

Holy Family Junior School



Code of Behaviour

Revised Policy

September 2021

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school. In Holy Family Junior School, we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with all members of our school community. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school.

The Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in Holy Family Junior School. Within the school, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises. Special Needs Assistants and other members of Holy Family Junior School staff also play a very important role in promoting positive behaviour in our school.

Holy Family Junior School Code of Behaviour is the set of practices and procedures that together form our school's plan for helping students to behave well and learn well. The code of behaviour helps the school community to promote the school ethos, relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour and minimise unacceptable behaviour. The code of behaviour helps teachers, other members of staff, students and parents to work together for a happy, effective and safe school.

Rationale

This policy was last reviewed in 2010, after an extensive consultative process took place to ensure that the views of all the partners in Holy Family Junior School community were included. It is being reviewed at this time to:

- Comply with DES requirements and as a response to updated guidelines
- Reflect the implementation of the Incredible Years Behaviour Management programme
- To ensure that all members of the school community are au fait with the code of behaviour
- To ensure the safety of all members of our school community

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

The aim of the Code of Behaviour is to ensure that the individuality of each child is respected and that individual differences are celebrated, acknowledging the right of each child to an environment in which they can safely learn and grow. The entire school community has a part to play in contributing to this environment. In Holy Family Junior School, we recognise that each

member of the school community, staff, parents/guardians and children has the right to be treated with respect, therefore every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school. Positive techniques of motivation and encouragement will be utilised by staff, placing greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions. School rules are kept to a minimum and are there to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of all members of Holy Family Junior School.

Aims

In revising this policy, consideration has to be given to the particular needs and circumstances of Holy Family Junior School.

The aims are:

- Through the implementation of the Incredible Years Programme as a whole school approach to the management of behaviour issues, we seek to promote positive behaviours, emotional awareness and self-discipline in an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- To 'catch the pupils being good' (See Incredible Years' Guidelines)
- 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 ensure 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 assist newly qualified staff members in understanding our code of behaviour
- To support class teachers in the implementation of behavioural plans for children with special needs

Content of Policy

In Holy Family Junior School, all members of our school community are expected to behave in ways that show respect for one another. Standards of behaviour at our school should reflect values such as:

- Respect for self and others
- Kindness and willingness to help others

- Courtesy and good manners
- Fairness
- Readiness to use respectful ways to resolve difficulties and conflict
- Forgiveness

Standards that signal unacceptable behaviour include:

- Any behaviour that is hurtful in any way
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threatening behaviour
- Damage to property
- Theft

The policy is addressed under the following headings:

1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school and whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour
 - Pupils
 - Parents
 - Teachers
 - Board of Management
2. Positive strategies for managing behaviour
3. Responding to inappropriate behaviour
4. Reduced School Day, Suspension and Expulsion
 - Reduced School Day
 - Suspension
 - Expulsion
5. Keeping records
6. Procedure for notification of a pupil's absence from school

7. Reference to other policies
8. Success criteria

1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school and whole school approach to the promotion of positive behaviour

The Education Welfare Act, Section 23, states that the code of behaviour shall specify “the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school”.

In Holy Family Junior School our aim is to promote positive behaviour, which will allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious way. We aim to enhance the learning environment where every child can have the opportunity to make progress in all aspects of his/her development.

We recognise that a positive school ethos is based on the quality of relationships between staff and the ways in which pupils, staff and parents/guardians treat each other. This positive ethos permeates all the activities of the school and helps in forming a strong sense of social cohesion within the school.

Due regard will be given to the age and range of abilities in implementing the Code of Behaviour, with particular reference to the fact that Holy Family Junior School is a Junior School. The school’s Social Personal and Health Education curriculum and the Incredible Years Programme are used to support the code of behaviour. These curricular areas aim to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, encourage forgiveness, develop resilience, and promote conflict resolution skills. They also aim to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship. Parents/Guardians of newly enrolled children are informed about the curriculum and their part in supporting it at the induction meetings in May and throughout the school year.

Guidelines for Behaviour (Children)

At the beginning of each school year, the pupils are involved in drafting the classroom rules, keeping the key principles of the Incredible Years Programme in mind. As we are a Junior School, we strive to keep the school rules as clear and as meaningful as possible for our young pupils. Visual cues are used and referred to regularly.

Instructions for and expectations of pupils:

- Show 5 (feet on the ground, hands on laps, eyes on teacher, mouth closed and ears listening) – this is reiterated at each assembly and on a daily basis in the classroom. This helps to maintain discipline and ensure uniformity of approach to positive behaviour management in the classroom
- A quiet hand
- Be a good listener
- Concentrate
- Follow direction
- A strong ignore
- Use indoor voice
- Walk indoors
- Sharing is Caring
- Be kind
- The yard rules are kept to a minimum
 - (1) Helpful hands
 - (2) Feet on the ground
 - (3) Use kind words
 - (4) Walk to your line
 - (5) Sharing is caring

Guidelines for behaviour (Parents)

Holy Family Junior School recognises that, in line with our school ethos, parents/guardians work in partnership with staff to meet legitimate expectations with regard to positive behaviour and discipline. We recognise the importance of the support of parents/guardians in order to meet legitimate expectations with regard to good behaviour and discipline.

Parents/Guardians are expected to:

- Ensure that the proper school uniform is worn (see Appendix A for details of uniform) – teachers will inform parents when school tracksuits are to be worn for PE. Every other day, pupils are expected to wear the official school uniform.
- Ensure that their child/children are in school by 9.00 a.m. Children should also be collected from school on time.
- Complete the collection form and return to the school. Parents should inform the school when the child is being picked up by someone not included on this form.
- Always sign out/in (reception) a child when leaving/returning to the school outside normal school times
- Promote the healthy eating policy at the school by ensuring that their child brings a healthy lunch to school each day
- Send a note explaining the absence of a child
- Help children with homework and ensure it is completed
- Instil in their child/children at home the message that learning and good behaviour are conducive to a happy school life
- Ensure that your child/children have the necessary books and materials for school
- If a parent signs up for the school payment scheme for books/art and crafts etc., that the agreement will be honoured and regular payments made
- Make teacher/principal aware of any changes in family circumstances if relevant to the child's well being at school
- Familiarise themselves with and embrace the principles of the Incredible Years Programme
- Attend meetings if requested by the teacher or principal in relation to their child
- Strive to be courteous and calm in all dealings with school staff
- Read and abide by the Covid-19 Response Plan for Holy Family Junior School

Under no circumstances should a parent approach another child whilst they are in the care of the school to discuss or chastise them. If there is a problem, parents should always approach the class teacher or principal.

Guidelines for behaviour (staff)

In our school, our aim is to treat all children with respect and dignity. There is a strong sense of community and cooperation among staff, pupils, and parents and all are agreed that the focus is primarily on the promotion and recognition of positive behaviour. The staff recognises that teachers are bound by the Code of Professional Conduct which may be accessed on www.teachingcouncil.ie. Teachers, Special Needs Assistants and Ancillary Staff will endeavour to treat pupils, parents and other members of staff with respect and courtesy.

As a whole school staff, we have implemented the Incredible Years Behaviour Management Programme in Holy Family Junior School. In recent years we have adopted the principles of the Dina School Curriculum and integrated it into our SPHE Policy.

The adults in the school have a responsibility to model the school's standards of behaviour, in their dealings both with students and with each other. The ways in which parents/guardians and teachers interact will provide students with a model of good working relationships.

Staff will endeavour to ensure that the curriculum is relevant and differentiated to meet the needs of all the pupils in his/her class.

Teacher Skills and Strategies include:

- Praise
- Encouragement
- Incentives
- Celebrations
- Clear limits
- Classroom structure
- Non verbal cues
- Positive verbal redirect
- Re-engagement strategies
- Empathy
- Attention and involvement
- Warning of consequences and reminders of expected behaviours
- Consequences (time out, loss of privileges, call parents)
- Reflection after an incident

Guidelines for Behaviour (Board of Management)

The Board of Management of Holy Family Junior School has a role to play in the maintenance of acceptable standards of behaviour in a school. The Board is consulted in the drafting/reviewing of the code of behaviour and is responsible for providing a safe and orderly environment for staff and pupils to work in.

