

Largy NS

Code of Behaviour

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## Introductory Statement

This draft Code of Behaviour has been devised by the staff of Largy National School with the members of the Board of Management, the parent committee and pupils. It was devised during the second term of the 2010/2011 school year.

### Rationale

- The Board of Management of Largy National School decided to review the Behaviour Policy to ensure that it is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, TUSLA, 2008.
- 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; and
  - E. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

### Relationship to Characteristic Ethos

- Largy National School seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are nurtured and valued.
- The school climate and atmosphere are created by the actions and behaviour of everyone in the school.
- The behaviour of adults in a child's life, including parents and teachers, is a significant influence on how a child acts.
- The code will be most effective where there is a high level of openness and co-operation between staff, parents and pupils.
- A clear understanding among all the partners of the standards of behaviour required and the procedures to be adopted where there are breaches of the code also helps ensure a harmonious environment where all can work effectively.

### Aims

In devising this code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. The aim is to create an ordered and orderly environment in which pupils can, through developing self-discipline, feel secure and make progress in all aspects of their development. This code of behaviour describes the school's expectations about how each member of the school community will help to make the school a good place for teaching and learning. Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school and the over-riding aims will be –

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement;
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences;

- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others;
  - To enhance the learning environment and allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development;
  - To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community;
  - To assist the parents and children in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the Code 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 foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment;
  - To enable teachers to teach without disruption.

### General Principles

The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to tolerate these differences. It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, parents and pupils.

Every effort will be made to ensure that the code of behaviour is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner. The limits of behaviour are clearly defined and children become familiar with the consequences of behaviour beyond these limits. The over-riding principle governing this code is respect - respect for ourselves and others; our own and others' property and the environment.

The school expects the highest standard of behaviour from its pupils including the following:

- Each pupil is expected to show respect for staff, for other children and for learning
- Each pupil is expected to be well behaved and show consideration for other children and adults;
- Each pupil is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own belongings;
- Each pupil is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual;
- Each pupil is expected to do his/her best both in school and for homework.

While the school has expanded on these principles to outline the "school rules", each class is required to draft their own class rules or charter, through consultation and discussion within the class and they will reflect the age and maturity levels of the students in the class. These rules will be kept to a minimum, they will be recorded in simple language and they will be stated positively, telling students what to do as well as what not to do. The rules will be referred to regularly and will form part of SPHE lessons.

### Restorative Practice

Restorative Practice is one approach that is utilised by our school. Restorative practice provides a focus on developing positive relationships between all members of the school community. It gives opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and learning. Restorative Practice is a process whereby children are given the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and how they and others have been affected by it so as to help heal broken relationships and prevent reoccurrence. Where a breakdown in good relations occurs, the school will use restorative practice involving all parties affected to help repair the harm done.

#### Restorative Questions to respond to Challenging Behaviour

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking about at the time?

3. What have your thoughts been since?
4. Who has been affected by what you did?
5. In what way have they been affected?
6. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

#### **To help those harmed by other actions**

1. What did you think when you realised what had happened?
2. What have your thoughts been since?
3. How has this affected others?
4. What has been the hardest thing for you?
5. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

### **Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Behaviour**

- The Board of Management and the Principal have overall responsibility for the implementation and on-going monitoring of this policy. However, all staff members have responsibility for their own classes and for the general school population when on yard duty or on any organised out-of-school activity. Senior students have a role to play and parents or other members of the school community may make comments or suggestions through their representatives on the Board of Management or directly to the Principal. The school values the support and co-operation of parents in the promotion of this strategy. The policy shall apply to all students during all school related activities.
- It is the policy of this school to actively promote good behaviour. Children learn best by being rewarded. It is more positive to praise a child doing the proper thing than to constantly scold the child who misbehaves. As part of our on-going efforts to promote positive behaviour, time will be allocated at some staff meetings for discussion regarding the implementation of the code. Staff will be given opportunities to share their experience of both positive and negative behaviour and to learn from collective wisdom. Staff will be given the opportunity to attend in service courses in the area of behaviour management and to liaise with SESS and other professionals
- The SPHE curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour. It aims to help 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. The Book Making The Limits is given to all class teachers as an aid to implementing the SPHE curriculum and the SPHE policy is reviewed on a regular basis. This policy is communicated to parents through the [school website](#) and is given to parents when their child is enrolled in the school
- Teachers will use various strategies to promote good behaviour including “Golden Time”, star/reward charts, stickers, homework passes, weekly lottery/raffle, lucky dip, extra responsibilities in class and in the school, singling out for exceptional worthwhile achievements and efforts, and other incidental means of praise or reward.
- To facilitate new members of staff become familiar with practices within the school, discussion regarding the implementation of the code will always form part of the first staff meeting held each September. The code will also be given to parents whenever they register a child in the school for enrolment. The code will be reviewed regularly at BOM meetings

