

Code of Behaviour 2015-2016

(Amended & Updated)

This policy has been amended and been prepared in accordance with The Guidelines produced by the National Welfare Board as per The Education Welfare Act 2000- Section 23.

Link to Mission Statement

Good Behaviour is essential for effective teaching and learning to take place in Our Code of Behaviour provides a just and reasonable system to ensure responsible behaviour by students, staff and parents/guardians. The Code was formulated after discussions with the children of Gort National School, staff, parents, and the Board of Management.

Affirmation and reward of good behaviour by school and home is a fundamental part of our Code of Behaviour.

The Code of Behaviour and the expectations set out in the Code are based on respect for others, a commitment to study and participation in the life of the school.

The code applies to all aspects of school life and all school related activities.

Bullying: The school has a very strong policy against bullying. The Anti-Bullying Policy is available on request. It is part of our Anti Bullying Code that:

- Every pupil is entitled to an education free from harassment or abuse and bullying will not be tolerated in school.
- There should be no name-calling, skitting, teasing, verbal abuse, physical abuse or fighting and no unwelcome comments about a pupil or any member of their family.
- Any incident brought to the attention of teachers or ancillary staff will be taken seriously and will be investigated. If the problem persists then the person causing the problem may face serious disciplinary action under our Code of Behaviour.

Roles and Responsibilities of the School Community in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.

Students/Children: Every child must give a commitment to accept the Code of Behaviour and to fulfil the expectations as set out in the Code. This will ensure the creation and maintenance of a good learning environment.

Parents/Guardians: Parents/Guardians have a duty to support the school in implementing a fair and just code of behaviour. Acceptance of the Code of Behaviour by parents/guardians is required on enrolment of a student in the school. Parents undertake responsibility to educate the child on the Code of Behaviour.(Parents/Guardians will sign a form of acceptance at enrolment.)

Teachers: Each teacher has a responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her own class and share, with every other teacher, a common responsibility for good order within the school and school grounds and on all school related activities before, during and after school.

Each teacher has the responsibility of teaching the Code of Behaviour to their class.

SNA's and Ancillary Staff: SNA's and all ancillary staff have a common responsibility along with the teachers to maintain good discipline and good order within the school and the school grounds and on all school related activities.

Principal: The Principal has the overall responsibility for the day-to-day running of the school. The Principal ensures that implementing the code is done in a fair and just manner and that the implementation of sanctions is fair, equitable, appropriate and consistent.

The Board of Management: The BOM formally approves the Code of Behaviour and supports the Principal and staff in the implementation of the Code. The Board of Management hears appeals by parents/guardians against the decision of the Principal to suspend or expel a student.

Expectations:

In defining the Code of Behaviour, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances in Gort National School. The Code has been formulated after discussions with all members of the school community as part of the consultative process. Our aim is to provide a framework for reasonable and responsible behaviour by all members of the school community children, parents/guardians and staff alike, and to ensure that every reasonable effort is made to accommodate the individuality of each student while acknowledging the right of each student to education in a disruption-free environment. The Code as stated extends to the environs of the school, to school outings and trips, to all school related activities.

Good Manners and Good Behaviour: Children are expected to show respect to teachers, fellow pupils and visitors to the school. Students must have respect and consideration for others. This involves being fair to everyone, helping others if they need help, not picking on or bullying others, not fighting, taking care of their own belongings and respecting the property of other children, teachers and the school. Gort National School expects our students to show politeness, respect and courtesy to all members of the school community, bus drivers, local residents and visitors at all times. Ill mannered, disruptive or dangerous behaviour will not be tolerated on the Tubber Rd.

1. **Attendance:** Children should attend school every day and arrive on time for school every morning. The school accepts children from 8.40 onwards. School begins at 8.50am. The school takes no responsibility for children arriving before the official opening time at 8.40am. In the Convent the school accepts children from 8.50 onwards. School begins at 9.00a.m. The school takes no responsibility for children arriving before the official opening time and after the official closing times. Gort National School expect that parents will send their children to school unless it is absolutely unavoidable. The school expects that all absences will be explained and that the children will bring in notes if they miss school for any reason. The school advises parents to send in medical certificates if the children have missed time due to illness.

