

Lecarrow Community National School

Code of Behaviour

Rationale:

The code of behaviour of Lecarrow C.N.S. has been reviewed after consultation with Parents, Pupils, Staff, DES and Board of Management. The Education (Welfare) Act requires that codes of behaviour should specify:

- a) the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student;
- b) the measures that may 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;
- d) the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student;
- e) the procedures to be followed relating to notification of a child's absence from school.

Aims:

- (a) Guidance for pupils, teachers and parents with regard to behavioural expectations, for all concerned with school life, will be contained in our code of behaviour
- (b) In devising the code, consideration has to be 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
- (c) Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school.

Principles:

- (a) The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to tolerate these differences
- (b) 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
- (c) Every effort will be made to ensure that the Code of Discipline is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner.

Teacher's Responsibilities & Rights:

Teachers are expected to support and implement the school's code of behaviour. A key issue in this regard is that teachers should be cognisant of their duty of care and create a safe, welcoming environment for each pupil.

Each teacher has the responsibility:

- to develop and nurture a sense of self-esteem in each pupil and in this regard the praising of desirable behaviour is essential.

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- Every school is a learning organisation and therefore, teachers should facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential. This will entail recognising and providing for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- Teachers are expected to be courteous, consistent and fair, to keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum and to deal appropriately with misbehaviour. In this regard, teachers should listen, at appropriate times, to pupils' explanations for behaviour.
- Recording incidents of misbehaviour and patterns of behaviour are essential as is the communication of this data to relevant education partners. Therefore, teachers should keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of minor misbehaviour, communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.
- Teachers should also provide support for colleagues.
- Teachers, like all workers, have the right to expect to be treated with respect and dignity by pupils, parents, B of M and colleagues.
- They should be able to teach in a safe, well-maintained, physical environment, relatively free from disruption.
- They have the right to the support and co-operation of teaching colleagues, other school staff and parents in order to achieve the school's aims and objectives.
- In the organisation of the school, teachers have the right to be listened to and participate in decision-making which affects their own work and that of the school in general.
- B.O.M authorised teachers/SNA permission to restrain or withdraw children if they are in danger of harming themselves or others.
- Teachers also have the right to work in an atmosphere that encourages professional development, and to support and professional advice from Boards of Management, Department of Education and Science, National Education Welfare Board, National Council for Special Education and National Educational Psychological Service. All teachers must undertake PAX training and implement PAX as their classroom and school rules.
- In the event of decisions being taken that affect teachers adversely, they have the right to appeal in accordance with agreed procedures.

Pupils' Responsibilities and Rights:

- All pupils have the right to expect to be treated fairly, consistently and with respect.
- They should be able to learn and be educated in a relatively disruption-free environment, safe from bullying and abuse.

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- Pupils should have the expectation that their individual differences will be recognised and provision made for them.
- Pupils should have the right to be listened to, and to question, at appropriate times.
- As learners they should be allowed to make mistakes and to learn from them.
- They should have confidence that their positive behaviour will be affirmed and that misbehaviour will be dealt with appropriately.
- Appropriate support services to cater for the psychological, emotional and physical needs of the pupils should be available as of right.

Our code of behaviour requires of pupils that they attend school regularly and punctually, work quietly and safely when requested and to the best of their ability at all times. All pupils must adhere to the schools code of behaviour.

Pupils have the responsibility

- to listen to their teachers and act on instructions / advice.
- In addition they should be required to listen to other pupils and because of the social construction of the classroom, await their turn to speak.
- Pupils are required to show respect for all members of the school community and to respect the rights of other pupils to learn.
- They have the responsibility to care for their own property and to respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Given the central importance of health and safety in any school situation, pupils have a duty to avoid behaving in any way which would endanger themselves or others. In this regard, they may be required to remain seated at all times should their teacher not be in the room. A similar argument can be made for the requirement that pupils stay on school premises during school hours and stay within designated areas during break times.
- Pupils' responsibilities include treating others with dignity and respect and therefore, they should avoid nasty remarks, swearing or name-calling and be inclusive of other pupils in games and activities.
- A further responsibility includes the need to contribute to good order around the school so requiring pupils to move quietly around the school and to keep the school clean and tidy is essential.
- As the school is a learning organisation pupils have an age appropriate responsibility to bring the correct materials and books to school and follow school and class rules.

Parents' and Guardians' Responsibilities and Rights

Parents and Guardians have the right to expect to be treated with respect and to have a safe and welcoming environment provided for their child.

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Parents are entitled to expect that there will be a recognition of individual differences among pupils, having due regard for the resources that are available, and that there will be fairness and consistency in the manner in which the pupils are treated.

Parents have the right to communicate with teachers on matters of mutual interest or concern and to expect contact at an early stage to discuss difficulties / problems. Progress reports in accordance with agreed school policy, information on school policies and procedures are legitimate expectations of parents.

