**Code of Behaviour**

**Owenbeg N.S.**

**Roll Number: 03924S**

**Introductory Statement**

This Code of Behaviour has been devised by the school principal in consultation with all staff members, the members of the Board of Management and members parents committee.

**Rationale**

* The Board of Management of Owenbeg N.S. decided to review the Behaviour Policy to ensure that it is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008.
* 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 registered at the school. It details in Section 23(2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:
  1. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
  2. The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
  3. The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
  4. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and
  5. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child’s absence from school.

The school has a central role in the children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. In seeking to define acceptable standards of behaviour it is acknowledged that these are goals to be worked towards rather than expectations that are either fulfilled or not.

The children bring to school a wide variety of behaviour. As a community environment, in school we must work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. It follows that acceptable standards of behaviour are those that reflect these principles.

Children need limits set for them to feel secure and develop the skills for co-operation. Therefore, any rules will be age appropriate, with clearly agreed consequences for any infringements of these rules.

Parents/guardians can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, by visiting the school and by talking to the members of staff.

As far as possible a code of behaviour acknowledges the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

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**Aims of the Code**

This code of behaviour describes the school’s expectations about how each member of the school community will help to make the school a good place for teaching and learning. Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school and the over-riding aims will be

* To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
* To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
* To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
* To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration of others
* To enhance the learning environment and allow the school to function whereby children can make progress in all aspects of their development
* To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community
* To assist the parents and children in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the Code 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.
* To enable teachers to teach without disruption
* To ensure safe and responsible use of the internet during school hours and to encourage a continuation of these good habits, to ensure safe and respectful internet use outside of school.

**Responsibility of Adults: Teachers, SNAs, Students on Placement, Parents and Guardians.**

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children, school staff and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we should aim to lead by example:

* Create a positive climate with realistic expectations
* Promote, through example, respect, honesty and courtesy
* Provide a caring and effective learning environment
* Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others
* Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, race, ability and disability
* Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all
* To discourage physical or verbal aggression
* A Code of Conduct that enshrines respect, integrity, care and trust is expected of Teaching Staff, SNAs, Ancillary Staff, Students on School Placement, Parents and Guardians. This ensures that the rights of the children are upheld.

**School hours:**

**Infants 9:20am – 2:00pm**

**1st Class – 6th Class 9:20am – 3:00pm**

**Guidelines for behaviour**

1. Each pupil is expected to be well behaved and show consideration for other children and adults
2. Each pupil is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other children’s and their own belongings.
3. Each pupil is expected to do their best in school and in completing their homework.
4. Students must respect other students and their learning and show kindness and willingness to help others.
5. Pupils must respect and obey all teachers and staff and be courteous and mannerly to all the school community including visitors.
6. Fighting, name calling, bad language, provocation of pupils or other improper behaviours are forbidden.
7. Bullying of any kind, physical, verbal, psychological is absolutely forbidden.
8. Disruption of class work will be regarded as extremely serious misbehaviour.
9. Pupils are encouraged to participate fully in school by helping with programmes such as the Green Schools initiative, Student Council and school choir.
10. Students must be organised and prepared for school at every class level.
11. Each pupil is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual. Absences of more than 20 days in the year will be reported to the attendance officer (as per DES regulations)
12. Good habits of attendance and punctuality should be formed in the early school years.

Pupils wishing to leave school early must have a note signed by parent/guardian or be collected at classroom door by parent / guardian. Pupil’s absences and lateness must be explained in verbal or written from. Students may not leave the school between 9:20am and 3:00pm unless accompanied by an adult authorised by parent/guardian.

1. If a student is leaving early or arriving during the day for any reason, the adult meeting them must sign them in and out.
2. Children at school before 9:10am are unsupervised.

**School Uniform**

* On P.E. days pupils should wear the school tracksuit, polo shirt (blue) and runners (preferably Velcro runners for younger pupils).
* On all other days pupils should wear full school **uniform**, with flat – heeled shoes.
* Pupils and their books should be neat and clean.
* Hair should be kept clean and checked on a regular basis for head lice and long hair must be tied back.
* Permanent synthetic hair colour is strongly discouraged
* Other than stud earrings, no body piercings are allowed.
* False nails or gel nail extensions are not permitted for any reason

**Homework**

* + Homeworkassigned must be completed on time, in full and to the highest possible standard. Homework should be checked and signed nightly by parent / guardian. If homework is not completed, there should be a brief note of explanation from parent/guardian.