The Board of Management, through on-going consultation, supports the staff in devising and upholding the behaviour code.

2. Positive Strategies for managing behaviour

‘The most effective methodology that teachers develop in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place’.

The following positive strategies will be used throughout the school to promote good behaviour and to prevent misbehaviour

- Praise
- Emotional and Academic coaching
- Special incentives to reduce conduct disorder
- Modelling of good behaviour
- A positive comment in a pupils’ exercise book or homework journal
- Differentiation of curriculum
- Golden Time
- Smiley Face/alternative reward
- Proximity Praise
- 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/stars/stamps/tokens
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication
- Magic Book and Pupil of the Week certificate presented at assembly on Monday
- Visit to the Farmers’ Market for Pupils of the Week
- In a structured way, children should be taught how to praise/compliment each other

- Strong ignore
- Reward system in class for immediate response to positive behaviour
- PE equipment will be available during playtime in the yard

In line with the principles of the IV programme, rewards, once given, are not taken away as punishment.

3. Responding to inappropriate behaviour

Despite the best efforts of schools, inappropriate behaviour happens. Even minor breaches of the code of behaviour can be disruptive, particularly if they are persistent. Serious misbehaviour can have damaging and long-lasting effects including disruption of the student's own learning and the learning of others. It can cause distress and anxiety or even pose a threat to the safety of students and teachers. Our policy is to intervene early and positively when student behaviour does not meet the standards expected in the school.

The purpose of time out/ sanctions is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- helping students to learn that they are in control and have choices.
- a time out gives them space and opportunities to self regulate and learn how to calm down and reflect on bad choices
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others, and supports them in finding solutions
- helping students to develop a positive self perception by understanding that bad choices does not mean they are a bad child (creating a safe environment and separating the child from the behaviour)
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour

Some strategies used in response to incidents of inappropriate behaviour are:

- reminding the pupil of expected behaviours(reflection)
- redirecting
- re-engagement strategies
- verbal and non verbal cues
- reprimand (including advice on how to improve and may also include a warning)
- discussion and explanation of consequences

- giving pupils the opportunity to make the right choice
- time at the quiet table
- consequence: time out or carrying out a useful task in the school
- referral to Principal
- communication with parents/guardians, either oral or written
- temporarily removing a student from the classroom to a supervised location may be appropriate in the interests of classroom management if the behaviour is impeding on the learning of the others and to help the individual student to recognise and learn about the impact and consequences of their behaviour. However, consistently denying a student access to a particular part of the curriculum **as a general sanction** would not be appropriate. (pre-empting triggers for destructive behaviour and allowing the child movement / teaching the child to become aware of his feeling and encouraging him to ask for a break verbally or through the use of cue cards)

Inappropriate behaviour in the yard:

- Distraction –IY strategy
- Verbal reminder of making the right choice
- Walk with adult for two minutes
- Time out to reflect on behaviour for two minutes
- Send to the Principal's office (serious misdemeanour)

Sanctions are used in the school as part of a plan to change behaviour. A sanction is a form of positive intervention. Sanctions are used in a respectful way that helps students to understand the consequences of their behaviour and to take responsibility for changing that behaviour. In particular teachers are aware that sanctions should:

- defuse and not escalate a situation
- preserve the dignity of all the parties
- be applied in a fair and consistent way
- be timely

There will be occasions when some pupils will need extra support to help them to manage their behaviour. The following stages will be followed to ensure a whole school approach and

response to the needs of the pupil, teacher and parents. This is also in line with NEPS and NCSE guidelines.

Students with special educational needs

Sanctions may be needed to help a student with special educational needs to learn about appropriate behaviour and skills, as in the case of any student. Teachers will take particular care that they help the student with special needs to understand clearly the purpose of the sanction and the reason why their behaviour is unacceptable. The school and classroom practices that support good learning behaviour are valid for all students, including those with identified special educational needs. Being firm, fair, and flexible is essential when dealing with all children but most especially with our SEN pupils. Behavioural plans may need to be drawn up in as part of an IEP. Social stories are very useful in this context. The support of the Special Education Support Services will be sought where necessary.