- For children presenting with behavioural difficulties arising from their Special Educational Needs, behaviour targets will be set in their IEP, lessons on anger management, emotions and the use of **the Time Out Room** will be given by the **SET Teacher**
- The school will require a child's parents/guardians, as a condition of registering a child, to confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them and they shall make reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the code by the child

## **REWARDS AND SANCTIONS**

The Following strategies will be used by all teachers:

Praise

Praise may be given by means of any one of the following:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval;
- A comment in a child's exercise book;
- A visit to another class, to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation;
- A word of praise in front of a group or the class;
- A reward system - student of the week; occasional treats; vouchers; stickers; Golden Time
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege;
- A mention to parents - either written or verbal communication;

## **Disapproval**

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and to discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to the age and emotional development of the child.

The following stages will be used to show disapproval of inappropriate behaviour – they are not always followed in the format listed.

- Reasoning with pupils including advising them about the consequences of their actions;
- Verbal reprimand (including advice on how to improve);
- Temporary removal from group (within the class or on the yard);
- Note in journal from class teacher to be signed by parent;
- Carrying out a useful task within the school;
- Reflection sheet (kept on file by teacher);
- Referral to another teacher/classroom;
- Verbal communication with parents/guardians;
- Prescribing extra work (kept on file by teacher);
- Supervision during lunch break in designated area;
- Withdrawal of privileges, responsibilities or extra duties;
- Recording instances of repeated misbehaviour and referral to the Principal;
- Formal written communication with parents/guardians;
- Referral to the Principal and the Chairperson;
- Formal meeting with parents/guardians;
- Suspension;
- Expulsion.

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health and safety.

Occasionally, other prudent, unlisted steps may be taken.

Initially instances of misbehaviour will be dealt with by the class teacher. This will include children

being advised about their behaviour and about how to improve. Discussion about behaviour and its consequences will form part of SPHE lessons at all class levels. Teachers will actively promote good behaviour and aim to “catch” repeated offenders at activities where they can give positive feedback, thus promoting better behaviour.

However, where these strategies have failed and where misbehaviour is more serious or persistent it will be necessary to involve others including the Principal, parents/guardians and the Board of Management. The Principal and staff may also seek assistance from NEPS, SESS, HSE or other agencies.

Sanctions may be needed to help a student with Special Educational Needs to learn about appropriate behaviour and skills, as in the case of any student Teachers will take special care to help the student with special needs to understand the purpose of the sanction and the reason why the behaviour is unacceptable.

The school and classroom practices that support good learning behaviour are valid for all students, including those with Special Educational Needs

### **Classification of Misbehaviours**

Misbehaviour falls into one of three categories – minor, serious or gross. Teachers and/or the Principal will make judgements based on a common sense approach having regard to the age or vulnerability of the child and the gravity and frequency of any misbehaviour as follows:

#### **Minor Misbehaviour**

The following are examples of possible minor misbehaviour:

Interrupting class work / Regularly arriving late for school / Running in the school building / Littering around the school / Not completing homework without good reason (to include a note from a parent/guardian) / Talking out of turn.

Teachers will take the following steps when dealing with Minor Misbehaviour

#### **Phase 1**

- Reasoning with the pupil
- Verbal reprimand;
- Time out;
- Note in journal from class teacher to be signed by parent;
- Carrying out a useful task within the school;
- Noting instances of yard misbehaviour in the incident book and informing class teacher.
- Loss of part of Golden Time e.g. losing a star is a loss of 5 minutes

Regular occurrences of Minor Misbehaviour will be dealt with as follows:

#### **Phase 2**

- Temporary separation from peers (within the classroom);
- Referral to another teacher/classroom;
- Reflection sheet (describing incident) signed by parents/teacher/student (kept on file by teacher)
- Referral to the Principal;
- Discussion with parents about misbehaviour.

#### **Phase 3**

- Child will be sent to the Principal;
- Formal letter from school Principal informing parent of continuous misbehaviour;
- Denial of participation in some class activity e.g. trip to park, school tour;
- Class teacher and/or Principal will meet with one/both parents;

- Chairperson of the Board of Management informed and parents requested to meet with Chairperson or other designated Board member and the Principal.

