**Cloonfour N.S.**

**Rooskey**

**Co. Roscommon**

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CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

**Introductory Statement:**

This Code of Behaviour was developed through a process of consultation between the Principal, the Teaching Staff, the members of the Board of Management and the Parent Representatives.

Excerpts from existing policies were also used in developing this code.

**Rationale:**

* It is an area of concern identified by the school community
* To ensure an orderly climate for learning in the school
* 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 at the school*
* To ensure existing policy is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008*

**Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School:**

**OUR VISION** is that of a caring, loving Catholic School where all children, whatever their ability, race or creed are cherished for their uniqueness.

Our school seeks to give **equal opportunity** to all children to reach their full potential - academically, spiritually, socially and emotionally.

We endeavour to achieve this goal in a climate of positive co-operation, supported by the entire school community of pupils, teachers, support staff, parents/guardians, Board of Management and Parish.

**Our Mission:**

The staff of Cloonfour N.S. National School seeks actively, through word and action, to create a happy climate of physical, emotional, social and intellectual security for students, staff and parents/guardians. In this way teaching and learning can take place within the context of mutual valuing and respecting relationships.

The teachers of Cloonfour National School see education not just as providing students with knowledge and skills but also as providing for the all-round development of the individual.

# We believe each child has a unique and special contribution to make. We believe every child matters.

##### OUR ETHOS is that of a caring, loving Catholic School where all children, whatever their ability, race or creed are cherished for their uniqueness.

* In Cloonfour N.S. where the ethos is that of a Christian Catholic School, religious instruction, in accordance with the doctrine and tradition of the Catholic Church is part of the education given to children.
* The pupils are prepared for the reception of the Sacraments of First Confession, First Holy Communion and Confirmation, in accordance with arrangements in the diocese.
* The Parish Priest, Father Jarek Maszkiewicz, regularly visits the school to discuss their Religious Education with the children and teachers, in addition to assisting in the preparation of the pupils for their impending Sacraments.
* Prayer is a feature of the school day.
* The school aims to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the pupil, including his/her relationship with God, with other people and with the environment.
* The Principal and teaching staff aim to maintain high professional standards and to create a safe and happy environment.
* A spirit of mutual respect is promoted within the school community. Pupils are encouraged by example and teaching to appreciate and respect people of different religious affiliations and of different nationalities and cultures.
* Close contact is maintained between school and home. Parents/Guardians and teachers support one another and collaborate with one another in leading the children to the fullness of their potential at the different stages.
* Our school seeks to give equal opportunity to all children to reach their full potential - academically, spiritually, physically, socially and emotionally.
* We endeavour to achieve this goal in a climate of positive co-operation, supported by the entire school community of pupils, teachers, support staff, parents/guardians, Board of Management and Parish.

**Aims:**

* To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision 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

We strive to develop independence in our students, together with the ability to self evaluate, self motivate and internalise discipline. We want our students to be happy with themselves, others and their world. We want our pupils to enjoy school. We endeavour to achieve quality in all that we do.

These aspirations can only be achieved through the co-operation of students, teachers, support staff, parents/guardians, Board of Management and Parish.

**We believe it takes a village to raise a child.**

**CONTENT OF POLICY**

**1. General Guidelines for behaviour in the School:**

* 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.
* Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
* Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to wear the appropriate school uniform, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.
* Pupils are expected to obey a teacher’s instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
* 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/e-mail stating the reason for absence.
* 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.

**2. Whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour:**

* The school staff will foster an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance.
* Children’s self-esteem will be developed through celebrating individual differences, achievements, acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and manners and providing opportunities for success throughout the curriculum and school.
* Teachers will help pupils to develop empathy by discussing feelings and trying to put themselves in the place of others.
* Relationships with pupils will be based on mutual respect and trust so that pupils will have confidence in the school staff.
* Teachers will be vigilant, respond sensitively and caringly to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying and investigate all disclosed incidents of bullying.
* Parents are requested to support the teachers by being co-operative and positive in implementing the Code of Behaviour and communicating with the teachers/Principal when necessary.
* Every member of the School Community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.
* Individual teachers are principally responsible for communicating the School Rules and maintaining positive behaviour and good discipline within their respective classrooms. Parents are also requested to reinforce this instruction.
* Playtimes are supervised in-rota by the class-teachers and misdemeanours during break times are communicated to the relevant teacher.
* It is the role of all staff members to promote good behaviour within and outside of the school and support each other through discussion or practical means when a problem arises.
* Teachers must also communicate with parents, the Principal and/or the Board of Management when repeated or serious misbehaviour occurs.

