

### **Rationale:**

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
- E. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school

To ensure policy is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for School, NEWB, 2008

### **Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school**

This is a Catholic Primary School under the patronage of the Archdiocese of Cashel and Emly. Under the management of the BOM we work in collaboration with parents and the local community.

We commit ourselves to promoting the wellbeing of all the pupils in our care by developing the spiritual, emotional and physical potential of each individual.

In our school there is a high expectation of pupils conduct and positive encouragement rather than negative criticism is the norm.

There is a strong sense of community and a high level of communication among pupils, teachers and parents.

Our Code of Behaviour will strive to reflect the principles of the school and our ethos.

## **Aims:**

### **Our Code of Behaviour aims to:**

- ✓ Ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement
- ✓ Allow the school to function in an orderly way where all children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- ✓ Create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- ✓ Promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the difference between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- ✓ Ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community
- ✓ 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
- ✓ Ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school
- ✓ Promote the growth of the individual child in his/her development into a responsible, self-disciplined adult.

### ***1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school***

The Code of Behaviour takes into consideration the particular needs and circumstances of Herbertstown NS

- Every effort will be made by teachers to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school as outlined in the Code
- Our Code of Behaviour will be administered with fairness, justice and good will and an emphasis put on praise and reward rather than punishment
- The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences, as every child is an individual and should be treated as such
- Herbertstown NS recognises the importance of children's rights and promotes the understanding for children that with rights come responsibilities
- Rules will be kept to a minimum
- The overall responsibility for behaviour in the school rests with the Principal
- It is hoped that all pupils, parents and staff will share a sense of responsibility about the behaviour in the school

## **2. Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour**

The element of a whole school approach to behaviour includes:

- An ethos, policies and practices that are in harmony
- A teamwork approach to behaviour
- A whole-school approach to curriculum and classroom management
- An inclusive and involved school community
- A systematic process for planning and reviewing behaviour policy

### **Staff:**

- ✓ Affirm positive behaviour and good work in the classroom
- ✓ Establish clear classroom based rules for the children in their class
- ✓ Maintain record of inappropriate behaviours
- ✓ Maintain a consistently fair approach for dealing with behaviour
- ✓ Active playtime is promoted
- ✓ As a staff we model and promote respect for others, politeness and the cultivation of a harmonious atmosphere at all times
- ✓ Curriculum content is focused and developed in response to the needs of children in the multi-class setting
- ✓ The school's SPHE 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
- ✓ New staff member will receive a copy of the Code and through dialogue with the school principal will be made aware of school practice

### **Board of Management:**

- ✓ The overall responsibility for ensuring that a code of behaviour is prepared rests with the BOM
- ✓ The BOM has particular responsibility for the ethos of the school, as well as having overall responsibility for school policies
- ✓ The BOM and staff have made sure that all members of the school community had the opportunity to be involved in work on this Code of Behaviour

**Parents:**

- ✓ Parents will receive a copy of the Code of Behaviour and general information regarding the running of the school on enrolment of their child in Herbertstown NS
- ✓ Parents are expected to be aware of and co-operate with the school's rules and system of rewards and sanctions and to bring these to the attention of their children
- ✓ Parents ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually
- ✓ Parents attend meeting at the school if requested
- ✓ Parents are welcome to discuss and dealings regarding their child with the class teacher. However, parents are requested to ring for an appointment to meet with the teacher at an appropriate time. This will ensure that the class will be adequately supervised.
- ✓ Parents help their children with homework and ensure that it is completed
- ✓ Parents ensure their children have the necessary books and materials for school
- ✓ Parents ensure that their children attend school attired in the correct uniform
- ✓ Parents encourage their children to show respect and courtesy for others – students, teachers and member of the whole school community

**Pupils:**

- ✓ Pupils are encouraged to devise individual classroom rules in conjunction with their class teacher every September. These classroom rules will reflect the whole school approach to behaviour
- ✓ Pupils are expected to be aware of and comply with the school rules
- ✓ Pupils are afforded the opportunity to reflect and review school rules on occasion. This is carried out through guided talk and discussion.
- ✓ Pupils are expected to try their best at all times and follow instructions from staff immediately
- ✓ Pupils are encouraged to respect themselves and others at all times by being courteous and polite, thereby cultivating a harmonious atmosphere in the school environment
- ✓ Pupils are expected to take responsibility and care for their own belongings
- ✓ Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free
- ✓ Pupils are expected to walk quietly in the school building at all times
- ✓ Pupils are expected to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- ✓ Pupils in our school are made aware that behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and feel safe is unacceptable.

