting targets for behaviour and monitoring them with the student in a supportive way.
- Time out
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
- Referral to the principal
- Communication with parent
- Detention during a break or after school hours
- Loss of privileges e.g. tour or trips, not representing school at sports
- Formal report to the Board
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Sanctions

- Sanctions, within class, will be at the discretion of the individual teacher
- Spelling handout or other appropriate work will be issued
- Kept in during break time.
- Sent to Principal's Office.
- Detention – persistent misdemeanour or gross misbehaviour will incur detention
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Detention

Detention, after school hours, will only occur following consultation between parent, class teacher and principal.

Detention will only be implemented following persistent misbehaviour or gross misbehaviour

Detention will be invoked after a number of strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour have been tried.

Procedures for detention

Following consultation between the Principal and Class Teacher the child's parents will be contacted.

A suitable time after school will be agreed by all parties. This will be confirmed in writing

The student who is being detained will be given age-appropriate work.

An agreement is reached that the child being detained must try to alter the unacceptable behaviour following the detention.

Detention will be used to impress upon the pupil and parents the seriousness of the misbehaviour.

Suspension

Suspension is defined as "requiring the pupil to absent him/her self from the school for a specified, limited period of school days". It will be used to

- enable the school to set behavioural goals with the pupil and parents.
- give the staff time to plan other interventions.
- impress upon the pupil and parents the seriousness of the misbehaviour.

The authority to suspend a pupil has been delegated by the Board of Management (B.O.M.) to the principal. The suspension will be for a maximum of three days. Further suspension will require the authorisation of the B.O.M. Where a B.O.M. meeting cannot be convened, the principal, in consultation with the Chairperson, may impose a suspension of 5 days.

Grounds for suspension:

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

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

Procedures:

Parents will be informed about the misbehaviour by phone, followed by a letter.

A meeting will be held with parents to give them an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and the sanction is imposed.

Parents will then be informed in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will include

- the period of suspension and the date on which the suspension will begin and end.
- the reason for the suspension.
- work that has been assigned.
- the arrangements for returning to school including commitments by the pupil and parents to comply with the Code of Behaviour.
- the procedure for an appeal to the Board of Management.

- the right to appeal to The Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science.

In exceptional circumstances the principal may consider an immediate suspension where the child becomes a danger to themselves or other children or staff. Where this is considered warranted, following a preliminary investigation, parents will be notified and requested to collect their child immediately. A formal investigation will take place immediately after the suspension is imposed.

A pupil will not be suspended for more than three days except in exceptional circumstances.

Following a period of suspension, the parents must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code. The Principal must also be satisfied that the pupil's re-instatement will not constitute a risk to the pupils own safety or the safety of other pupils or staff.

Records and Reports: 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.

The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management and the National Educational and Welfare Board

Teachers will keep a written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour.

Expulsion

Expulsion of a pupil is a very serious step and one that will only be taken by the B.O.M. in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. Expulsion will only be used after the school has taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour.

Grounds for expulsion

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

In exceptional circumstances the B.O.M. may expel a student for a first offence including

- A serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff.
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils.
- Sexual assault

Procedures

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the following steps will then be taken:

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.

- A recommendation to the B.O.M. by the principal.
- Consideration by the B.O.M. of this recommendation and the holding of a hearing.
- B.O.M. deliberation and action following the hearing.
- Consultations arranged by the National Educational Welfare Board.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.
- Informing the parents of their right to appeal.

Bullying

Bullying will not be tolerated in this school and parents are expected to co-operate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying, in accordance with the school's Anti Bullying Code. Sanctions from the above list will be imposed.

The school also has a Harassment and Adult Bullying Policy.

Notification of a child's absence from school

Current legislation (Education and Welfare Act 2000) states that parents must notify the school when their child is absent. A written note must be sent to the child's class teacher on the day the child returns to school. This note must clearly state the reasons for the child's absence.

Roles and Responsibilities

Every member of the school community has a role and a responsibility in the implementation of the school's code of behaviour.

Home School Communication

It is in the interests of pupils, parents and teachers that good relations should prevail between school and home. Our school prides itself on the high level of co-operation that exists between us. Parents support the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules.

The staff of our school always welcome the opportunity to discuss behavioural problems that may arise from time to time. Parents should contact their child's teacher if they have a concern. With mutual respect, trust and goodwill these occasional problems are readily solved.

A brief overview of our Code of Behaviour is discussed at an induction meeting of new parents to the school. The code, together with our school's Anti-bullying Policy, will be provided to all new applicants on their enrolment to our school. Parents are requested to sign their agreement to support our code. Both policies can also be accessed via the school website www.helens.ie. The school rules are also printed in our homework journal

This policy was reviewed following an audit in keeping with the National Educational Welfare Board Guidelines.

. It was reviewed by the Board of Management in June 2016.