**Board of Management’s Responsibilities:**

* Provide a comfortable, safe environment
* Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code
* Ratify the code

**Principal’s Responsibilities:**

* 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 required.

**Teachers’ Responsibilities:**

Support and implement the school’s Code of Behaviour.

* Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
* Recognise and affirm good work.
* Prepare schoolwork 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. (Classroom Records)
* Provide support for colleagues.
* Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

**Pupils’ Responsibilities:**

* Attend school regularly and punctually.
* Present in their school uniform.
* 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:**

Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.

* Ensure that children attend regularly, punctually and in the appropriate school uniform.
* Be interested in, support and encourage their children’s schoolwork.
* 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 with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child’s progress/behaviour.

**3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour:**

* 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.

Our school rules aim to promote a safe and positive environment within which pupils and teachers alike can achieve their goals. We aim to create a climate of positive co-operation and mutual respect where all members of the School Community can feel physically and emotionally secure. Teaching and learning can then take place on the basis of mutual respecting relationships.

***GOLDEN RULES*:**

Our **Code of Behaviour Policy** has at its core **6 Golden Rules**. Pupils and staff are all expected to respect these. They are:

* I will be **gentle -** I will not hurt anyone
* I will be **kind** - I will not hurt people’s feelings
* I will be **honest** - I will not hide the truth
* I will **listen** - I will not interrupt
* I will **respect** property - I will not waste or damage things
* I will **work hard** - I will not waste time

## SCHOOL RULES

**1. BEHAVIOUR**

Pupils are expected to behave themselves in a normal mannerly way in the school, in the cloakrooms and in the playground and also while travelling to and from school. Throwing things, kicking, thumping, spitting, name-calling and rough, crude or cheeky language are not acceptable.

**2. BULLYING**

Bullying of other children - verbal,physical,cyber - is regarded as a serious misdemeanour. Children are encouraged to REPORT any such incidents so that it can be dealt with immediately, in accordance with our “Anti-Bullying” Policy.

**3. PROPERTY**

Pupils are expected to have respect for school property and the property of others. Each child is responsible for his/her own property, therefore, articles of clothing, footwear, lunchboxes, books, etc. should be clearly marked. Unclaimed articles of clothing will be disposed of after one month. Any interference with property other than one’s own will be punishable, i.e. hiding of slippers, taking of football-gear, lunches, drinks, etc.

**4. SCHOOL-WORK**

Books and copies should be covered and kept CLEAN, NEAT and TIDY with each child’s name clearly marked. Parents are requested to ensure that children attend school without unnecessary accessories, such as jewellery, money, toys, cards, excessive amounts of stationery, etc. Mobile phones are permitted but are not allowed to be turned on in school. If they are powered on, they will be confiscated. Children are expected to concentrate, listen to, follow instructions and respect the teacher.

**5. HOMEWORK**

Homework is allocated each night from Monday to Thursday. This should be completed CAREFULLY and NEATLY. In circumstances where a child is unable to complete his/her homework, a parent is requested to write a note to the teacher explaining why this was so. Otherwise, unfinished homework may be completed at break-times/weekends.

**6. SCHOOL PREMISES**

Children are not allowed, AT ANY TIME, to leave the school premises without PERMISSION from a teacher. Persons are not permitted to be on school-grounds after school-hours without permission from the Board of Management. Any breach of this rule will be reported to the relevant authorities.

**7. SHOES AND CLOTHING**

Children are requested to attend school in the appropriate school uniform - a navy sweatshirt, navy tracksuit bottoms and a blue t-shirt with collar. (The school name should be printed on the jumper in ED print in Longford.)

**The following are not permitted:**

* Unnecessary Accessories
* Jewellery
* Make-up
* Hoop earrings

**To reduce competition and increase pride in their school uniform, children are expected to wear the COMPLETE uniform every day.**

If there is a genuine reason why a child cannot wear any part of the uniform, a written note of explanation must be submitted to the class teacher.

**8. LUNCHES**

Sweets, bars, crisps, chewing gum, fizzy drinks (including fizzy fruit-flavoured water), sports drinks are not allowed from Monday to Thursday. However, Friday will be our treat day. On this day, children can include one food item from the 'not allowed' list (except chewing gum). Please note: popcorn is only allowed on Fridays.

Unfinished lunches should be brought home. All litter must be disposed of carefully as it is a priority in the locality that all areas, including school-grounds are kept litter-free.

**9. PLAY-AREAS**

Running or playing in the classrooms, cloakrooms or hall-areas is NOT permitted. When the bell rings children must line up in a safe manner.

**10. TRANSPORT**

Children must wait INSIDE the gates until their parents or in some cases bus has arrived.