**Break/Yard time**

* + Pupils must play safely at all times. Anti-social, dangerous or hurtful behaviour is forbidden
  + Pupils are not allowed into the school building during yard time without permission from a teacher.
  + Equipment such as footballs, skipping ropes etc. are permitted in the school yard, provided they are played with appropriately and in a safe manner
  + Pupils should walk in the corridors in single file.
  + Pupils must ask a teacher before retrieving a football from outside of the boundaries of the school yard.

**Healthy Eating Policy**

* + As a staff we encourage a ‘Healthy Eating Policy’. We recommend at least one portion of fruit or vegetable is included in your child’s lunch each day. Crisps, chewing gum and fizzy drinks are not allowed.

**Mobile phones/smartwatches**

* Mobile phones, internet-enabled device or audio/image/video recording devices are not permitted for pupils, in school, at after-school activities, school events or when representing the school (without the express permission of the principal).
* In exceptional circumstances where a satisfactory written request is received and passed by BOM, they may be allowed, but may not be switched on while on school premises. They must be given to the class teacher for safe keeping during the school day. (The school will not be responsible for any phone/smart watch lost or mislaid while in school).

**Parents/Guardians**

* Parents/guardians should not disrupt the school day without good reason. If parents/guardians wish to speak to a teacher about a serious issue they should make an appointment with the Principal or with that teacher and not disrupt class teaching time.
* Parents/guardians of Infants should ensure that children are toilet trained before coming to school, (except in exceptional cases).
* Teacher should be made aware of any illness, disability, problem or family situation which might affect a child’s development.
* Any unauthorised vehicles are not allowed in the school car park by order of the B.O.M.

**School Rules**

* We are kind and helpful
* We are honest and fair
* We listen to others
* We show respect for ourselves and others
* We show respect for property
* We work hard

**Class Rules**

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children. These reflect and support the school rules but are presented in a way that is accessible to the children.  
Class rules should be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. They should, where possible emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. ‘Walk’ and not ‘Don’t run’). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference.

Where difficulties arise, parents/guardians will be contacted at an early stage.

**Incentives**

* Part of the vision of Owenbeg N.S. is to help children achieve their **personal best** - academically, intellectually and socially.
* We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and that similarly children use a variety of approaches to solve problems.
* All children deserve encouragement to achieve their best.
* Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to at all times by adults in the school.
* Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements.
* Praise for *behaviour, kindness* and *work* is equally important.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given;

* A quiet word or gesture to show approval
* A comment in a pupil’s exercise book
* A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
* A word of praise in front of a group or class
* Extra Golden Time for individual/group or whole class
* Feedback to parents/guardians
* A system of merit marks or stickers
* Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
* A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.

**Unacceptable Behaviour**

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross.

**Minor misbehaviour**

All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour, parents/guardians will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the Principal to discuss their child’s behaviour.

**Examples of minor misbehaviour:**

* Interrupting class work
* Regularly arriving late for school
* Running in the school building
* Littering
* Cursing/bad language
* Being discourteous or unmannerly
* Not completing homework without good reason (to include a note from parent/guardian)
* Inappropriate behaviour or gestures
* Minor infringement of the school rules
* Talking out of turn

**Examples of serious misbehaviour:**

* Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, name-calling,

discrimination and victimisation)

* Having a mobile phone, internet-enabled device or audio/image/video recording device in school, at after-school activities, school events or when representing the school (without the express permission of the principal)
* Consistent cursing/bad language
* Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
* Threats, physical hurt or verbal abuse to another person
* Damage to property
* Theft
* Telling lies
* Name calling
* Answering back a teacher/staff member
* Endangering self or fellow pupils in the class or in the yard.
* Deliberate, continual disobedience
* Infringement of the Acceptable Use Policy: i.e. Use of a device/internet in an unacceptable way
* Any other behaviour not listed which the staff, Principal and Board of Management deem to be a serious misbehaviour

**Examples of gross misbehaviour:**

* Repeated incidents of serious misbehaviours
* Any action that puts the safety of self or other pupils or staff at risk
* Misuse of school I.T. devices/ programmes
* Ongoing refusal to follow school rules to the detriment of the rights of other pupils and staff
* Assault on a teacher or pupil
* Serious theft or damage to property
* Any other behaviour not listed which the staff, Principal and Board of Management deem to be a gross misbehaviour

**Sanctions**

The use of sanctions or consequences should be characterised by certain features;

* It must be clear why the sanction is being applied
* The consequence must relate as closely as possible to the behaviour
* It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future

sanctions

* Group punishment should be avoided as it breeds resentment
* There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences
* It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus

**The school manages unacceptable behaviour by adopting the following strategies in a staged approach.**

The list is by no means exhaustive. The nature of the behaviour and the age of the child will determine the nature of the strategies employed.