### **Serious Misbehaviour**

The following are examples of possible serious misbehaviour:

Constantly disruptive in class / Telling lies / Stealing / Damaging others' property / Bullying / Answering back a teacher / Endangering self or fellow pupils in the class or the yard / Using unacceptable language / Deliberate, continual disobedience / discourteous or unmannerly behaviour /leaving school premises without permission.

All incidents of bullying will be dealt with as outlined in the school's Anti-bullying policy. (See separate policy)

Teachers will take steps as outlined from Phase 2 above, but depending on misbehaviour may proceed to the following steps when dealing with Serious Misbehaviour

- An account of all incidents will be entered in the relevant Incident book;
- Suspension will be used as a sanction where all attempts at reasoning with the pupil have failed and where all other efforts of the school in consultation with the parents or guardians of the pupil have failed to achieve a satisfactory conclusion. Following formal verbal discussions a letter outlining items discussed will be sent to parents. Communications to parents regarding the suspension of a pupil, or the possibility of considering suspension as a sanction, will be in writing. (Copies of all correspondence will be retained)

Regular occurrences of Serious Misbehaviour will be dealt with as follows

Parents will be invited to meet class teacher, the principal and/or the chairperson to discuss repeated serious incidents of misbehaviour.

### **Gross Misbehaviour**

The following are examples of gross misbehaviour:

Bringing weapons or dangerous substances to school / Persistently engaging in activities which have been identified by members of staff as dangerous or inappropriate / Leaving school premises without permission / Deliberately injuring any member of the school community / Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff or a pupil; (e.g. physical violence, striking, nipping, biting, spitting). Persistent incidents of serious misbehaviour will be classified as gross misbehaviour.

### **Teachers will take the following step when dealing with Gross Misbehaviour**

- Principal and Chairperson are informed immediately and suspension considered.

#### **Suspension**

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. 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. 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, teacher and the principal. If the parents (and the pupil) 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 health and safety of pupils and teachers, the Board has deferred responsibility to the Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Further suspensions will require Board of Management approval. This approval may be obtained at a regular meeting of the Board or at an emergency meeting at which the Chairperson and Principal have outlined for the Board the reasons why they feel it is necessary to impose a further suspension. In line with the requirements of the Education Welfare Act (2000), the Board of Management will inform TUSLA when any pupil's period of suspension equals or exceeds six school days.

- When a student is suspended, the parents/guardians will be requested to remove the student from the school. The Principal will meet with the parents/guardian to outline the decision to implement the suspension and will present the parents/guardian with a written statement of the terms, duration and date of the termination of the suspension.

### **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 (and pupil) 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 and will not have a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils. The Principal in consultation with the parents, the class teacher and the pupil (if appropriate) will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil, if required, and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

Where a satisfactory resolution of a problem is achieved, a pupil may be re-admitted to school within a suspension period at the discretion of the chairperson of the board and the principal.

### **Expulsion**

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil in an extreme case (see p.80/81/82, Developing a Code of Behaviour; Guidelines for Schools) e.g. where repeated incidents of serious misbehaviour interfere with the educational opportunities of fellow students or where there is a threat to the health and safety of either students or staff. Where expulsion is considered the school authorities will have tried a range of other interventions and will have formed the opinion that they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour. This sanction would be imposed under the terms of the Education Welfare Act (2000). Suspension/expulsion procedures are in accordance with the Education Act (1998).

### **Before/After School**

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening time of 9.00a.m. or after the official closing time of 1.40p.m. (infants) 2.40p.m. (other classes) except where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management. Pupils involved in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with school behaviour policy during these times.

### **Misbehaviour on the Yard**

Incidents of yard misbehaviour will be dealt with as follows:

The teacher on duty who notices misbehaviour will reason with the pupil/s misbehaving. If no

improvement occurs the following procedure may be followed:

- Ask the pupil/s misbehaving to accompany the teacher on duty as they patrol the yard;
- Impose a period of “time out” – 5 to 15 minutes – where the student will be asked to remain in a specified place until told to return to play;
- Allocate certain useful tasks as punishment;
- Inform the class teacher (who may decide to impose a further sanction depending on the seriousness of the misbehaviour);