**11. DISCIPLINE**

School policy is that teachers, parents and pupils all CO-OPERATE in implementing the above rules as far as possible. Rules in existence were drawn up, firstly, for the good of the pupil and secondly, for the smooth running of the school. Misdemeanours are presently RECORDED by the teachers. Persistent breaches will be reported to parents.

**12. ACCIDENTS/ILLNESS**

In the event of serious injury or illness, parents or guardians are notified by phone.

**13. ABSENCE AND SICKNESS:**

As we have already stated, regular attendance is crucial to your child’s progress. However, children, from time to time, get sick. In accordance with the **Educational Welfare Act** the school has a duty to report any child who has missed **20 days** or more in one academic year. **The Principal has no discretion in this. Parents/Guardians are now obliged by law to provide a written explanation on their child’s absence to the school.**

If your child has a particular health problem, e.g. eyesight, hearing, toilet related problem, asthma, etc. please inform the school.

**14. LATE ARRIVAL**

Late arrival at school and non-attendance at school are not seen as a breach of discipline as these are the responsibility of parents.

Teachers communicate these rules in a manner suitable to the children’s age, ability and class-level. Children are expected to adhere to the above rules in respect of all school-personnel, i.e. Teachers, Visiting Teachers, Substitute Teachers, Invited Guest-Speakers, Special Needs Assistants, Visitors, Coaches, Ancillary Staff, Clergy, etc.

The Code of Behaviour also applies to extra-curricular school activities, e.g. school trips, matches, visits to places of interest, walking to and from the Hall or Church, school tours or attending any event while representing the school.

### Before/After School

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening time of 9.20a.m. or after the official closing of 2.00p.m.(infants) 3.00p.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.

**Reward and Sanctions:**

Positive behaviour e.g. sharing, helping, being kind, displaying a sporting attitude, being co-operative, academic achievement or improvement, displayed by individual or groups of children is acknowledged in one or more of the following ways:

* A quiet word or gesture to show approval
* Their mane on the ‘good deed tree’
* A comment in a pupil’s exercise book/homework journal
* A visit to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation
* A word of praise in front of a group or class
* A system of merit marks/points
* Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
* A mention to parent, written or verbal communication
* Treats, e.g. Additional P.E./Art time, Board-Games, D.V.D. or “sweet” treats

**Disapproval of unacceptable behaviour may be dealt with as follows:**

(The nature of the behaviour will determine the strategy)

* Reasoning with pupils
* Verbal reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
* Prescribing extra work
* Communication with Parents (by phone or written to inform parent of child’s misbehaviour)
* Temporary separation from peers and/or loss of privileges
* Referral to Principal
* Note to parents (Written communication to invite parents to school to discuss child’s misbehaviour)
* Take note of unacceptable behaviour in written detail in Teacher’s Records
* Suspension/expulsion (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular 7/88)

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:

**Example of minor misdemeanours may include:**

Interrupting class work, running in the school building or around corners, talking continuously in class, leaving assigned seat without permission, leaving litter around the school, not wearing the correct school uniform, being discourteous or unmannerly, not completing homework without good reason (This list is not exhaustive).

**When dealing with minor misdemeanours, teachers may take the following steps:**

* Verbal reprimand/reasoning with the pupil

**In the case of regular occurrences of minor misdemeanours the following steps may be taken:**

1. Loss of merit marks/points
2. Write story of what happened or other prescribed writing to be signed by a parent (Senior Room).
3. Note to parents via letter/Homework Journal to be signed by parent.
4. Temporary separation from peers.
5. Sending to another teacher/Principal.
6. Denial of participation in some class activity.
7. “Sin-Bin” (Removal) for pupils if misbehaviour is repeated after warning. (This is an area of the School Yard where a child must stay for an age-appropriate length of time until allowed to rejoin Playtime).
8. Note to parents concerning further misbehaviour in yard (i.e. any action that puts the safety of self/other pupil at risk).
9. Class Teacher requests meeting with one or both parents regarding repeated breach of rules.

**Examples of serious misdemeanours may include:**

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 or 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, endangering self or fellow pupils in the classroom or playground. (This list is not exhaustive)

**Examples of steps which may be taken when dealing with serious misdemeanours:**

* Send to the Principal
* Class teacher sends note in Journal to be signed by parent
* Class teacher meets with one/both parents
* Principal meets with one/both parents
* Chairperson of Board of Management is informed and parents requested to meet with the Chairperson and Principal

**Managing Aggressive or Violent Behaviour:**

Where a child may be emotionally disturbed or displaying behavioural problems, the school may seek the help of the support agencies e.g. National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Health Service Executive (HSE), National Council for Special Education (NCSE) or Special Education Support Services (S.E.S.S).

