



**RAHARA N.S.**  
SCOIL NÁISIÚNTA RATH ARADH

# Code of Behaviour

# CODE OF BEHAVIOUR RAHARA N.S.

**This Code of Behaviour should be read in conjunction with Rahara N.S. Anti-Bullying policy**

This Code of Behaviour is formulated by the Board of Management of Rahara N.S. in accordance with the guidelines *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008* and Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. Consultation has taken place with the various stakeholders in the formulation of this policy.

## Rationale

- The Code of Behaviour has been reviewed at this particular time to ensure the 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*.
  
- 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:*
  - 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

The Code of Behaviour endeavours to uphold the Vision Statement of Rahara N.S. which states,

‘Each pupil, through an encouraging learning environment, will be motivated to achieve his/her full potential, be a self-confident, caring and capable person who will contribute positively to his/her community and be respectful in an ever-changing world.’

## Aims

The code aims at:

- Creating a caring environment where each child can feel secure and confident, so that teaching and learning can be effective and children can develop to their full potential.
- Developing a positive approach to discipline in pupils, based on respect and tolerance of others.
- Maintaining good order throughout the school and respect for the school environment.
- Accommodating the individuality of each child while acknowledging at the same time the right of each child to an education in a relatively disruptive free environment.

## Content of policy

The policy is addressed under the following headings.

## **1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school**

Each pupil is expected to be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults

Each pupil is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own belongings

Each pupil is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual

Each pupil is expected to do his/her best both in school and for homework.

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

The Board of Management, Principal, Staff, Parents and Pupils of Rahara N.S. have roles to play in the success of Code of Discipline.

### **The Board of Management is expected to:**

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

### **The Principal is expected to:**

- 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.

### **Members of staff are expected to:**

- support and implement the school's code of behaviour;
- to be familiar with and follow the school's policy on "Child Protection".
- create a safe, welcoming environment for each pupil;
- praise desirable behaviour;
- facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential;
- 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;
- record instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour in the school incident book;
- communicate with parents when necessary, always with courtesy and respect;
- provide reports on matters of concern.

### **Parents are expected to:**

- ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually
- encourage their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work
- be aware of and cooperate with the school's rules and system of rewards and sanctions
- attend meetings at the school if requested
- help their children with homework and ensure that it is completed
- ensure their children have the necessary books and materials for school.
- to send a written note to the class teacher explaining their child's absence from school;
- to ensure the school has up-to-date phone numbers of family/friends to be contacted in case of an emergency.

- to arrange and ensure that a family member/friend is contactable and available to attend the school in the event of an emergency.
- to ensure their child has a healthy lunch in school every day in line with the school policy on "Health Eating".
- to arrange meetings with the class teacher and/or principal when they are concerned about any issue relating to their child;
- to encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves, for others, for their own property and that of others;
- to be interested in, support and encourage their child's school work;
- to communicate to the school problems which may affect a child's behaviour.

**Pupils are expected to:**

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- 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.

**School Rules:**

School rules at Rahara N.S. are devised with regard to the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. It is imperative that adults 'practise what they preach' in their interaction with children every day. The School Rules listed below provide clear guidelines for all members of the school community.

- Pupils enter and leave the school building at all times in an orderly fashion.
- In the interest of safety they must walk within the school building.
- Pupils are expected to treat all staff members, themselves and each other with due respect and courtesy.
- Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to be safe is unacceptable.
- Inappropriate language will not be tolerated.
- We encourage pupils to wear their full school uniform.
- Jewellery is not allowed during sporting activities.
- Hairsprays/gels/deodorants are not allowed. Roll-on deodorants may be used by 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> classes if required.
- Chewing gum, glass bottles, correction fluids, other solvents, matches, cigarettes, alcohol or drugs are not allowed.
- Cycling in school grounds is not allowed
- We encourage children to bring healthy lunches
- Children shall not have mobile phones during school hours. If a child is found with a mobile phone during school hours it will be taken away by the teacher and only returned to the parents/guardians. In **exceptional circumstances** the parent/guardian may make arrangements with the school and the phone will be held for the child for use after school hours.
- Pupils must respect the school building and property. If any deliberate damage is caused, the parent/guardian will be responsible for the cost of repair/replacement.

**School Environment:**

We pride ourselves on obtaining and flying the School's Green Flag denoting an environmentally friendly policy.

