

**Claregalway Educate Together N.S.
Code of Behaviour**

Version	Date First Ratified/Amended by BOM	Date Reviewed by BOM
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Introductory Statement

The Code of Behaviour is the result of ongoing consultation and collaboration between the Principal, staff, parents, and Board of Management, thus ensuring a whole school approach to behaviour in our school. This Code was prepared in accordance with guidelines issued by Tusla. In order to comply with these guidelines, the Code of Behaviour will address: the standards of behaviour expected in the school; the plan for promoting good behaviour; the ways in which the school responds to unacceptable behaviour; the plan for implementing the Code of Behaviour; and school procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion.

In drawing up the Code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and the circumstances of the school and our pupils. The Code of Behaviour places a greater emphasis on building positive relationships rather than sanctions or punishments through implementing various programmes and initiatives throughout the school. Our Code translates the expectations of staff, parents and students into practical arrangements that will help to ensure continuity of learning for all students. It helps to foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour are expected, supported and recognised.

Relationship to the characteristic ethos of the school

Claregalway Educate Together N.S. is a multi-denominational school under the patronage of Educate Together. The Code of Behaviour helps the school community to promote the school's unique ethos, relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour and minimise unacceptable behaviour. This policy also helps teachers, other members of staff, students and parents to work together to create a happy, caring, respectful and safe school environment.

Aims

The aims of the Code of Behaviour are:

- To ensure that the individuality of each child is respected and that individual differences are celebrated
- To acknowledge the right of each child to an environment in which they can learn safely and grow
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our Educate Together ethos
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community
- To assist parents and students in understanding the school's Code of Behaviour and to ensure their co-operation with its implementation
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school
- To ensure that the emphasis is on building positive relationships with students and helping/teaching them how to solve problems proactively and collaboratively
- To ensure that the entire school community has a part to play in contributing to this environment.

Whole School Rules (see Appendix 1)

The school has three core **School Rules**:

1. Respect
2. Ready
3. Kind

The success of the school's Code of Behaviour depends on consistency in the implementation of these rules. This will be achieved as follows:

- Teaching of the School Rules. These rules are brought to the attention of the children through the class teachers on a regular basis, especially at the beginning of each term.
- Behaviour that does not conform to one or more of these rules can be considered unacceptable. For each rule we have certain expectations, and these are explained and taught to all students.
- Modelling the standards
- Rewards and Incentives for keeping the rules
- Prevention Strategies
- Sanctions for breaking the rules
- A problem-solving approach, where both students and staff come up with solutions

These rules are inherent in everything we do. We are committed to creating a caring, supportive and respectful atmosphere at school, where every student can achieve their full potential.

Promotion of the School Rules

All students are taught the School Rules when they start school and they are revised consistently throughout their time in the school. Parents are encouraged and expected to talk to their children about the rules and to encourage their children to keep them. Individual rules will be highlighted at regular periods at assembly for special attention.

The School Rules are promoted through the entire school community as follows:

- **Noticeboards**
The School Rules are displayed prominently in each classroom and throughout the school.
- **Assembly**
Assembly takes place monthly. It forms a valuable role in our whole school approach to developing self-esteem, promoting positive behaviour and effective discipline. Good work and achievements are highlighted, celebrated and rewarded. The school rules are emphasised and explained. Specific school routines for the classroom and yard are emphasised and explained.
- **Parents/Guardians**
All Parents and Guardians are provided with a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour before enrolment as required by Section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. Parents and Guardians must accept the Code of Behaviour, acknowledging it is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the Code by the child.

Building Relationships and Promoting Good Behaviour

The primary aim in Claregalway Educate Together N.S. is to build solid relationships with every pupil. This in turn leads to more effective learning and more positive behaviour. Promoting positive behaviour is the main aim of the Code. An understanding of the factors that influence behaviour is fundamental to successfully implementing our Code of Behaviour. Learning, relationships and behaviour are inextricably linked. Good behaviour is a result of good relationships, and it positively influences how students learn. As a whole school approach to the management of behaviour issues, we seek to promote positive behaviours and self-discipline in an atmosphere of respect, acceptance, open-mindedness and consideration for others.