They also have the right to be consulted in relation to the school's code of behaviour and to appeal decisions in accordance with agreed procedures .

Parents/Guardians are expected to:

- Nurture in their children a positive attitude towards school and try not to pass on any negative experiences parents may have had themselves while at school.
- Ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually in full school uniform with appropriate clothing for the weather so that their child will be warm and dry playing outside during breaks;
- Send a written note to the class teacher explaining their child's absence from school;
- Ensure the school has up-to-date phone numbers of family/friends to be contacted in case of an emergency.
- Arrange and ensure that a family member/friend is contactable and available to attend the school in the event of an emergency.
- Ensure their child attends school clean and with a good level of hygiene; to check their child's head regularly for head lice and treat as necessary;
- Ensure their child has a healthy lunch in school every day in line with the school policy on "Health Eating".
- Arrange meetings with the class teacher and/or principal when they are concerned about any issue relating to their child;
- Communicate with staff when necessary, always with courtesy and respect and to model good behaviour in their relationship with teachers;
- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves, for others, for their own property and that of others;
- Be interested in, support and encourage their child's school work;
- Ensure that their child has the correct books and other materials;
- Label pupils coats and other property
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and other school policies and to support the implementation of these policies;
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others;

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- Communicate to the school problems which may affect a child's behaviour.
- Supervise their young children on school premises when collecting other pupils or visiting the school
- Refrain from bringing family pets/dogs into the school yard (even if on a lead)
- As the Board of Management is responsible for the Health & Safety of all staff and students, parents are requested not to approach or reprimand another person's child on the school premises.

School Rules for Children of Lecarrow C.N.S.:

Safety: For my own safety and that of others-

- (a) I should always walk while in the school grounds and building (Exception playtime and PE)
- (b) I should remain seated in class, if/when teacher has to leave classroom for short periods and while eating lunch
- (c) I should always show respect for my fellow pupils and all adults
- (d) I should bring a note of explanation following absences
- (e) I should never leave the school grounds without the permission of the Principal / Teacher.

Caring for Myself

- (a) I should respect myself and my property, always keeping my school bag, books and copies in good order.
- (b) I should always be in school before the bell rings at 9.20am
- (c) I should show respect for my school and be proud to wear the complete school uniform every day
- (d) I should always be aware of my personal cleanliness
- (e) I should always bring a sensible, nutritional lunch to school in keeping with the healthy eating policy of the school
- (f) I should always do my best in school by listening carefully, working as hard as I can and by completing my homework.

Caring for Others

- (a) I should be kind and respectful to teachers and fellow pupils by being mannerly and polite, by taking turns and by remaining silent and orderly in my class line
- (b) I should behave well in class so that my fellow pupils and I can learn
- (c) I should always keep my school clean by bringing unfinished food and drink, cartons, wrappers etc home
- (d). I should show respect for the property of my fellow pupils, the school building and grounds
- (e) I should be truthful and honest at all times.
- (f) I should take responsibility for my actions / behaviour at all times.

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Strategies for dealing with Behaviour – good / inappropriate:

(a) When I follow the school rules I can expect any of the following:

- I may get a quiet word or gesture to show approval from my teacher
- A comment may be written in my copy
- I may be sent to visit another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation.
- The teacher may praise me in front of a group or class
- I may get a reward from the class teacher's system
- My teacher may give me some special responsibility or privilege
- My parents may be told about my good behaviour.

(b) When I do not follow the school rules I can expect any of the following;

(The nature of the behaviour will determine the strategy)

- The teacher may reason with me
- The teacher may give out to me and may advise me on how to improve
- The teacher may give me extra work
- The teacher may communicate with my Parents
- I may be separated from my classmates
- I may lose some of Golden Time or some playtime
- I may be sent to the Principal or Deputy-Principal
- A note may be sent to my parents
- If the teacher thinks the incident is very bad it may be written into the Behaviour Record Book
- I may be Suspended or expelled (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular 7/88).

Procedures:

The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross will be judged by the teachers and/or Principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours, as follows:

The following examples of minor misbehaviours are not acceptable in St Paul's N.S

- Interrupting class work
- Continually arriving late for school
- Running in school building
- Talking in class line
- Placing unfinished food/drink cartons in class bin
- Leaving litter around school

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- Not wearing correct uniform
- Being discourteous/unmannerly
- Not completing homework without good reason.
- Endangering self/fellow pupils in the school yard at break time.