Whole-class/General Classroom Structures and Supports

Personnel involved: Class Teacher

1. Foster Positive Relationships
 - Good Communication
 - Demonstrating to a student that they matter
2. Fostering a positive and safe classroom environment
3. Providing a supportive and differentiated learning environment
4. Good classroom organization
5. Teaching Social and Emotional Skills and Strategies which promote the personal, emotional and behavioural competencies of the child (SPHE, Dina curriculum)
6. A systematic, consistent approach to responding to behaviour throughout the school, especially on the yard
7. Teacher attitudes and expectations

Stage 1

Additional Classroom Support

Personnel involved: Pupil, Class Teacher and Parent

May include:

1. Statement of concerns and why this may be happening e.g. Mary has difficulty following teacher instructions/ She has poor listening and attention skills
2. Observations; Study the child and his/her behaviour and identify triggers and needs i.e. is he looking for attention/ control issues/ poor social skills/ has a poor understanding of emotions
3. Record number of major disruptions throughout the day and what part of the day they were most prevalent
4. Speak to parent, look at environment etc.
5. Plan strategies e.g. what behaviours can be pre-empted and prevented; teach rule and check understanding, proximal praise, give lots of attention, star chart, visual cues etc.
6. Implement and review

Stage 2

School Support

Personnel involved: Pupil, Class Teacher, Parent and Support Teacher/Principal

May include:

1. Identifying concerns e.g. shouting out in class, literacy skills etc.
2. Further information gathering e.g. ascertaining pupil's interests and strengths, frequency chart, ABC chart.
3. Prioritizing targets and incentives/ motivations (and time frame).
4. Listing strategies e.g. behaviour contract, reminder of rule/agreement, choice, distract, visual support, breaks,
5. Implement and review

Stage 3

School Support Plus

1. Personnel involved: Pupil, Class Teacher, Support Teacher, Parent, Principal and other relevant professional e.g. NEPS, CAMHS etc.
2. IEP process
3. Builds on school support as outlined above and with additional input from outside professionals

4. Reduced School Day, Suspension and Expulsion

Holy Family Junior School code of behaviour focuses on the positive, through a whole-school, consistent emphasis on giving attention, praise and rewards to good behaviour. However, the code of behaviour must also take into account the matter of suspension and expulsion as schools are required, under section 23(2) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, to include their procedures for suspension and expulsion in their code of behaviour. All suspensions and expulsions will be carried out with reference to Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (NEWB, 2008, chapters 10-12) and related documents.

Reduced School Day

There may be occasions when a pupil is finding the full school day stressful and difficult to cope with. Their behaviour might reflect this. In agreement with parents and school management and as part of a behavioural plan, a pupil's time in school may be reduced. This is a short term measure and will be continuously monitored.

Records and Reports

Formal written records will be kept of the following

- The investigation (including notes of interviews held)
- The decision-making process
- The decision and the rationale for that decision
- The duration of the reduced day and review date

Suspension

Suspension will be a proportionate response to the behaviour causing concern.

Usually other interventions will have been tried.

Grounds for suspension include

- Behaviour that has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other children
- The child's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- The child is responsible for serious damage to property
- A single incident of serious misbehaviour may be grounds for suspension

Procedures in respect of suspension

School will endeavour to ensure fair procedure including the right to be heard and to impartiality.

The process will include the following stages:

1. Investigation of the facts to confirm serious misbehaviour
2. Parents will be informed by phone or in writing about the incident
3. Parents will be given an opportunity to respond

If suspension is decided upon:

1. Principal informs parents in writing of the decision to suspend, confirming the period of the suspension and the dates on which it will begin and end. (This shall not be for more than three days except in exceptional circumstances)
2. The reason for the suspension
3. Any work to be done at home
4. The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the parents
5. The provision for appeal to the Board of Management or Secretary General of the DES (only where the total number of days for which the child has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days)
6. Where the cumulative total of days is 6, the NEWB will be notified.
7. In exceptional circumstances an immediate suspension may be necessary. Fair procedures will still apply.

Records and Reports

- Formal written records will be kept of the following
- The investigation (including notes of interviews held)

- The decision-making process
- The decision and the rationale for that decision
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached

Expulsion

Expulsion will only be used in **extreme** cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will have taken other significant steps to address the misbehaviour except in exceptional circumstances. Due process and fair procedure will apply in all circumstances.