**SUSPENSION/EXPULSION:**

The sanction of suspension or expulsion should only be used in exceptional circumstances when all other avenues have been exhausted. The Health and Safety at Work Act 2005 requires that Boards of Management conduct their business, as far as reasonably practicable, in ways that prevent improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the safety, health and welfare at work of employees or the health and safety of pupils, parents or visitors at risk. Provisions relating to the expulsion of a student are contained in section 24 of the Educational Welfare Act 2000. The Board of Management reserves the sole authority to expel a pupil.

**SUSPENSION:**

**1. Authority to suspend:**

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a student. Authority may be delegated to the Principal formally and in writing.

**2. Grounds for suspension:**

Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Other interventions will have been tried before suspension and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

1. The student’s behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students.

2. The student’s continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.

3. The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

4. Single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension

**3. Suspension as part of behavioural management plan:**

Suspension should be part of an agreed plan to address the student’s behaviour. The suspension should:

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

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person. Fair procedures must still be applied.

**4. Procedures:**

The school should observe the following procedures:

* Inform the student and their parents about the complaint
* Give parents and student an opportunity to respond

**5. Period of Suspension:**

A student should not be suspended for more than three days, but with permission of the Board of Management this can be extended to five and again to ten days if necessary.

**6. Appeals:**

Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parent may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*.

**7. Reinstatement:**

When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a student should be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed, the school should expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

**EXPULSION:**

Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student’s behaviour. The following should be undertaken to address misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion:

1. Meeting with parents and pupils to try to help the student change the behaviour
2. Making sure the pupil and parents understand the possible consequences of the behaviour
3. Exhausting all other possible options

(d) Seeking the help of support agencies i.e. National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Health Service Executive (HSE), National Council for Special Education (NCSE), National Behavioural Support (NBSS)

**Grounds for Expulsion:**

1. The pupil’s behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
2. The pupil’s continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
3. The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property

**Automatic Expulsion:**

A Board of Management can impose automatic expulsion for certain prescribed behaviours or in exceptional cases for a first offence. These behaviours may include, according to the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB):

1. Sexual assault
2. Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
3. Actual violence or physical assault
4. Serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff

**Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:**

1. Detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
2. Recommendations by the Principal to the Board of Management
3. Board of Management considers Principal’s recommendations and holds hearing
4. Board of Management deliberates and proposes action following the hearing
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel

**Fairness of Procedures:**

The Constitution of Ireland gives rights to parents and pupils in the matter of education and these must be respected as fundamental in the school Code of Behaviour. The requirement of fairness of procedures also derives from the constitution. There are two basic rules of fairness of procedure:

1. The right to be heard i.e. the right to respond, the right to know what alleged misbehaviour is being investigated, the right to know how the issue is decided. If there is a possibility of a serious sanction, the right to be heard by the Board of Management. If the dispute is about facts, the right to ask questions of the other party or witnesses.
2. The right to impartiality i.e. the right to an absence of bias in the decision-maker. Generally, impartiality requires that the investigation is separated from the process of making a decision so that the decision-maker comes to the task with an open mind.

**Appeals:**

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 parents 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. Accordingly, schools should advise parents of this right of appeal and associated timeframe if it has been decided to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student.

**KEEPING RECORDS:**

The eight rules of data protection apply to personal records kept in school:

1. Obtain and process information fairly.
2. Keep it only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purposes.
3. Use and disclose it only in ways compatible with these purposes.
4. Keep it safe and secure.
5. Keep it accurate, complete and up-to-date.
6. Ensure it is adequate, relevant and not excessive.
7. Retains it for no longer than is necessary for the purpose or purposes.
8. Give a copy of their personal data to an individual on request.

**Class Records**

Teachers maintain written classroom records on individual children, which include information on academic progress as well as behavioural matters.

**School Records**

Individual reports on all pupils are kept on-file in the school.

**References to other policies:**

Other school policies that have a bearing on the Code of Behaviour include:

* SPHE
* Anti-Bullying
* Harassment
* Enrolment
* Record Keeping
* Health & Safety
* Special Educational Need
* Healthy Heating
* School Tours
* Swimming
* Acceptable Usage

**SUCCESS CRITERIA:**

* Observation of positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment
* Practices and procedures listed in this policy consistently implemented by teachers
* Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils
* An atmosphere of co-operation and contentment pervading throughout the school community

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

This Code of Behaviour will be implemented from **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Ratified by the Board of Management on DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Chairperson, Board of Management.**