The following strategies are used to promote good behaviour in our school:

- There are good relationships between teachers, parents and pupils and a happy school atmosphere.
- Good school and class routines are in operation. Core routines necessary for the smooth running of classroom learning are clearly established, e.g. entry to the classroom, settling down after break times, noise level for pair/group work. etc.
- Teachers develop clear and simple classroom rules in discussion with the children. Each class will agree rules stated in terms of observable behaviours. Each class teacher is responsible during the month of September for drawing up a list of class rules with their class, which reflect the school values, involve the students in the decision making and are taught to the class together with the Whole School Rules.
- Teachers use a classroom management plan to promote positive behaviour. This includes the Whole School Rules and class rules as mentioned above, the agreed reward system and the consequences that apply when a child fails to adhere to the rules.

- Parents are welcome in our school and staff consult with them where necessary.
- We acknowledge positive behaviour by praising children on their behaviour and by rewarding them. Staff regularly seek opportunities to “catch students being good”.
- Teachers ensure that the class timetable is as varied as possible and present a balanced and interesting educational programme for the pupils as outlined in the Primary School Curriculum.
- Teachers are punctual at all times.
- Children are aware that misbehaviour and failure to adhere to whole school and class rules will incur clear, consistent consequences.
- SPHE and Learn Together Curricula are used as structures within which to address the teaching of social skills, self-esteem and respect and care for others.
- Agreed playground rules are in place which are understood by all. Supervision arrangements are in place, including arrangements for wet days, pupils using the toilets and pupils who become ill or injured.

Approaches to Rewards and Praise

Our school places greater emphasis on rewards and creating positive relationships than on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the long run, give best results. Our approach to rewards and praise include the following:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- Points (ClassDojo is used in many classrooms), treats or stickers are awarded to individuals/teams/class for good behaviour and effort put into school and homework
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Informing parent – written/verbal communication
- Class treats – extra break/PE; watch a film; homework pass
- Nomination to the Silver Book of Good Deeds
- Special mention at Assembly

Prevention Strategies

The most effective methodology in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place. Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions. We aim to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. We also aim to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship.

Prevention strategies used in the school may include:

- Restorative Practice
- Circle time
- Zones of Regulation
- 5Rs (Incredible Years)
- Organised activities at break time
- Carrying out useful tasks
- Sensory Breaks/Movement Breaks
- Use of individual behaviour systems - identifying triggers
- School Support Plans and SET support

Additional Supports

Pupils with additional needs will be required to follow the school’s Code of Behaviour, however they may require assistance in understanding and respecting certain rules and teachers will use their professional judgment in relation to regularity and level of sanctions. While teachers must be seen to be fair in the eyes of other children who may have exhibited the same type of misdemeanours, they will also show leniency and understanding in relation to children with specific learning/behavioural/emotional difficulties. Parents of these children will be kept informed of their child’s behaviour on a regular basis and may be requested to work with the school in devising effective strategies to help the child to improve his/her behaviour. Such interventions could include:

- Work station where space permits if SEN pupil works better without being distracted
- Withdrawal by support staff for activities which seem to trigger disruptive behaviour
- Headphones for classes involving extra noise should the SEN child have sensory difficulties
- A shorter school day may be explored for SEN pupils where behaviour deteriorates at the end of the day
- Referral to another teacher or adult who can work with the student
- Individual Behaviour Support Systems may be devised in consultation with parents, class teacher, SET, ANA and outside agencies. Professional assessments where available may inform and shape the plan.

Specialised Supports

A small minority of students may exhibit particular behaviours of concern. The school, in cooperation with the student's parents will seek to avail of any local services that may assist in responding to the needs of the student. These services could include the National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS), CAMHS, NCSE, relevant professional counselling services, etc.