2. **Uniform:** Children are expected to wear their school uniform every day except on P.E. days. The school uniform consists of grey trousers/pinafore, a red jumper/cardigan with school crest and a white polo shirt.
3. **Class work and Homework:** In Gort National School we expect our children to listen to the teacher. We expect our children not to disrupt or disturb the class. We expect that the children will come to school properly prepared for class having the books, copies, pencils, pens etc. required. Children have a homework journal and are responsible for taking down the homework assigned each night. Children are expected to do both written and oral work Mon-Thurs. Parents/Guardians are responsible for checking that the work is completed. The parent/guardian should sign the homework notebook each evening when the homework is completed. The school homework policy ensures that homework is not assigned at weekends or at holidays but uncompleted work may be assigned at weekend.
4. **School Environment:** Children are encouraged to keep the school building, yard and school environs clean and free of litter. Litter must be categorized as part of our recycling policy and placed in the appropriate bins. Chewing gum is not allowed. Children are not permitted to return to the school grounds or building after school at weekends and during holidays without permission from the school principal or the Board of Management.
5. **Yard Drills and Behaviour during Break Times:** Pupils are asked to leave and return to the classroom in single file. Children are not allowed to bring any item or objects onto the playground for health and safety reasons. (A list of yard rules and the procedures for teachers is included in the appendix to the Code of Behaviour). On days when children do not go to the playground due to weather etc. they remain in their classroom for the duration of the break.
6. **Health and Hygiene:** The school has a Healthy lunch and healthy eating policy. Parents/Guardians are requested to adhere to the guidelines given in this policy and prepare a healthy lunch for the children. Junk food, wedges, sausage rolls, chicken wings, crisps etc. are not allowed. Parents/Guardians are asked to check the children's hair on a regular basis to help prevent outbreaks of head lice. Any outbreaks should be reported to the school. Children are expected to be clean, neat and tidy at all times and to follow hygiene procedures laid out in school.
7. **Health and Safety:** In light of the amalgamation of the two schools the Health and Safety Policy from the previous schools still stand until a new one is ratified.
8. **Behaviour on School Outings:** On outings children representing Gort National School are expected to be on their best behaviour and behave in an exemplary manner. Directions from the person in charge must be complied with at all times. All school rules included in previous sections apply to school outings. This includes walking locally or within a school group to any centres such as the church, the library, community centres etc.

Reward Systems and Procedures:

Gort National School places a significant emphasis on promoting and rewarding good behaviour. This is done in a number of ways; through affirmation and acknowledgement by the teachers in class and sending positive notes home in the homework diary, at parent teacher meetings, in newsletters and local papers and at the end of year ceremonies. We set high expectations for all our students and endeavour to create a positive learning environment.

Regular praise and affirmation is continually given to children for their efforts in Gort National School. As part of the Code of Behaviour the school will continue this policy. Teachers own management styles, experience and creativity are acknowledged. In this school the aim is to strike a balance between reward and sanction. We strive towards a policy that raises expectations of the children in our care and improves their standards. The importance of rewarding positive behaviour cannot be underestimated. Affirmation is the means by which, teachers and parents mirror for children their goodness worth, value, uniqueness, lovability and vast potential. It is vital that the rewards are public. By accentuating the positive it is hoped that such behaviour type will increase in frequency.

Rewards come in different forms. Tangible rewards come in the form of treats, trips to special places or privileges (extra playtime, story time etc.) Praise on the other hand is teacher approval. Positive enthusiastic feedback from teachers that used in a specific way may help to change and enhance the pupil's self esteem.

In Gort National School it is recognised that there are various levels of reward:

1. Initially the most important reward for the child is intrinsic. As a result of good choices they are safe and secure. Furthermore, due to responsible choice they help other children and staff feels safe and secure. They are contributing to the well being of others.
2. Gort National School recognises the importance of reinforcing positive behaviour through gesture (smile, nod etc.), verbal acknowledgement and praise that is specific accurate and realistically applied to something that the child has done.

The school builds on a reward-centred climate through the following whole school initiatives:

1. Teachers send home positive letters/good notes.
2. Positive behaviour or cooperative behaviour is acknowledged with homework passes.
3. Attendance awards for regular attendees on a yearly basis. An Attendance Blitz to be held annually to give impetus to whole class attendance.
4. Classroom management awards can include stars, stickers, badges, points, vouchers, small prizes.
5. Principle Reward Certificates.