- Pupils are expected to value our school environment and to care for it. The playground is a litter-free zone.
- To protect the environment, the school is involved in various projects:  
**Composting:** Fruit peels, pencil parings, etc. are collected for the purpose of composting  
**Recycling:** Waste paper and cardboard are collected for recycling.

#### **Behaviour in Class and in School Building:**

- Pupils must not behave in such a manner as to disrupt class work or to cause unnecessary disturbance.
- It is school policy that every pupil listens to the class teacher, works hard; making best use of his/her time in school.

#### **Behaviour in the Playground:**

- All pupils have a right to enjoy their time out in the playground in a safe environment at break periods.
- Misdemeanour consists of any action that puts the safety of self or others at risk.
- Fighting, rough play, abusive/bad language or any physical force is not tolerated.
- In the interests of safety, climbing on the perimeter walls is strictly forbidden.
- Children do not enter the school building without getting permission from teacher on yard duty. Children must remain within clear view of teacher on yard duty at all times.

#### **Swimming Days**

- All children shall obey the rules of the Coral Leisure Centre Roscommon and the rules of Rahara N.S.

#### **School Tours and outside school activities**

- The code of behaviour will apply where pupils, although outside the school, are still the responsibility of the school e. g. school tours, games, extra-curricular activities and attendance at events organised by the school.

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

#### **Strategies to promote Positive Behaviour:**

- Ensuring that pupils are treated fairly, equally and firmly
- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- Matching work with pupil's abilities.
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book
- A visit to another member of staff or the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Delegating some responsibility or privilege
- A mention to a parent – written or verbal
- Use of Circle Time

(The above list is not comprehensive and consists of examples only.)

#### 4. Rewards and sanctions

##### REWARDS

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book
- A visit to another member of staff or the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Delegating some responsibility or privilege
- A mention to a parent – written or verbal
- Golden Time in the senior classes

##### SANCTIONS

The use of sanctions is an important element in the school code. They are used in a corrective way and are intended to help the child to change and improve his or her behavioural patterns.

- The nature of the misbehaviour and the age of the child
- The frequency, duration and persistence of the behaviour
- Whether it is part of an escalating pattern of poor behaviour
- The context of the behaviour.

will all determine the strategies to be employed

##### **Disciplinary Actions and Sanctions to deal with Misdemeanours:**

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, persistence, context of such misdemeanours. Whether it is part of an escalating pattern of poor behaviour will also be considered.

##### **Examples of Minor Misdemeanours:**

Interrupting class work/ arriving late for school/ running in school building/not listening and speaking out of turn/leaving seat without permission at break or lunch time/ placing unfinished food in bins/ leaving litter around school/ not wearing correct uniform/ being discourteous or unmannerly/ not completing homework without good reason/ not bringing explanation notes for absences and homework/ cycling in school grounds

##### **Examples of steps to be taken by teachers when dealing with Minor Misdemeanours**

- The class teacher will normally deal with classroom misdemeanours.
- Verbal reprimand and reasoning with the pupil, including advice on how to improve, setting realistic targets.
- Time out from friends and others (to reflect on the misbehaviour).
- Loss of privileges such as Game time, extra recreation time etc.
- Noting incidence of misbehaviour in incident book
- Note to parents.

##### **Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with REGULAR occurrences of Minor Misdemeanours:**

- A record is kept of regular instances of misdemeanour.
- Following **three** instances of misdemeanour the pupil is sent to Principal.
- Class teacher meets with parent(s)/guardian. Communicating with parents sooner rather than later

- Principal meets parent(s)/guardians concerning behaviour.

### **Examples of Serious Misdemeanours:**

Constantly disruptive in class/ telling lies/stealing/damaging or interfering with another person's property/bullying/back answering a teacher/leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission/ using or writing unacceptable language/ bringing alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, matches or constantly bringing chewing gum, glass bottles, correction fluids or other solvents to school/ deliberately injuring a fellow pupil or partaking in any activity which would put themselves or others in danger/ deliberately leaving taps on/ misuse of fire equipment.

### **Disciplinary Actions and Sanctions to deal with Bullying:**

Bullying is a serious misdemeanour and the sanctions applied are the same as those listed below for serious misdemeanours.

- Apology to the victim
- A record is kept. Pupil/s write an account of the incident/s that lead to the Bullying behaviour and what they have learned from this episode in their lives – parents must sign this.
- Pupils may be removed from activity if endangering self or others.
- Pupil is sent to Principal/Deputy Principal and made aware that suspension could be a possibility
- In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred the Principal/Deputy Principal informs parents.
- Suspension procedures may follow if deemed necessary by the school authorities.

