**Polasaí Dearfach Iompair**

**Positive Behaviour Policy**



**Ethos**

In Gaelscoil Aodha Rua, we aim to provide every child with a happy, safe, secure and stimulating environment for learning. In order to cultivate this ethos, staff place a consistent emphasis on promoting and encouraging positive behaviour. In partnership with pupils and parents, we set high expectations for behaviour from our pupils, both within the school and when representing the school in venues in the local community. We dedicate ourselves to regularly using positive reinforcement, praise and rewards, to promote and respond to desirable behaviour. In turn, we believe that the use of these positive strategies actually lessens the need for reactive strategies and the use of sanctions in response to undesirable behaviour.

**School Context**

Due to the fact that our school is still located in temporary / mobile accommodation, we rely on the generosity of a range of local community venues for hosting many of our curricular and extra-curricular activities. We regularly travel to Ranfurly Arts Centre, Dungannon Youth Resource Centre, The Junction, Dungannon Leisure Centre and The Torrent Centre, to name but a few and use their facilities for sport, drama and a range of school performances.

Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that the content of our ‘Positive Behaviour Policy’ extends to our visits to public venues in the local community, including whilst on the journey to and from these venues. We remind our pupils that when using these facilities, they are acting as ambassadors for our school and should be mindful of the impact that their behaviour has on the public image of the school. It is heartening to mention, that we regularly receive messages from service providers regarding the exemplary behaviour and good manners of our pupils when visiting their settings. Maith sibh a pháistí!

**Guidance**

In devising this policy, we drew on guidance from:

‘Pastoral Care in Schools’ – DENI 1999

‘Safeguarding & Child Protection in Schools’ – DENI 2017

**Aims of the Policy**

In this policy we aim to:

* Outline common expectations for behaviour and discipline between staff, pupils and parents
* Agree strategies for promoting desirable behaviour / for responding to undesirable behaviour, both in school and on outings
* Ensure a safe, secure and stimulating environment for learning where all children can access the curriculum without hindrance or interruption due to the undesirable behaviour of others
* Encourage pupils to respect themselves and their belongings
* Encourage children to respect others and their property
* Emphasise the importance of using good manners and being courteous and polite to others
* Encourage children to understand the effect of their behaviour on others and the consequences of repeated incidents of undesirable behaviour in school
* Invite all stakeholders (pupils, parents & staff) to work in partnership to ensure the effective implementation of the policy

**Core Values**

The core values underpinning our work on positive behaviour can be summed up in our ‘Rialacha Órga’ or ‘Ten Golden Rules’. These rules are on display in every class-room and in the yard. Every child has received a copy of our ‘Golden Rules’ and parents were asked to discuss the out-workings of the rules with their children. (See Appendix 1)

**Roles and Responsibilities**

The successful implementation of this policy, as in all school policies, relies on the effective partnership between parents, pupils and school staff. We each have a role in ensuring that we are aware of the core aims of the policy and that they are upheld and adhered to.

**Role of Parents**

Parents are invited to:

* Ensure that their child arrives at school and is collected on time
* Ensure that their child’s attendance is good and that a note is sent in to explain any absences
* Ensure that their child is wearing full school uniform (unless advised to wear sports uniform)
* Ensure that their child is prepared for school and has brought the necessary equipment
* Encourage their child to show respect to school staff and staff in external venues
* Remind their child of the school rules and encourage them to adhere to them

**NOTE:**

* ***We do not present awards for good attendance / punctuality to pupils in our school, as we place full responsibility for these areas on parents / guardians.***
* ***In turn, if an issue arises regarding unsatisfactory attendance / punctuality, we will raise this issue with the parent / guardian.***

**Role of Staff**

Staff have a responsibility to:

* Ensure they are adequately prepared for lessons
* Cater for the learning needs of all children, to ensure they are sufficiently supported / challenged
* Provide an ordered, organised, attractive learning environment for learning
* Agree clear expectations for behaviour and encourage pupils to have an input into the class code
* Cultivate a positive ethos in the classroom where praise, encouragement and rewards far outweigh criticism and negative sanctions
* To treat pupils in a caring, respectful manner and to encourage them to do their best in both curricular and pastoral activities
* Be familiar with and implement school policies consistently
* Guide pupils on expected standards of behaviour when using public venues
* Deal with all incidents of undesirable behaviour in a fair, firm and consistent manner – always criticising / categorising the behaviour and not the child.

