

SCOIL ASSAIM BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Introductory Statement and Rationale:

All children have a right to be educated in a safe and caring environment. Our school is a caring community, a place where every pupil is valued equally. It was considered important, therefore, that this policy should reflect Scoil Assaim's philosophy and ethos, as outline in the school's Mission Statement: *To educate each child to the best of his ability, and to lead pupils to early adolescence in the happy development of all their gifts and talents.* This Behaviour Policy provides guidelines aimed at directing behaviour for the good of all pupils in our school.

This policy was reviewed and updated in June 2021.

Aims:

- ◆ To allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious 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 these 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 our code, and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures
- ◆ To ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions is implemented in a fair and consistent manner

1. Guidelines for Behaviour:

The following guidelines for behaviour are based on the characteristic spirit of the school:

- ◆ Pupils are expected to be well behaved and to show respect and consideration for other children and adults
- ◆ Pupils are expected to show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own belongings
- ◆ Pupils are expected to be punctual and to attend school regularly
- ◆ Pupils are expected to do their best both in school and for homework
- ◆ Pupils are expected to uphold the guidelines for behaviour during school trips and when representing the school at various out-of-school activities

Parents are also asked to note the following:

- ◆ Uniforms: boys are expected to wear complete school uniform each day. The school tracksuit may be worn on P.E. days.
- ◆ A pupil's absence from school must be notified in writing to the class teacher by a parent or guardian; the school journal can be used for this purpose or parents can notify the school via Aladdin.
- ◆ Pupils entering the school grounds before 8.40 a.m. or remaining thereon after 2.45 p.m. are not covered by insurance, unless they are taking part in a school-organised activity.
- ◆ Mobile phones and smart devices must be kept in school bags, switched off at all times until pupils leave the school premises. This rule applies to all school trips and outings.
- ◆ The school authorities do not accept responsibility for the loss of, theft of or damage to property of pupils in excess of school requirements, e.g. bicycles, watches, money, mobile phones, smart devices etc.
- ◆ All pupils must line up in the school yard at 8.50 a.m. School starts at 8.55 a.m. *** Start time has been adjusted during the COVID-19 restrictions; please see notifications on Aladdin.**

2. Whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour

'A positive school ethos is based on the quality of relationships between teachers, and the way in which teachers and pupils treat each other. This positive ethos permeates all school activities and helps in forming a strong sense of social cohesion within the school'

Staff

- In our school we recognise the importance of taking a whole-school approach to promoting and recognising positive behaviour; a strong sense of community and co-operation is maintained among staff, pupils and parents.
- All pupils are treated with respect and dignity in our school.
- The school's SPHE curriculum is used to support the Behaviour Policy; this aims to develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. It also helps foster self-esteem and enables pupils to accommodate diversity.
- This policy is communicated to all new and temporary staff via Scoil Assaim's computer network.

Board of Management

- The Board of Management is supportive of the Principal Teacher in the application of a fair code of behaviour within the school.
- The Board of Management has been consulted in the ratification of this Behaviour Policy. The policy is reviewed by the Board every 2 years; adjustments/additions to the policy are made, if deemed necessary.

Parents

- Our school acknowledges the support of parents in achieving and maintaining high standards of behaviour.
- Our school prides itself on a high level of co-operation between pupils, parents and teachers.
- This Behaviour Policy, along with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy, is available via the school website to parents of all enrolled pupils.
- Parents support the school in maintaining high standards of behaviour by encouraging their children to abide by school rules, ensuring their children are at school on time and that homework is completed to a satisfactory level.

Pupils

- Pupils' views were elicited in the development of this Behaviour Policy.
- Pupils are involved in drafting rules for the classroom, and are encouraged to sign up to these rules on an annual basis.

3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour

'Every effort is made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to managing behaviour, placing greater emphasis on rewards than sanctions in order to set a positive atmosphere for learning'

We will display the five key elements of our behaviour policy in our classrooms and our school environment. They are as follows:

Be Safe
Be Honest
Be Respectful
Be Responsible
Be The Best You Can Be!

Classroom

- 'Ground rules' in each class are consistent with the ethos of the school and are expressed in positive terms.
- Pupils have an input in devising class rules.
- Teachers ensure that pupils understand how they are expected to behave.
- A clear system for rewarding good behaviour and sanctions for misbehaviour is consistently applied.

