

**CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

**Clonea Power NS**

**INTRODUCTION**

The aims of the Code of Behaviour of Clonea Power N.S. are:

* To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
* To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
* To develop pupils’ self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
* To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others.
* To facilitate the education and development of every child.
* To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
* To enable teachers to teach without disruption.

The main objective of Clonea Power National School is to bring about the full development of each pupil. This is to ensure that the individuality of each pupil is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each pupil to education in a relatively disruption-free environment. School rules are necessary to provide such an environment.

This school places greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the long run, give the best results.

A high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff, pupils and parents.

The responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal and Deputy Principal. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises. A pupil will be referred to the Principal or Deputy Principal for serious breaches of discipline.

The term "classroom" will include classroom, school grounds, PE venues, field trips, school tours, swimming etc.

**It is to be understood that our Code of Discipline will be under constant review and therefore any list of rewards or misbehaviours cannot be exhaustive.**

Misbehaviours are categorised as (a) Misdemeanours (b) Serious Misbehaviours and (c) Gross Misbehaviours. There is a reward system for good behaviour. There is a Disciplinary Procedure for unacceptable behaviour.

Sometimes it may be necessary to devise an individual code of discipline for a child with special educational needs who presents with challenging behaviour.

**General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour**

1. Pupils are expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable.

2. Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.

3. Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.

4. Pupils are expected to obey a teacher’s instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.

5. Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing on return of the pupil, stating the reason for absence. To satisfy both parents and staff of the safe arrival of pupils to school, parents should also phone/text on the morning of the absence informing the school where the child is.

6. Should it be necessary for a child to arrive late, the child must report to the office to sign in. Should it be necessary for a child to leave early from school, the adult collecting the child must report to the office to sign out.

**We ask all pupils to observe two major guidelines.**

**These guidelines underpin our entire Code of Behaviour:**

**1. Follow your teacher’s instructions**

**2. Be kind to one another**

**They can be further condensed into just one word: RESPECT**

**Additionally, we put an emphasis on energy and effort in our school.**

**Respect: Respect each other and the whole school community.**

**Effort: Always give your best effort to every task and activity.**

**Energy: Bring energy and have fun.**

**Affirming Positive Behaviour**

**REWARDS/INCENTIVES**

The following are some of the strategies which will be utilised to reward good behaviour. This list is by no means exhaustive.

* Acknowledge positive behaviour through verbal or/and written praise
* Written/verbal communication with parents
* Homework Vouchers
* DVD
* Extra P.E./play time
* Bonus points
* Prizes for achievement, improvement or significant progress.
* Golden Time
* Pupil of the day/week/month/term/year
* Monthly Class awards for good behaviour

**EXAMPLES OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR**

**A: MISDEMEANOURS**

1. Rough behaviour
2. Noisy behaviour
3. Misbehaviour in yard
4. Inattention/lack of effort
5. Careless work
6. Distracting/interrupting others
7. Interrupting teacher

8. Wandering around the classroom without permission

1. Eating in class without permission
2. Failure to tidy up after activities
3. Failure to show respect when teacher is engaged with visitor/caller **\***
4. Lack of respect for others and for property**\***
5. Regularly late for school
6. Improper uniform
7. Homework regularly not done or not completed
8. School requisites regularly left at home

**B: SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOURS**:

1. Continuous occurrence of misdemeanours

2. Disrespect/insolence/deliberate disobedience

1. Teasing/bullying/intimidation cf. Bullying Policy
2. Deliberately/wilfully disrupting class routine
3. Deliberate failure to complete work
4. Failure to show respect when teacher is engaged with visitor/caller **\***
5. Lack of respect for others and for property**\***
6. Deliberate or repeated bad language
7. Getting others into trouble
8. Kicking/Fighting/Spitting

11. Dishonesty e.g. telling lies, cheating

12. Stealing

13. Throwing objects

1. Use by pupils of mobile phones and other electronic or recording equipment in ‘classroom’(as defined in Introduction)
2. Photography without express permission of teacher
3. Exit from supervised areas of school at break-times, without permission

**C: GROSS MISBEHAVIOURS**:

1. Continuous unresolved serious misbehaviour

2. Threatening behaviour of a serious nature

3. Continuous reported intimidating behaviour

4. Serious assault on another pupil

5. Serious verbal or physical abuse of a school staff member

6. Serious theft

7. Failure to show respect when teacher is engaged with visitor/caller **\***

8. Lack of respect for others and for property**\***

9. Disobeying a directive from the Principal

10. Truancy

11. Bringing lewd material to school

12. Endangering others with intent

13. Exit from school grounds during school hours, without school permission

**\* Category will depend on the severity of the misbehaviour**

**\* Discretion of teacher will be used at all times**

**SANCTIONS**

**A: GENERAL:**

The following strategies will be used to deal with unacceptable behaviour, not necessarily in this order:-

* Reasoning with/advising the pupil
* Reprimand: Misdemeanours/Serious or Gross Misbehaviours
* Temporary separation from classmates and friends within classroom or to another classroom
* Immediate removal from class to another classroom
* Immediate sending home in the case of serious verbal or physical abuse of a school staff member by pupil
* Prescribing additional work
* Loss of privileges
* Communication with parents
* Referral to Principal or Deputy Principal
* Suspension (temporary)

**B: DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE FOR SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOUR**

Teachers will keep a written record of misdemeanours and serious misbehaviours before the disciplinary process as laid out below, is invoked. The normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Parents will be involved at an early stage rather than as a last resort.

1. The pupil will report to Principal or Deputy Principal.

Parents are informed and acknowledge same.

2. The pupil will report to Principal or Deputy Principal on second occasion.

Parents are informed and a meeting is arranged between parents, Class

Teacher and Principal/Deputy Principal, which the pupil may be required to attend.

3. If the pupil is reported for a third time, parents will be required to attend a further meeting, on this occasion with the Class Teacher and Principal/Deputy Principal.

4. If the pupil is reported for a fourth time, it will be regarded at this stage as Gross Misbehaviour and the following procedure will be followed:

**C: DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE FOR GROSS MISBEHAVIOUR**

In the case of gross misbehaviour the Board of Management authorises the Principal to sanction an immediate suspension of from one to three days following agreement with the Chairperson.

The parents will be formally notified of such suspension and given the reasons for same.

In the event of the Chairperson not being available for early consultation the Principal may act and then have the matter formalised as soon as possible.

For suspensions of greater than three days a special meeting of the Board of Management will be called to authorise the further period of exclusion.

The child's and the Parents' rights will at all times be observed.

As a last resort, expulsion of a pupil could be considered by the Board.

**SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS**

A proposal to exclude a student through suspension/expulsion is warranted only by very serious misbehaviour or gross misbehaviour. Aggressive, threatening or violent misbehaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as very serious or gross misbehaviour.

Care will be taken to ensure that all matters to do with an investigation of alleged misbehaviour will be dealt with in confidence.

The principles of fair procedures will be applied to –

* The investigation of an alleged misbehaviour that may lead to a suspension or expulsion.
* The process of decision-making as to (a) whether the pupil did engage in the misbehaviour and (b) what sanction to impose.

The principles of fair procedures are:

(1) The right to be heard

(2) The right to impartiality in the investigation and decision-making.

Refer to NEWB guidelines (see appendix 1)

**SUSPENSION**

Suspension is defined as: requiring the pupil to absent him/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days. During this period, the pupil retains their place in the school.

The board of management has the authority to suspend a pupil.

Where this authority is delegated to the principal, the delegation will be done formally and in writing.

The decision to suspend a pupil must have serious grounds such as that:

* The pupils’ behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils.
* The pupils’ continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
* The student is responsible for serious damage to property.
* Aggressive, threatening or violent misbehaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as very serious or gross misbehaviour.
* The pupil has engaged in misappropriate behaviour such as of a sexual nature, smoking, drug or substance abuse of any kind.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

**Factors to consider before suspending a student- (see appendix 2 of NEWB Guidelines)**

Suspension will be part of an agreed plan to address the pupils’ behaviour.

The suspension should:

* Enable the school to set behaviour goals with the pupil and their parents.
* Give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions.
* Impress on a pupil and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour.

**Forms of suspension**

* Immediate suspension: In exceptional circumstances this may be considered necessary where the continued presence of the pupil in the school would represent a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff, or any other person. Fair procedure must be applied.
* ‘Automatic’ suspension: Serious misconduct as deemed by Principal/Deputy Principal for particular named behaviours as outlined above.

**Procedures in respect of suspension**

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will observe the following procedures:

1. **Inform the pupil and parents**

The school will let the pupil and their parents know about the complaint, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension. Parents may be informed by phone and in writing, depending on the seriousness of the matter.

1. **Give an opportunity to respond**

A meeting with the pupil and their parents will provide an opportunity for them to give their side of the story and to ask questions. The school will record invitations to these meetings and the parents’ response. If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write advising the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a rescheduled meeting, and failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour.

**Procedures in relation to immediate suspension**

Where this is considered by the principal to be warranted for reasons of safety of pupil, other pupils, staff or others a preliminary investigation will be conducted to establish the case for the suspension. In this case the parents will be notified and arrangements made with them for the pupil to be collected.

**The period of suspension**

A pupil will not be suspended for more than 3 days, except in exceptional circumstances where it is considered that a longer period is needed to achieve a particular objective.

B.O.M. should give guidance on kinds of circumstances where longer suspensions might be approved. The BOM must consider and approve a proposed suspension of longer than 3 days. However, where a meeting of the board cannot be convened in a timely fashion the board may authorise the principal to impose a suspension of up to 5 days. The board should normally place a ceiling of 10 days on any one period of suspension imposed by it.

The board will formally review any proposal to suspend a pupil, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to 20 days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

**Appeals**

The B.O.M. will offer an opportunity to parents to appeal a principal’s decision to suspend a pupil. If parents wish to appeal it should be done formally in writing to the B.O.M. The Board will discuss the issue and inform the parents of their decision within 21 days. If the appeal is upheld and the suspension has already taken place then record of the suspension will be permanently removed from the child’s record.

In the case of a B.O.M decision to suspend, an appeals process may be provided by the Patron.

**Section 29 appeal**

Where the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days, the parents may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. When parents are being notified of such a suspension, they and the pupil will be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Dept of Education and Science under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, and will be given information about how to appeal.

**Implementing the suspension**

**Written notification**

The principal will notify the parents and the pupil in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm:

* The period of suspension and the dates on which it will begin and end
* The reasons for the suspension
* Any study programme to be followed
* Arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parents (e.g. Reaffirming their commitment to the code of behaviour)
* Provision for an appeal to the B.O.M.
* The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Deparment of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 Section 29)

**Re-integration of student**

The school will help the student to take responsibility for catching up on work missed and reintegrate fully into school life.

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

The Principal should report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

**Expulsion**

A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him/her from the school having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

The Board of Management of a recognised school has the authority to expel a student. As a matter of best practice, that authority should be reserved to the Board of Management and should not be delegated.

**The Grounds for Expulsion**

The school should have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:

* Meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour.
* Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist.
* Ensuring that all other possible options have been tried.
* Seeking the assistance of support agencies. A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:
* The student’s behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
* The student’s continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
* The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference is that, where expulsion is considered, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions, and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student’s behaviour.

**‘Automatic’ expulsion**

A Board of Management may decide, as part of the school’s policy on sanctions, and following the consultation process with the principal, parents, teachers and students that particular named behaviours or repeated incidents as listed above incur expulsion as a sanction.

**Expulsion for a first offence**

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management 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 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.

**Determining the appropriateness of expelling a student. (See appendix. 3).**

**Procedures in respect of expulsion**

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, when proposing to expel a student (See appendix. 1).

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.

2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.

3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal’s recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.

4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.

5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.

6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

7. School will strictly adhere to NEWB guidelines.

It is a matter for each Board of Management to decide which of the tasks involved in these procedural steps requires separate meetings and which tasks can be accomplished together in a single meeting, consistent with giving parents due notice of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for a Board hearing.

The Principal should give parents and the student every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.

**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). An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a student.

**The appeals process**

The appeals process under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 begins with the provision of mediation by a mediator nominated by the Appeals Committee (Department of Education and Science). For further details about the Appeals process, including requirements for documentation, and the steps in the process, refer to current DES guidance.

**Review of use of expulsion**

The Board of Management should review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school, and to ensure that expulsion is used appropriately.

**Review/Evaluation/Implementation**

This code has been ratified by the B.O.M. on the 12th June 2023 and it will be constantly monitored and evaluated by all staff on an on-going basis e.g. as a standing item on Staff Meeting agenda.

This policy will be reviewed in 2026/2027.

POLICY RATIFIED BY BOARD OF MANAGEMENT:

SIGNED: Catherine Power Signed: Martin Whelan

Chairperson Principal