Responding To Inappropriate Behaviour

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct: minor, serious and very serious. The Code also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed at each level. The teaching staff of the school, in consultation with the Principal, will decide what sanction is most appropriate to the behaviour that has occurred. The school strives to solve issues at the lowest level possible. Teachers encourage, support and show students how they may be able to resolve issues themselves. When misbehaviour impacts upon the learning or safety of others, it may be necessary to use sanctions. The sanction will depend on the type and level of misbehaviour and also the individual context.

Teachers have professional autonomy to decide on how best to investigate incidents in line with the Code of Behaviour. It is not a 'one size fits all' approach. Teachers will lean into a restorative approach when investigating incidents as they occur.

Dealing with Minor Misbehaviour

Minor misbehaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and common areas.

Examples of minor misbehaviour may include: (Please note the list is not exhaustive)

- Not following adult instruction
- Disturbing the work or play of others
- Disrespectful language, tone, or manner
- Failure to prepare for class
- Homework/class work not completed
- Interfering in others games

Procedure when dealing with minor misbehaviour

Where minor issues occur the class teacher may employ any of a number of strategies to respond to, or divert children's inappropriate behaviour in order to prevent it escalating into something more disruptive to learning and more difficult to manage. Students learn through their mistakes. To this extent, responses to the daily behaviours, which occur in school, will be developmentally appropriate, instructive and positive. Children will be taught what is expected and how they should behave. Incidents will be logged on Aladdin. Strategies may include:

- Gesture /Look /Whisper
- Planned ignoring
- Carrying out a useful task in the school
- Positive behaviour attention
- Reminder of rule/expected behaviour
- Teaching rule to class or class recitation of the rule
- Expressing disappointment or disapproval, or using humour
- Change of place
- Verbal reprimand/reminder(s)
- Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
- Prescribing additional or alternative work
- Loss of privileges such as loss of a portion of Golden Time or breaktime

Dealing with Serious Misbehaviour

Disruptive behaviours waste teaching and learning time and impinge on the good order and discipline in the school. These behaviours seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and wellbeing of the students and staff. Listed below are some examples.

Examples of serious misbehaviours include: (Please note the list is not exhaustive)

- All minor misbehaviours when on a persistent basis.
- Behaviour that disrupts the learning of others in class
- Refusal to do work
- Telling lies
- Name calling other students
- Swearing / bad language to other students or staff
- Any infringement of the AUP
- Rough play
- Behaviour which is dangerous to self or others (e.g. shoving, pushing, hitting)
- Intentionally damaging school or personal property

- Stealing
- Cheating
- Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin
- Disrespectful language or behaviour toward an adult
- Possession or use of dangerous toys or sporting equipment

Procedure when dealing with serious misbehaviour or persistent minor misbehaviour

- Behaviour Reflection (based on the principles of Restorative Practice)
- Incident is recorded on the student's Behavioural Log on Aladdin.
- Parents to be informed at this stage
- Staff member working with a child reminds the child of expected behaviour.
- Makes environmental changes as needed.
- Class teacher uses strategies (examples below) to address behaviour.
- Class teacher may involve other adults such as SNAs, SETs, parents to help resolve the issue
- As staff complete Restorative Practice training this will be incorporated into the procedure for dealing with such incidents
- Principal becomes involved if the behaviour persists and will assess the situation and support. Principal may decide there is a health and safety risk and require parents to collect the child. If this happens, staff will discuss and come up with a behaviour support plan to attempt to minimise the chances of repeated behaviour on return, and communicate this to the parents.

When serious misbehaviour issues arise that require a sanction either because of the level of disruption, upset or hurt caused, or the persistence of the disruption the following sanctions will be used in a graded system to show disapproval and to discourage such unacceptable behaviour. Principal may be involved in investigating incidents as necessary. Some examples of sanctions are:

- Meeting with parents/guardians
- Child is placed on report, i.e., a daily report of the child's progress is kept for a set period of time; this report is filled in by the teacher with consultation with the child and other staff members; the report is signed by both the teacher and parents; parents are requested to comment appropriately on the content of the daily report. (See Appendix 2)
- Loss of privileges
- Removal to another classroom for time out
- Suspension from school (See Appendix 3).