Yard

- A concise set of yard rules has been drafted which emphasises positive behaviour and makes clear what activities are permitted; all teachers and pupils are aware of yard rules. Our five key elements will provide the foundation for these rules.
- Clearly outlined arrangements for supervision of yard times are in place.
- Zones within the yard are clearly marked and communicated to the pupils. *** Adjustments have been made to yard rules and arrangements to comply with COVID-19 arrangements.**
- Pupils must abide by class rules on wet days when staying in class during break-time.
- All pupils comply with the 'freeze system' at the end of yard time.
- All pupils line up quietly when the bell rings.
- Clearly outlined arrangements are in place for supervision of pupils who remain inside due to illness; pupils must have a note from a parent requesting they be kept in, and must sit quietly outside the office with a suitable activity.
- Clear procedures are in place to manage incidents of misbehaviour: reasoning, verbal reprimand, temporary separation from peers through time out on the step and reporting to classroom teacher. The school's serious warning system will also be implemented when necessary.

4. Rewards and Sanctions

Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour:

- Rewards within class are at the discretion of individual class teachers.
- Any pupil whose work and behaviour is considered satisfactory can earn points towards a homework pass.
- 'Pupil of the Week' is often used to acknowledge and reward good behaviour.
- Pupils can earn points towards 'Golden Time' on Friday as recognition of positive behaviour.

Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour:

Behaviours are categorised in the school under minor and serious misdemeanours. The degree of misdemeanour will be judged by the teacher and/or Principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity and frequency of such misdemeanours. Teachers will make every effort to understand the reasons leading to incidents of misbehaviour, and when applying sanctions it should be the behaviour (rather than the person) that is the focus. Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a curricular area as punishment for misbehaviour.

The following are considered to be minor breaches of discipline:

- ◆ Minor disruption of class work
- ◆ Failure to complete homework assignments unless adequate reason is given by parent or guardian
- ◆ Rough play
- ◆ Name-calling / bad language
- ◆ Not staying within play area
- ◆ Running on corridors / pushing on stairs
- ◆ Lack of punctuality on a regular basis
- ◆ Less serious incidents of vandalism

The following are regarded as serious breaches of discipline and may be punished by suspension (each case will be considered on its own merits).

- ◆ Disrespect towards a teacher by word or deed
- ◆ Bullying (see our school Anti-Bullying policy)
- ◆ Violent behaviour towards another pupil causing him, or putting him at risk of, serious injury. As a general rule, retaliation is not accepted as an excuse
- ◆ Vandalism to property
- ◆ Leaving the school grounds without permission from a teacher
- ◆ Repeated incidents of less serious breaches

Misbehaviour is initially dealt with by class teacher by way of advice/warning, but if it is more serious or persistent the Principal and/or parents may be involved. When sanctions are necessary it must be clear why they are being applied, the consequence must relate as closely as possible to the behaviour, and it must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions. Group punishment should be avoided as it breeds resentment. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and, if necessary, to help the pupil devise strategies for this.

The following sanctions (listed in order of severity) are used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour.

Sanctions

1. Reasoning with pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
3. Temporary separation from peers within class
4. Reflection Sheet
5. Communication with parents
6. Loss of privileges (e.g. exclusion from yard, video, etc.)
7. Serious warning issued
8. Detention slip issued
9. Referral to Principal Teacher
10. Detention after school (parents notified in advance)
11. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school

Involving parents in management of problem behaviour:

Before resorting to serious sanctions, the normal channels of communication between school and parents are utilised.

- ◆ Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have any concerns
- ◆ Parents are kept fully informed from the outset of instances of misbehaviour on the part of their children.
- ◆ Scoil Assaim involves parents at an early stage, rather than as a last resort.
- ◆ In the case of gross misbehaviour, the Board authorises the Principal to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion on the matter with parents.

5. Suspension / Expulsion procedures

Suspensions / expulsion procedures are in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by Circular and Education Welfare Act 2000.

Parents are informed of their right to come to the school, and are invited to do so in order to discuss the misbehaviour with the Principal and, if appropriate, the class teacher. This is always done when the suspension of a pupil is being contemplated.

In the event that a pupil becomes a danger to himself or to others, the parents will be asked to remove the child immediately, to allow time to put measures in place to ensure the safety of the child and the safety of others.

6. Keeping records

Teachers keep a written record of all instances of recurring misbehaviour.

7. Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school

In accordance with the Education Welfare Act 2000, parents must notify the school of a pupil's absence and the reason for this absence. All pupil absences are reported to the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB).

8. Success Criteria

- ◆ Observation of positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment
- ◆ Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers
- ◆ Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils

9. Implementation and Review

This policy will apply with immediate effect.

The operation of this policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management every two years.

Scoil Assaim Board of Management, June 2021