#### **Involving Parents/Guardians in Managing Problem Behaviour**

Parents/guardians are valued as partners in the school community and as such will be invited to participate in promoting positive behaviour both in school and in the wider community. Class teachers will refer to repeated episodes of minor misbehaviour in the pupil’s Homework journal which parents/guardians are requested to sign each evening. Parents of infants will receive a short note from the teacher. In cases where pupils are required to complete some extra work as a sanction,

parents/guardians will again be requested to sign the relevant work. Class teachers may occasionally request parents/guardians to visit them in school to discuss some aspect of a pupil’s behaviour. The Principal will be informed of these meetings and may be invited to attend. Parents/guardians are encouraged to make appointments to meet with class teachers and/or the Principal at the earliest opportunity in an effort to prevent any escalation of inappropriate behaviour. The school will remind parents/guardians of the procedures for contacting the school at every opportunity.

Where pupils are found to be involved in more serious misbehaviour the Principal may telephone or write to parents/guardians to request them to attend an informal/formal meeting at the school. Class teachers, teachers who witness misbehaviour while supervising on yard duty, the Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management may also attend these meetings. The pupil may also attend all or part of these meetings if deemed appropriate.

#### **Managing aggressive or violent behaviour**

The school recognises that occasionally students may not respond positively to the usual interventions and that they may require extra support in an effort to manage aggressive or violent behaviour. The Special Educational Needs Organiser may be contacted. Help and support may be sought from the services available, e.g., HSE, NEPS, SESS. 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 the child will be removed from the situation and the parents contacted and asked to take the child home. A Cool Room with lessons on how a pupil can use it is provided so that the pupil can avail of it in order to avert aggressive behaviour. A small minority of students may show particular challenging behaviour. These students will need a sustained and systematic response involving the important adults in their lives, in school and at home. Regular communication, in the form of a written log, will be completed by the class teacher and/or SNA, in order to provide continuous feedback between parents and teachers on the child’s behaviour, in addition to regular verbal communication.

#### **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 Science against some decisions of the Board of Management, including (1) permanent exclusion from a school and (2) suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student. (See Circular 22/02)

## **Keeping records**

In line with the school's policy on record keeping, and data protection legislation, formal records in relation to pupils' behaviour are kept in a secure filing cabinet. Copies of all communications with parents/guardians will be retained in the school. Records of more serious incidents are recorded in a specific journal. All such records are retained until students reach 21 years. Class teachers shred personal records at the end of each year.

Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school

Parents must notify the school in writing of a student's absence and the reason for this absence. The school's attendance policy deals with this in more detail.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Board of Management's Responsibilities**

The Board of Management is expected to

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment;
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code;
- Ratify the code;
- Ensure the code is communicated to the whole school community.

### **Principal's Responsibilities**

The Principal is expected to

- Promote a positive climate in the school
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner
- Arrange for review of the Code, as outlined in the timetable for review.

### **Teachers' Responsibilities**

Teachers are expected to:

- Teach the code;
- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour having regard to decisions made on a whole school basis;
- Be cognisant of their duty of care;
- Create a safe and welcoming working environment for each pupil;
- Develop and nurture a sense of self-esteem in each pupil;
- Praise desirable behaviour;
- Facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential;
- Listen, at appropriate times, to pupils' explanations for behaviour;
- Recognise and affirm good work;
- Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils;
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils;
- Be courteous, consistent and fair;
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum;
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour;
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour;
- Provide support for colleagues;
- Communicate with parents when necessary and
- Provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

### **Pupils' Responsibilities**

Pupils are expected to

- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice
- Show respect for all members of the school community
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling
- Include other pupils in games and activities
- Bring correct materials/books to school
- Follow school and class rules.

### **Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities**

Parents/guardians are expected to

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for their own and other people's property
- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others
  
- Communicate to the school the reasons for children's absences
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour.

### **Reference to other Policies**

Other school policies that have a bearing on the code of behaviour include

- SPHE plan
- Anti-bullying
- Enrolment
- Tours
- Health & Safety
- Special Educational Needs

### **Success Criteria**

This policy will be deemed to be successful when the following are observed:

- 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.

### **Implementation Date 5 May 2011**

### **Review**

The code will be discussed at staff meetings and reviewed periodically.

### **Ratification and Communication**

The policy will be printed in the School Policies Booklet.

Review

This policy will be reviewed in June 2018

Reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on 12 May 2021

Signed: P.J.Leddy

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: M Hoey

Principal

Date: 12/5/21

Date: 12/5/21