Examples of steps to be taken by teachers when dealing with minor misbehaviours

- Verbal reprimand/reasoning with pupil
- Noting instance of yard misbehaviour.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with regular occurrences of minor misbehaviour

Phase 1 (within the classroom)

- Temporary separation from peers
- Sending to another teacher
- Denial of participation in some class activity
- Communicate to parents concerning further misbehaviour in yard [Misbehaviour in yard consists of any action that puts the safety of self/other pupil/adult at risk eg kicking, hitting, punching, biting, slapping,]

Phase 2

- 1) Send to Principal or Deputy Principal or Assistant Principal
- 2) Class teacher meets one/both parents
- 3) Principal/D-Principal meets one/both parents concerning behaviour.

Examples of serious misbehaviours

- Constantly disruptive in class
- Telling lies
- Stealing
- Damaging other pupil's property
- Bullying
- Back answering a teacher
- Frequenting school premises after school hours without appropriate permission
- Leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission
- Not working to full potential
- Using unacceptable language
- Bringing weapons to school
- Deliberately injuring a fellow pupil.

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Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with serious misbehaviours

- 1) Send to Principal or Deputy Principal or Assistant Principal
- 2) Principal or Deputy Principal or Assistant Principal communicates with parents
- 3) Principal and /or Deputy Principal meets with one/both Parents
- 4) Chairperson of Board Of Management informed and parents requested to meet with Chairperson and Principal.

Examples of Gross Misbehaviours

- Setting fire to school property
- Deliberately leaving taps /fire hose turned on
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher/pupil.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with gross misdemeanours

- 1) Chairperson/Principal to sanction immediate suspension pending discussion with Parents
- 2) Expulsion will be considered in an extreme case in accordance with Rule 130 (6) i.e. 'No pupil can be struck off the rolls for breaches of discipline without prior consent of Patron and until alternative arrangements are made for enrolment of pupil at another suitable school in the locality'.

It should be noted that these lists consist of examples only: It is not meant to be a totally comprehensive list of misbehaviours and procedural steps.

Procedures in respect of Suspension. (as per page 77 of the NEWB Guidelines)

While the BoM has the authority to suspend, they may delegate this authority to the principal, for periods of up to three days.

- Investigation of the facts to confirm serious misbehaviour.
- Parents will be informed by phone or in writing about the incident.
- Parents will be given an opportunity to respond.

If suspension is still decided upon

- Principal notifies parent in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter should confirm.
 - The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
 - The reasons for the suspension.
 - Any study programme to be followed.
 - The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents.

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- The provision for appeal to the Board of management or secretary general of the DES. (Only where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days.)
- Where the cumulative total of suspension days reaches 6, the NEWB will be notified.

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 rationale for the decision.
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

Expulsion.(As per page 82 of the NEWB Guidelines)

Procedures in respect of expulsion.

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
 - Inform parents in writing of alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
 - Give parents and students the opportunity to respond before a decision is made.
- A recommendation to the BOM by the principal(see page 84 NEWB guidelines)
- Consideration by the BOM of the principal' recommendations and the holding of a hearing. (see page 84 NEWB Guidelines)
- BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing. (page 85 NEWB Guidelines)
- If BOM is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing, of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. The intention to expel a student does not take effect until 20 school days have elapsed after NEWB have received written notification. The NEWB should be notified using a **Notice of Intention to Expel form** which is available on www.schoolreturn.ie or from our helpline (1890 36 3666). This form should be completed and sent to **School Return Section, National Educational Welfare Board, 16-22 Green St, Dublin 7.**
- Consultations arranged by the EWO.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

Appeals.

- A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 section 29)

Complaints Procedure:

Role of Board of Management

Under the provisions of the *Education Act 1998* and the regulations of the Department of Education and Science, the board of management is the body charged with the direct governance of a school. All complaints about schools should be directed in the first instance to the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

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The Department of Education and Science supports the principle that complaints regarding schools should be resolved at school level whenever possible and will only become involved in the investigation of specific complaints *after every effort has been made to resolve the matter at local level.*

Correspondence with the Department of Education and Science: If the Department becomes involved in investigating a complaint, the Primary Administration Section of the Department co-ordinates the matter. All correspondence should be addressed to Judith McGuinness, Complaints Section, Schools Division, Department of Education and Skills, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath. 090 64 84264.

Expectations of all Adults (Ancillary Staff, S.N.As, Coaches, Etc School rules are devised with regard to the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. It is imperative that adults ‘practise what they preach’ in their interaction with children every day.

All Staff are expected to:

- Support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour;
- Be cognisant of their duty of care;
- To be familiar with and follow the school's policy on "Child Protection".
- Create a safe, welcoming environment for each pupil;
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils
- Be courteous, consistent and fair;
- Communicate with parents and staff when necessary, always with courtesy and respect;
- Provide reports on matters of concern.
- To be familiar with and follow the school's policies on "Grievance" and "Harassment" if he/she has any complaint against staff, parents or outside personnel.
- **Ratification and Review**

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management

Signed: _____
Chairperson, BoM

DATE: