

# **Scoil Ursula**

• **Title**

**Code of Behaviour**

• **Introductory Statement**

*The staff of the school met in November 2008 to begin formulating this policy. It was adapted to the current format in accordance with the guidelines of the NEWB Policy Document, “Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools” (2008). It was disseminated to the wider school community by the Board of Management in December 2009. Submissions were taken and discussed in February 2010 and the policy was ratified by the Board on \_\_\_\_\_.*

• **Rationale**

It was decided to revise the Code of Behaviour as the existing policy was due for review/amendment and to ensure an orderly climate for learning in the school. It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) that 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 Spirit of the School**

Ursuline Education aims to nurture the development of the pupil in a spiritual, moral and intellectual way, in an atmosphere where difference is respected. A positive climate is used to motivate the pupil. Every effort is made to enhance the child's self esteem and to foster a friendly and supportive atmosphere, conducive to learning.

Ursuline education strives to nurture a community where Christian values

are respected, lived and taught. It is based on the Gospels and the teachings of St. Angela Merici. This Code of Behaviour supports these aspirations and is in accordance with the following tenets:

### **Ursuline Education nurtures**

- Personal relationship with God
- Holistic development of each individual
- Dignity and uniqueness of each person
- Importance of courtesy and kindness
- A caring and respectful attitude towards self, others and environment

### **The school strives to enable students to**

- Be aware of God's unconditional love for them
- Know and live their faith
- Be active members of their own community and Church
- Be aware of others less fortunate than themselves
- Be independent of mind in order to stand up for the truth.

### **Principal and staff**

- Maintain traditions of school
- Implement Ursuline philosophy
- Strive for excellence in teaching and learning
- Ensure the centrality of Religious instruction, prayer and liturgy
- Commit to professional and personal development
- Are flexible and adaptable to changing needs.

### **Parents**

- Take responsibility as primary educators
- Become aware of the philosophy and ethos of the school.
- Support the philosophy and ethos
- Are active partners in their children's education
- Maintain good communication with the school

*(Where the word "Parents" is used in this document it is also taken to mean guardians or any other adults who are "in loco parentis")*

### **Students**

- Are active participants in their learning and religious development
- Strive to reach academic and creative potential
- Develop self-discipline and leadership
- Are responsible guardians of the planet
- Love their cultural heritage and respect cultural differences
- Develop creativity in leisure-time
- Are active in the service of others

### **Trustees with the principal**

- Maintain the ethos
- Support the Religious and Educational enterprise
- Have ultimate responsibility for property and finance
- Monitor overall policy

### **Board of Management**

- Implements the ethos
- Is responsible for the administration and maintenance of the school
- Maintains standards in teaching and learning
- Upholds the discipline of the school

### **Wider Community**

- Good relations with Church and Local Community are fostered
- Appropriate interventions and involvement in the life of the school of members of the community are sought and encouraged.
- Appropriate support of community projects is promoted in the school.

### **• Aims**

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our mission statement
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community
- To 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
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school

### **• Guidelines (*content of policy*)**

In devising the code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruptive free environment.

Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school. The code offers a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are utilised by the teachers.

**The school places greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the long run, develop their innate moral compass.**

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, pupils and parents.

The involvement of the pupils in the formulation of the Code of Behaviour empowers them to take ownership of its implementation.

The overall responsibility for behaviour within the school rests with the B.O.M. The Principal is responsible for in-school management of behaviour. 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.

The school recognises the diversity that exists between children: educational, behavioural and cultural, addressing the need to accommodate these differences in an ever-changing society.

In consultation with parents and the learning support team, a child may be referred for assessment. Support services within the wider community may be accessed e.g. National Educational Psychological Service, the HSE and Community Care Services.

In the belief that the most effective schools tend to be those with the best relationships with parents, every effort will be made by the Principal and staff to ensure that parents are kept well informed.

### **School Rules**

#### ***General:***

#### **School hours:**

***9.05 a.m*** class ***begins*** for all pupils

***2.30 p.m*** class ***ends*** 1st—6th class

***1.30 p.m*** class ***ends*** Junior and Senior Infants.

1. School BOM will not accept responsibility for pupils:
  - Arriving before **opening** time 8.50 am
  - Remaining after **closing** time 2.30pm (except for school based activities.)
  - Going to and from the bus.
2. School bell to be responded to promptly at all times.
3. Notification from parents is required when a pupil
  - a. wishes to leave during school hours.
  - b. where a child has been late.
4. Absences: A written note is obligatory for absences. Pupils, who are absent 20 days or more in the one school year, must be reported to the National Educational Welfare Board. Reports of absences are returned each school term to National Educational Welfare Board.
5. Healthy lunches are advised. Junk food is discouraged. Chewing gum, crisps, fizzy drinks and glass bottles are not permitted.
6. Healthy lifestyle— We encourage Walking On Wednesday and whenever possible. For those who cycle to school, cycling is not allowed in the school grounds and all bicycles must be locked.
7. In the interests of safety, children are not allowed to use the “Staff Entrance gate” i.e. the main gate of the school. The pedestrian lane should always be used.
8. All children are obliged to wear the full school Uniform except on designated PE days when the PE uniform is worn.
9. All children’s belongings: uniforms, coats etc. must have nametags on them.
10. In the interests of safety and hygiene, sensible, sturdy footwear must be worn. Runners allowed only on P.E. days.
11. Mobile phones & other electronic equipment are strictly prohibited.

### **Behaviour**

1. Refined behaviour is expected at all times, e.g. speaking politely using words/phrases such as “please”, “thank you”, “sorry”, excuse me”, “pardon” etc.

2. Show good manners towards other children and adults.
3. Honesty is encouraged at all times.
4. Inappropriate language will not be tolerated.
5. Children are expected to show consideration at all times, and to conduct themselves appropriately when involved in school related activities e.g. games, extra curricular activities, cultural excursion and any other school linked events.
6. Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated (see Anti Bullying Policy)
7. Children who travel to school by bus are expected to queue, to board and alight in an orderly way. Courtesy is expected toward the driver and other passengers.
8. Children must never cross the road without the assistance of the traffic warden, who must be obeyed and respected at all times.
9. Each pupil is expected to attend school daily and to be punctual.

### **Within the school building**

1. Children must respect their teachers and be attentive and co-operative in class. Good manners, courtesy, and politeness are essential at all times towards teachers, visitors and fellow pupils.
2. A child must not disrupt class work by negative or attention seeking behaviour.
3. School property i.e. Building, PE equipment, technical equipment, furniture, books etc. must be treated with due care and respect. If deliberate damage is caused to any of the above by a pupil, repair or replacement costs will have to be borne by the parents. Pupils must not damage, take without consent or steal the property of another pupil.
4. Children must co-operate with and take correction from all members of the school staff.
5. Children are encouraged to walk in single file on the stairs and to move around the school building in an orderly manner.

## **Playgrounds**

During break-times, designated play areas are supervised consistently on a rota-basis by teachers. Children must leave the school buildings at break times except on wet days. On those wet days, children are supervised in the classrooms by the teachers on duty. The Buddy System takes place with the Infants. All other children occupy themselves with board games and appropriate activities. All children **without exception** must go to the playground during break time, weather permitting.

Each class has a designated play area and must play within that particular space only.

1. **No fighting, kicking or rough play is allowed.**
2. **Children must not throw litter.** It is essential for pupils to keep the school grounds tidy and use the bins provided in keeping with our Green School Code.
3. No child is permitted to leave the school grounds without permission **under any circumstances.**
4. **Children are forbidden** to climb on walls, roofs, drain-pipes, gates, railings and due care must be taken wherever there are steps.
5. **Children must obey the bell** promptly, stop playing and stay reasonably quiet and still and file up quietly in alphabetical order according to their class when the teacher-on-duty sounds the whistle.

## **Rewards and Sanctions**

*In our school we adopt many positive strategies to promote good behaviour and sustain the harmonious atmosphere in our school. These strategies include giving pupils a voice in the decision-making processes in the school via Students Council, Green School's committee and the SPHE programme. We use a*

*clear system of acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour. Children are aware of sanctions and consequences for misbehaviour.*

**Systems of Rewards in Scoil Ursula:**

- Merit Awards.
  - Commendations.
  - Certificates of Achievements.
  - Golden Time.
  - Homework passes.
  - In class reward systems.
1. In general each class teacher will resolve class problems as they arise. A child with Special Needs will be subject to the school code of behaviour and will be treated with compassion and understanding. A child will be sent to the Principal for serious breaches of discipline or continuous instances of disruptive behaviour. Parents will be informed of such instances when necessary.
  2. The following sanctions for unacceptable behaviour may be implemented at a teacher's discretion. Initial correction for misbehaviour will be a warning.
    - a. Reasoning with the pupil.
    - b. Reprimand
    - c. Temporary separation from peers, friends or others.
    - d. Loss of privileges
    - e. Extra work
    - f. Referral to Principal
    - g. Communication with parents and guardians.

Scoil Ursula prides itself on the high standards of behaviour maintained. The Staff and the extended school community will continue to strive to maintain these standards into the future.

**Suspension and Expulsion**

- The decision to suspend a pupil requires serious grounds such as:



- a. The pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils.
- b. The pupil continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
- c. The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.

**A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension** e.g. assaulting a member of staff

Reference: page 71 of the Guidelines of the Code of Behaviour/  
National Educational Welfare Board.

*A proposal to expel a pupil requires serious grounds such as that:*

The pupil's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.

The pupil's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.

Where expulsion is considered, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour. Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. 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. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

**Rules for National Schools:**

**Rule 130 (5)**

“ Where the Board of Management deems it necessary to deal

with continuously disruptive pupils or with a serious breach of discipline, by authorising the Chairperson or Principal to exclude a pupil from school, the maximum initial period of such exclusion shall be three school days. A special decision of the Board of Management is necessary to authorise a further period of exclusion to a maximum of 10 school days to allow for consultation with the pupil and or pupils' parents or guardians. In exceptional circumstances the Board of Management may authorise a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed”.

- **Success Criteria**

Our success criteria will be based on the achievement of our objectives. We will use staff observation and parental feedback as our benchmark for success or otherwise of the policy.

- **Roles and Responsibility**

The school principal will be responsible for the implementation and evaluation of the policy. Any feedback received will be recorded and any problems that arise will be taken into account for the purposes of evaluation and review.

- **Timeframe for Implementation**

The policy will be implemented on the 1st of September, 2010.

- **Timeframe for Review**

This policy is reviewed annually.

- **Responsibility for Review**

The school principal will be responsible for reviewing the policy.

- **Ratification and Communication**

The Board of Management ratified this policy on the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_, (Chairperson, BOM)

**Scoil Ursula does not have adequate resources to disseminate all of its policies to all the concerned members of the wider school community. The policy is communicated to the members of the BOM and is available to the wider school community through the parents' representatives on the BOM. All Scoil Ursula policies are available for inspection in the school.**