**Role of Pupils**

Pupils have a responsibility to:

* Uphold the ‘Ten Golden Rules’ of Gaelscoil Aodha Rua and any other agreed ‘class-code’ or behaviour agreement within the school
* Show respect to all adults who work in the school and to follow their instructions to ensure the safety and well-being of all members of our school community
* Treat other children kindly, help each other and celebrate each other’s achievements.
* Wear their school uniform with pride and represent our school in the local community
* Participate fully in all aspects of school life and try their very best with every task, using their talents and skills to enhance their learning
* Be polite, well-mannered and courteous in their interactions with staff, pupils and visitors to our school

**School Routines and Procedures**

Research shows that children learn best in an environment where the rules and boundaries are clearly defined and where the expectations pertaining to behaviour are high. Our school, like all schools, has a unique context which is dictated by the layout of the accommodation, the number of pupils, the number of staff and the daily timetable of events. As a staff, we have agreed the following behaviour guidelines pertaining to the various activities during the school day, to suit our own school context:

**Morning Routine**

* Children arrive at school at 8.45am.
* Parents of children in Rang 1&2 children should follow the ‘adult to adult’ handover procedure.
* Children in Ranganna 3-7 should walk in an orderly fashion along the walking track to their classrooms, paying heed to safety advice from class-room assistants on duty at the various gates.

**In the Classroom**

* Children should try their best to speak Irish and to encourage others to speak Irish
* Children should try their best with every task and ask for help when experiencing difficulty
* Children should follow instructions from their teacher / assistant
* Children should make full use of all the classroom resources to support their learning
* Children should conduct themselves in a mannerly fashion, that enables everyone in the class to learn and to benefit from learning activities
* Children should respect and look after school resources and keep their class-room tidy and in good order

**In the Playground**

* Children should welcome anyone who wishes to participate into their game.
* Children should be aware of their own safety and the safety of others in the yard
* Children should never open the playground gates
* Children should refrain from talking to strangers who may be using the external facilities
* Children should act as positive role models to the younger pupils
* Children should inform a class-room assistant if they wish to use the toilet during play-time
* Children should wear weather appropriate clothing

**In the lunch-room**

* Children should remain in their seats whilst eating their lunch.
* All rubbish should be placed in the bins provided.
* All un-eaten food should be taken home in lunch-box.
* Children should follow instructions given by supervisory staff.
* The lunch-room should be left tidy and chairs pushed in.
* Children should leave the lunch-room in an orderly line and walk to the playground.

**In the dinner room**

* Children should remain in their seats until the catering staff call them to the servery table.
* Children should use good manners and be courteous and co-operative with catering staff.
* Children should leave the dinner-room tidy and push in all chairs.
* Children should leave the dinner-room in an orderly line and walk to the playground.

**Home-time**

* Children should walk in an orderly line from their class-rooms to the designated class lines in the yard.
* Children should not leave until their class-teacher calls their name to leave with the designated adult who has arrived for them.
* Children should walk carefully from the yard to the car / bus / gate with their designated adult.
* If a child is going home to another child’s house, a written note must be sent to the class-teacher.
* The school ‘Collection Policy’ will be adhered to in the case of an unknown / not nominated person arriving to collect a child.

**On the bus**

* Children should wait in line with the teacher who is on duty until the bus driver arrives to take them to the bus.
* Children should walk in an orderly line from the yard to the bus.
* Children should put their school-bags under their seat so as not to obstruct the aisle.
* Children should put on their seat-belts before the bus moves off.
* Children should sit quietly during the journey, so as not to distract the bus driver.
* Seatbelts should remain closed and children seated until the bus stops at their destination.
* Children should use good manners and be courteous to the bus driver.
* Children should follow all instructions given by the bus driver.
* Bus prefects will liaise with class teachers regarding any undesirable behaviour on the bus.

**Use of external venues**

* Children should walk in an orderly line into any external venue and should stand back to allow members of the public to pass them if necessary.
* Children should remain with the group under the supervision of their teacher / guide.
* Children should display good behaviour and good manners when using an external venue and remember that they are public representatives of our school in the local community.
* Children should treat public property with respect and leave the facilities (toilets included) as they found them.
* Children should follow all instructions given by school staff or the staff of the venue during visits.

**Positive strategies**

Research shows that by using a wide range of age-appropriate, intrinsically motivating strategies, teachers can successfully promote and encourage positive behaviour in their classrooms and on a whole-school basis and in turn lessen the need for reactive strategies in response to undesirable behaviour. In devising this policy, we carried out an audit with staff to catalogue the wide range of positive strategies in use in each classroom to promote and reward desirable behaviour.