These expectations and responsibilities of pupils can be summed up as follows:

*Be kind and gentle*

*Be neat and tidy*

*Be happy and safe*

*Be good and respectful*

*Listen and do your best!*

### **3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour.**

Positive reinforcement of behaviour is an approach that is used to compliment this Code of Behaviour and lead to better self-discipline within children.

#### **Classroom**

- ✓ Classroom rules are devised by pupils and expressed in a positive light
- ✓ Teachers ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave
- ✓ A quiet word can be used to express approval when merited
- ✓ A comment on work completed
- ✓ Positive note to parents recognising and acknowledging good behaviour and/or achievement
- ✓ Effective classroom management – incorporating routines, timetabling, early finisher activities, peer tutoring
- ✓ Consistent approach to behaviour expectations
- ✓ High expectations of good work reflective of each child's individual ability
- ✓ Teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of importance of good homework practice and routine

#### **Playground**

- ✓ Adequate supervision will be provided during all break times
- ✓ Children are aware of the boundaries around the school
- ✓ Permission must be sought from the supervising teachers to use the toilet facilities during break
- ✓ Once bell rings, children will walk to the lines and line up alphabetically in their designated area
- ✓ Children remain in their own classroom on wet days. Supervision is continued indoors by staff on duty. Senior pupils operate a helper system with the junior classes on these days
- ✓ All e=children are expected to go out onto the yard once they have eaten their lunch. Requests from parents to allow their child stay indoor during break times cannot be accepted as the school is unable to provide adequate supervision both inside and outside the school during break times
- ✓ Inappropriate behaviour e.g. rough horseplay, is not allowed
- ✓ Children are encouraged to be physically active during break. Children are permitted to bring basic equipment to school for this purpose
- ✓ Any incident of misbehaviour and/or accidents will be recorded on Aladdin and brought to the attention of the relevant class teacher(s)
- ✓ Yellow and red Card system – used to discourage misbehaviour in the yard.

### **Other areas in the school**

- ✓ Children are expected to behave in an orderly fashion at all times in the corridors, toilets and all areas of the school building
- ✓ In as far as possible, children are collected from their classrooms by the SET
- ✓ Mobile phones are not permitted

### **School related activities**

This Code of Behaviour is applicable to all school related events both within the official school day and at all extracurricular activities

### **School opening/closing time.**

Our school will open to receive pupils at 9.05am. No responsibility is accepted for pupils arriving before that time. Classes will commence each day at 9.20am. No pupils should arrive later than 9.20am.

Classes will end each day at 3.00pm. Children will be dismissed via the gate at the rear of the building leading out to HDA car park.

## **4. Rewards and Sanctions**

### **Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour**

Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of this Code. School management and staff actively foster the school ethos, policies and practices that promote positive behaviour and prevent inappropriate behaviour

- Positive behaviour is acknowledged to parents through journal notes or verbally
- Homework passes
- A merit system e.g. Class Dojo
- Treat
- Visit to Principal/other staff member for commendation
- Praise
- Delegating special responsibility or privilege
- Star Award at Monthly Assembly

### **Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour**

A common framework for dealing with inappropriate behaviour is in place in this school

It is envisaged that the class teacher is the person on the ‘front-line’ who is responsible for dealing with all minor misdemeanour in relation to the Code of Behaviour

The class teacher will employ a problem solving approach to misbehaviour. Children will be encouraged to discuss all behaviour and recognise the consequences of behaving in this manner. Open communication with parents will be fostered at all times.

Records of incidents of continuing misbehaviour will be maintained on Aladdin.

**A staged approach for dealing with misbehaviours will be employed:**

- Reasoning with pupil
- Verbal reprimand and advice on how to improve behaviour
- Removal from the group, time out
- Note home to parents
- Extra homework
- Detention during part of break with written work
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Informal communication with parents
- Referral to principal
- Formal communication with the parents, teacher and principal
- Formal report to the BOM
- Suspension/Expulsion (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act, 2000)

**Sanctions will be used in a way that ensures that'll**

- ✓ They are a positive form of intervention
- ✓ They are used consistently
- ✓ They are communicated clearly to both parents and pupils
- ✓ They are proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- ✓ They are appropriate to the age and developmental stage of the pupil and take account of the cultural background of the pupil

**Managing aggressive or violent behaviour**

- Any pupil who may present with serious emotional disturbance will be referred for psychological assessment as soon as possible
- Appropriate support can also be sought from SENO
- 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, every effort will be made to remove the pupil from the situation. Support will be requested of parents and SENO to help improve situation for the child. All efforts will be made to support the ongoing needs of the child. In extreme cases it may be necessary to contact the Garda Síochána or the local HSE Social Work Department for additional support.