Procedures in respect of expulsion:

A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal

- Parents informed in writing about alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- Parents given an opportunity to respond before decision is made
- A recommendation to Board of Management by principal
- A consideration by the Board of Management of principal's recommendations and a hearing
- Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing. If the Board is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled, it must notify the EWO in writing (using the Notice of Intention to Expel form available on www.schoolreturn.ie) of its opinions and the reasons for this opinion. The intention to expel a pupil does not take effect until 20 school days have elapsed after NEWB have received written notification. (Form available on HYPERLINK <http://www.schoolreturn.ie> www.schoolreturn.ie or from NEWB helpline 1890 363666 and should be sent School Return Section, NEWB, 16-22 Green St, Dublin 7
- Consultation arranged by EWO
- Confirmation of decision to expel

Right to Appeal

- Parents will be informed of their legal right to appeal a decision (either to expel or to suspend for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20

school days or longer in any one school year) to the Secretary General of the DES (Education Act 1998, section 29)

- 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)

Records and Reports

- Formal written records will be kept of the following:
- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- The decision-making process

5. Keeping records

Classroom

- Teachers record : daily diary/study containing observations to identify behaviours, triggers and individuals needs
- ABC forms
- Visual timetable recording time of day when interruptions took place

Playground

- The adults on yard duty will deal with issues arising in the yard and will inform the class teacher
- The principal/deputy principal will be informed of any serious misdemeanours
- Accident reports will be kept in a file in the deputy principal's room

Principal

- A copy of all behaviour plans will be kept on file in the Principal's Office
- A record of serious incidents will be kept on file in the Principals' office

6. Procedure for notification of a pupil's absence from school

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23(2)(e) states that the code of behaviour must specify "the procedures to be followed in relation to a child's

absence from school". Section 18 stipulates that parents must notify the school of a student's absence and the reason for this absence.

Holy Family Junior School strives at all times to encourage maximum school attendance in all pupils by:

- Creating a stimulating and attractive school environment
- Acknowledging good or improved attendance
- Adapting curriculum content and methodologies to maximise relevance to pupils
- Making parents aware of the terms of the Education Welfare Act and its implications.

Holy Family Junior School policy in relation to explanation of pupil absences is that parents/guardians send in a note or ring the office informing teachers of their child's absence from school and the reason for this absence.

The standard forms to report on pupil absences to the National Education Welfare Board.

There are regular attendance meetings, involving the EWO Officer, HSCL teachers, principal/deputy principal.

7. Related policies

- SPHE Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- Dignity in the Workplace Policy
- Data Protection and Record Keeping Policy
- Health & Safety Statement
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Homework Policy
- Parental Involvement Policy

8. Success Criteria

Practical indicators of the success of this policy we aspire to are:

- A happy, safe and productive school environment
- A palpable sense of order and calmness
- Consistent implementation of the policy and acceptance of the principles of the Incredible Years by all members of the school community
- Positive feedback from pupils, parents and staff

9. Ratification and communication

This policy was presented to the Board for ratification at the August meeting and then posted on our website.

Signed: Allen Flynn

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date

References

Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 Section 23(1 -5), 24 (1-5)

Education Act, 1998 Section 15 (2(d))

Guidelines for Developing School Codes of Behaviour (National Education Welfare Board)

The Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013

Circular 22/02 Appeals Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998.

(DES website) Deals with appeals under the following headings:

(1) Permanent exclusion from a school

(2) Suspension

(3) Refusal to enrol

Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes

Management Board Members' Handbook. Revised 2007. CPSMA: A suggested Code of Behaviour & Discipline for National Schools

INTO (2004) Managing Challenging Behaviour: Guidelines for Teachers

INTO (2006) Towards Positive Behaviour in Primary Schools

The Principal's Legal Handbook Oliver Mahon B.L. IVEA 2002 Ch. 2 School Discipline

How to promote Social and Emotional Competence, A Teacher's Guide Carolyn Webster-Stratton 1999

Working towards a Whole School Policy on Self-Esteem and Positive Behaviour. Jenny Mosley. Positive Press 2001

Dignity in the Workplace. HFJS Policy Document 2013