These included:

* An agreed class-code – children have an input into devising and agreeing their own set of rules for the class-room, to enable everyone to learn effectively
* ’10 Golden Rules’ – these guide us in our interactions with others at school and cultivate a positive, caring ethos throughout the school
* Verbal praise – highlighting a child who is displaying desirable behaviour to encourage others to imitate
* A positive comment / sticker / stamp in their exercise book or on their work
* A short note sent home to inform the parent / guardian of the child’s efforts in school
* Individual target-based competitions
* Group competitions
* Whole-class competitions
* Weekly targets for behaviour (listening, good manners etc)
* Presentation of certificates / prizes at assembly
* Star of the day / week awards
* Irish speaker of the week awards
* Long-term class goal competition – children work together towards a goal and choose own reward
* Principal’s award at assembly

The positive strategies used are in line with the children’s age and stage of development and often link in with other curricular areas, eg. Rang 1 were working towards getting 10 stars, whereas Rang 4 were using a 100 square to collect their points, in line with their understanding of numeracy.

**Dealing with undesirable behaviour**

Whilst we will always endeavour to manage behaviour positively there will be occasions when it is necessary to employ sanctions in response to undesirable behaviour. These are necessary for three main reasons:

* To make the particular child and others aware of the school expectations regarding behaviour and that their behaviour is not satisfactory
* To ensure that undesirable behaviour from any one child / group of children does not hinder opportunities for learning for other children
* To ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils and staff

When using sanctions, our aim will be to encourage a positive change in the child’s behaviour and attitude. We will ensure that the child is aware of why they are being reprimanded and it is our policy to criticise the behaviour and not to label the child. We will ensure that the child is reminded of the class code / school rules and that they understand how their behaviour / actions have on others, their feelings and their learning.

**Sanctions should:**

* Be constructive and consistent
* Be applied with sensitivity and flexibility
* Keep self-esteem intact
* Where possible, be related to the misdemeanour
* Be specific to the culprit and not applied to a whole group
* Be applied by the class teacher to begin with and gradually elevating through the levels of authority in the school, depending on the severity and frequency of the undesirable behaviour

**Sanctions may include:**

* A look of disapproval
* Immediate verbal checking for misbehaviour
* A minor penalty, relevant to the offence, e.g. an apology, picking up own litter
* ‘Time-out’ from a particular activity or group setting
* Loss of freedom, e.g. shadowing at breaktime or lunchtime on the proviso that the child is given sufficient time for eating his/her meal and for toileting
* Incomplete homework/school work to be completed at home/during breaktime under supervision
* Loss of privileges, such as membership of school teams or attendance on an outing.

Serious acts of misconduct will be dealt with by the Principal who will inform parents if necessary. Serious acts may include actions such as:

* Assault of another child / adult
* Bullying
* Use of bad language
* Disobeying instructions from a staff member pertaining to health and safety
* Stealing or destruction of property not belonging to themselves

If a child persistently displays undesirable behaviour at school it may be necessary for the class teacher and the school SENCO to write a record of concern for the child in line with the Code of Practice for SEN. Any further movement through the different stages of the Code of Practice will be done in partnership with parents and it may be necessary to seek support for the child from external organisations such as:

* Behaviour Support Team
* RISE (formallay known as ACE)
* EWO (in case of truancy / poor attendance)
* Educational Phychology

**EA suspension / expulsion policy**

In the case of persistent, dangerous or particularly agressive behaviour from a child, despite the use of positive strategies, sanctions and involvement of other agencies, it may be deemed appropriate to reduce a child’s daily time in school for a given period. Any decision to do so, would be made in partnership with the BOG and the child’s parents. It may also be deemed appropriate to commence procedures for Suspension / Expulsion. In this case, the BOG and Principal will initiate the Education Authority procedures on Suspension and Expulsion. Guidance will be sought from the EA and parents will be kept fully informed at each stage of the process.

**Appendix 1**

**Na Rialacha Órga**



1. Bímid cineálta lena chéile

We are kind to eachother.

1. Tugaimid aire agus cuidiú dá chéile

We take care of eachother.

1. Tugaimid moladh dá chéile

We praise eachother.

1. Bímid ag roinnt lena chéile

We share with one another.

1. Bímid múinte macánta i gcónaí

We are always good mannered and honest.

1. Bímid séimh agus muid ag súgradh

We are gentle when we play.

1. Bíonn seal cainte agus seal súgartha ag gach duine

We make sure that everyone gets a turn to speak and a turn to play.

1. Bíonn meas againn ar a chéile agus ar dhaoine fásta

We show respect to each other and to adults.

1. Bíonn meas againn ar threalamh na scoile

We treat school property with respect.

1. Labhraímid Gaeilge go fonnmhar gach lá

We speak Irish with pride and enthusiasm every day.