## **5. Suspension/ Expulsion**

### **Suspension**

The BOM of Herbertstown NS has the authority to suspend a pupil. This authority has been delegated to the Principal and a BOM meeting.

Suspension will be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern.

Only in the most exceptional circumstances will a suspension be considered. The decision to suspend a student requires such serious grounds as:

- The pupils behaviour has had a serious detrimental effect on the education of other pupils
- The pupils continuing presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property
- A single incident of serious misconduct may be ground for suspension

While suspension is being considered and before any form of suspension is imposed, the parents will be invited to attend the school to discuss the behaviour of their child

Parents and pupil will be given an opportunity to respond before any sanction is imposed

A pupil will not be suspended for more than 3 days, except in exceptional circumstances

The Principal, subject to BOM, may propose a longer periods of suspension, up to 5 days

Any suspension being imposed will be notified to parents in advance and a return date and time specified.

A child returning to school after a period of suspension must be accompanied by their parents and will be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the schools Code of Behaviour.

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for the reasons of safety of the student, other students, staff or others, a preliminary investigation will be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. The formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension.

In the case of an immediate suspension, parents will be notified and arrangement made with them for the pupil to be collected.

## **Expulsion**

The BOM has the authority to expel a pupil in extreme cases. 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 a notification under this section by an educational welfare officer.'

Steps will be taken to address the misbehaviour and avoid the expulsion of the pupil where appropriate:

- Meet with the parents and pupil
- Ensure pupil understand consequences of their behaviour
- Ensure all other options have been tried
- Assistance of support agencies has been sought

*It is the right of the BOM to take...’such other reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school concerned and that safety of students is secured.’*

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms that the serious misbehaviour may warrant expulsion the following fair procedures will be followed:

- A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal
- A recommendation to the BOM will be made by the Principal
- The BOM will consider the recommendation and the holding of a hearing
- BOM deliberations and actions following hearing
- Consultations are arranged by the EWO
- Confirmation of the decision to expel

There may be exceptional circumstances where the BOM forms the opinion that a student should 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 of Behaviour could 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

## **6. 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 BOM, including:

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

Parents will be advised of this right of appeal and associated timeframe, in accordance with Circular 22/02, if it has been decided to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil by the principal and the BOM. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to parents or pupil

## **7. Keeping records**

### **Class level**

- Each teacher will maintain detailed records of children presenting with behavioural problems. Record will be maintained in a secure, central location
- The standard end of year report incorporating reference to social development and in particular behaviour in class and on the playground is utilised by the class teacher

### **Playground**

- A record of misbehaviour is maintained as required by supervising teachers on yard on Aladdin
- A fair and consistent approach in relation to the school and playground rules is maintained at all times by all teachers
- Record of yellow and red cards

## **8. Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school**

In accordance with the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23(2) (e) parents must notify the school of a student's absence and provide the reason for this absence in writing. It is recommended that this note is produced on the student's return to school. All absence notes are stored in a secure, central location by the class teacher.

Parents are made aware of the terms of the Education Welfare Act and its implications for school to report absences that exceed 20 days

If a report has been made to Tusla the standard reporting forms are used.

Acknowledgment is made of children who maintain full attendance at the end of every year.

## **9. Reference to other Policies**

A number of organisational and curricular plans and policies help support the aims of this Code of Behaviour:

- SPHE
- Enrolment
- Attendance
- Child Protection
- Health & Safety
- Anti-Bullying

### **Success Criteria**

- ✓ Parents and teachers are a dominant influence on the lives of children and for this reason the school holds as an idea that parents and teachers will model good example at all times
- ✓ The success of this Code of Behaviour will be reflected in the positive atmosphere in the school
- ✓ This Code of Behaviour will serve to enhance the channels of effective communication that already exist between parents, children and teachers
- ✓ All members of the school community will display respect for one another in accordance with the school rules as outlined during this policy

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- ✓ The overall responsibility for ensuring that a Code of Behaviour exists in the school rests with the BOM
- ✓ All staff members, parents and pupils have responsibility to adhere to the Code of Behaviour
- ✓ Teachers and Principal will ensure that this Code of Behaviour is reviewed when necessary