1. Reasoning with pupil including advising them about the consequences of their actions
2. Verbal reprimand (including advice on how to improve behaviour).
3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to

another class.

1. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened (reflection sheet)
2. Loss of privileges
3. Detention during break
4. Recording instances of repeated misbehaviour
5. Referral to Principal
6. Formal meeting with parents/guardians
7. Referral to the Principal and the Chairperson of the BoM
8. Suspension or Exclusion from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000)
9. Expulsion

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health & safety.

Detention at break time does not require prior notice to parents/guardians, but that it is an acceptable method of sanction.

**Suspension and Expulsion**

Before serious sanctions such as detention, suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents/guardians will be utilised. Communication with parents/guardians may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

**Suspension**

For gross misbehaviour or repeated incidences of serious misbehaviour, suspension will be considered. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour, depending on circumstances. Where there are repeated incidences of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may have to be suspended for a temporary period. Suspension will be in accordance with terms of Rule 130 (5) of the Rules for National Schools. In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained, and to secure the safety of pupils, the Board shall authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed, and the parents/guardians will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the principal. If the parents/guardians do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

**Expulsion**

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a student in an extreme case (see p.81, Developing a Code of Behaviour; Guidelines for Schools) or where repeated incidents of gross misbehaviour interfere with the educational opportunities of fellow students or where there is a threat to the health and safety of either students or staff. This sanction would be imposed under the terms of the Education Welfare Act (2000). Suspension/expulsion procedures are in accordance with the Education Act (1998).

**Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)**

Following or during a period of suspension, the parents/guardians may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parents/guardians must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil’s reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil’s own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

**Children with Special Needs**

All children are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans or a Student Support Plan (IEP) will be put in place in consultation with parents/guardians and the class teacher, learning support/ resource teacher, and or Principal. All will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

* Through the Special Educational Needs Organiser, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Service Executive, NEPS, …
* E.N. personnel may facilitate teachers in sharing practice and support in the
* management of challenging behaviour.
* Some teachers may act as mentors for particular children or in assisting teachers in the creation of individual behaviour plans for specific children
* There is a mentoring system for newly qualified teachers to support them in
* this area
* Professional development will be available to staff on an ongoing basis e.g. NCSE, Colleges of Education, Education Centres etc.
* If physical restraint is used as a strategy for dealing with violent or threatening
* behaviour, school personnel will be advised to read Managing Challenging Behaviour – Guidelines for Teachers, INTO 2004: 11 and the BOM will consult competent legal advice. This should be communicated to all staff at the commencement of each school year.
* In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil himself/herself or the safety of other pupils or staff, a temporary exclusion will be enforced while consultation with the SENO and/or EWO takes place about appropriate resourcing and/or alternative placement.

**Methods of Communicating with Parents/Guardians**

Communicating with parents/guardians is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents/guardians and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents/guardians have been established and are reviewed regularly.

Parents/guardians should be encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child’s life, in the past or present, which may affect the child’s behaviour.

The following methods are to be used at all levels within the school:

* Informal parent/teacher meetings and Formal parent/teacher meetings
* Through children’s homework journal (infants do not have a homework

journal-please check bags)

* Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
* Term newsletter
* Text/email from school and/or Aladdin notice.

**Appeals**

Appeals Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) 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. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student. (See Circular 22/02)

**Keeping records**

In line with the school’s policy on record keeping, and data protection legislation, records in relation to gross misbehaviour are kept in a secure filing cabinet. Copies of communications with parents/guardians will be retained in the school. Records of more serious incidents are recorded in a specific Discipline journal and are retained until students reach 21 years. Class teachers should shred personal records at the end of each year.

**Emotional and Behavioural Difficulty**

The school recognises that the term EBD (Emotional and Behavioural Disorders) covers a wide range of Special Educational Needs. Children with an EBD diagnosis will have a behavioural plan in school. Reference to other Policies List and check other school policies that have a bearing on the code of behaviour e.g.

* SPHE plan
* Anti-bullying
* Child Protection
* Admissions/ ASD Class Enrolment
* Health & Safety
* Special Educational Needs

**Success Criteria**

This policy will be deemed to be successful when the following are observed:

* Positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment
* Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers
* Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on 5th March 2024

Signed (Chairperson of BOM)

Signed

(Principal)