### **Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with Serious Misdemeanours:**

- A record is kept of all serious misdemeanours.
- Pupils may be removed from activity if endangering self or others
- Pupil is sent to Principal and made aware that suspension could be a possibility
- Principal contacts parent/guardian
- Suspension procedures may follow if deemed necessary by the school authorities.

### **Examples of Gross Misdemeanours:**

Deliberately vandalising school property/ aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil. Bringing alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, matches to school.

### **Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with Gross Misdemeanours:**

- A record is kept
- Principal contacts parent/guardian
- Suspension or expulsion may be considered

### **Managing Aggressive or Violent Behaviour**

Every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed child referred for psychological assessment without delay. Help will be sought, also, from support services within the wider community, e.g. Community Care services provided by the Western Health Board.

## **5. Suspension / Expulsion**

### **SUSPENSION**

(See also NEWB Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, Chapter 11, pp 70-78).

For the purpose of this policy suspension is defined as:

‘requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days’.

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a student.

**Grounds for suspension:** The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- the student’s behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- the student’s continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

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

**Immediate Suspension:** In exceptional circumstances the Chairperson in consultation with 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.

**'Automatic Suspension':** The 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 incur suspension as a sanction.

**Procedures in respect of suspension:**

The following procedure will be followed in Rahara N.S.

- An investigation of the facts shall be held to confirm serious misbehaviour.
- Parents will be informed by phone or in writing about the incident.
- Parents will be given an opportunity to respond.

If a student and his/her parents fail to take the opportunity to respond, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour. The school should record the invitations made to parents and their response.

If suspension is still decided upon

- The principal will notify the parent in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm.
  - The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
  - The reasons for the suspension.
  - Any study programme to be followed.
  - The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents.
  - The provision for appeal to the Board of Management
  - The provision for appeal to the Secretary General of the DES under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007. (Only where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days.)
  - Where the cumulative total of days reached 6, the NEWB will be notified.

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

### **EXPULSION:**

(See also NEWB Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, Chapter 12, pp 80-87).

A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000* and with any additional requirements set down by the Patron.

### **Procedures in respect of expulsion.**

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
- A recommendation to the BOM by the principal
- Consideration by the BOM of the principal's recommendations and the holding of a hearing.
- BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing.
- If BOM is of the opinion that the student will be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing, of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. The intention to expel a student does not take effect until 20 school days have elapsed after NEWB have received written notification. The NEWB will be notified using a Notice of Intention to Expel form which is available on [www.schoolreturn.ie](http://www.schoolreturn.ie) or from the helpline (1890 36 3666). This form will be completed and sent to School Return Section, National Educational Welfare Board, 16-22 Green St, Dublin 7.
- Consultations arranged by the EWO.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

### **Appeals**

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act 1998 section 29)

### **Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school**

Reasons for pupils' absences must be communicated in writing, by parents/guardians to the school and will be retained by the school. To facilitate this, such communications should not be in the homework diary, but on a separate page or sheet of paper. If a child is absent, when the child returns to school s/he should give/send a written note to the class teacher which contains the child's name, the dates of absence and the reason for the absence. These notes will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school. The school will contact parents when a written explanation for the child's absence is not received by the school.

### **Reference to other Policies**

This Code of Behaviour has been drawn up with reference to the following policies and plans:

- o Anti-bullying
- o Enrolment
- o Record keeping
- o Home / School links
- o Health & Safety
- o Special Educational Needs
- o SPHE plan

**Success criteria:**

The success of the Code of Discipline will be judged under the following criteria:

- Improved discipline within the school
- Implementation of the policy by staff
- Feedback from staff, parents and pupils
- Improvements in behaviour

**MONITORING:**

Each staff member is responsible for the implementation of the Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy. Within the classroom the teacher monitors his/her class. Teachers consider themselves responsible for the behaviour of children within sight or sound of them and respond to any instance of unacceptable behaviour. The principal is responsible for monitoring and reviewing Policy at staff level on a regular basis and reports any review the staff deem necessary to the Board of Management.

The Board of Management (BOM) has ultimate responsibility for discipline in the school under its management and a duty to ensure that a fair code of discipline applies therein.

**Ratification and Review**

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management 2013-14. The policy is due for review in 2020-21 or earlier should Government legislation or DES guidelines require.

It was ratified by the Board of Management on Date: 24/08/2020

Signed:

Fr. Ray Milton,  
Chairperson, BOM