Dealing with Very Serious Misbehaviour

Very serious misbehaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal well being of the pupils and staff of the school. They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment. Situations, which include illegal activity, may result in contact with the Garda Síochána after parental involvement. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included here. Please note that the list is not exhaustive.

Examples of very serious misbehaviour include: (Please note the list is not exhaustive)

- Persistent disruptive behaviour
- Persistent slugging / name calling
- Persistent defiance and disrespect
- Hitting or other aggressive behaviour
- Throwing objects that could cause injury or harm
- Racist / bad / inappropriate language deliberately directed at someone
- Inappropriate harassment and bullying
- Angry / aggressive play
- Deliberately spitting at another child
- Leaving the school without permission
- Verbal abuse towards staff
- Destruction of property
- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Repeated or serious misbehaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Setting fires

- Intentional possession or use of weapons
- Violent fighting or intentionally causing physical harm to others
- Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, physical condition, handicap, or ethnic origin.

Procedure when dealing with very serious misbehaviour

Very serious misbehaviour may involve suspension and/or ultimately, expulsion from school. This may be due to persistent and repeated serious behaviours or one incidence of very serious behaviour which causes health and safety risks to other members of the school community. The length of the suspension will depend upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension or expulsion is contained in this document (Appendix 3 & 4).

Yard

If a child misbehaves in the yard the teacher and SNAs on duty will respond in line with our Code. A reprimand or warning will be given by the teacher or SNA on duty. Where the issue persists or when the incident is of a more serious nature a child may be asked to stand by the wall beside the main door into the playground for a short time out and miss play. The teacher and SNAs on duty will use their discretion to determine which is appropriate. The class teacher is informed and the incident is logged on Aladdin.

For repeated serious misbehaviour on the yard, or where a behaviour support plan requires it, arrangements may be made for the student not to go to the yard at break time.

Yard Rules:

- No food packaging
- No toys/gadgets
- Each class keeps to its own play area
- Ask permission to go to the toilet (the teacher with the board) and report to the same teacher when you return
- Nobody is allowed in the school building during break except for going to the toilet, having sought permission
- Ask permission to get a ball outside the fence
- Each class is responsible for bringing their own gearbag in and out of the yard
- When the bell goes, first whistle freeze; second whistle walk to your line
- Line up promptly and properly; one behind the other
- No messing or bouncing of balls in the line. All gear should be in gearbags after the second whistle
- Tell a teacher in the yard if you are sick/injured
- Class rules apply during wet play.

School Trips and Outings

Students' behaviour on trips and outings will comply with the standard set down in the school's Code of Behaviour. Where it is felt that a child's conduct would pose a safety risk or inhibit the educational benefit for self or others, the school management reserves the right to refuse the child permission to travel on school trips/ tours /outings. Parents will be advised of this in advance.

When the Code of Behaviour Applies

The school's Code of Behaviour applies during school hours, at all extra-curricular classes or events, at swimming classes, at all fundraising and social events organised by the school, on school tours, and at all events organised by, on behalf of, or in the name of Claregalway Educate Together N.S. whether during school hours or outside of school hours. This also includes travel to and from school on the school bus. The staff reserves the right to investigate matters which occur outside of the school premises at any time if it impacts upon the school community or reputation.

Bullying

In dealing with incidences of bullying behaviour, teachers have regard to the school's Anti-Bullying Policy which was drawn up in accordance with Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary Schools (2013). Bullying in any form is unacceptable. Any child being bullied or the parent of that child should inform the child's teacher. (Please refer to the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and Acceptable Use Policy).

Absences / Communication

The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, Section 18, requires parents to notify the Principal of a school of the reasons for a child's absence. Parents are encouraged to use Aladdin to provide explanations for absences. The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 21(4) requires the Principal to inform an Educational Welfare Officer in writing if the aggregate number of school

days on which a student is absent from school during a school year is 20 days or more. Additionally, Section 21(4) authorises the Principal to notify an Educational Welfare Officer if, in the opinion of the Principal, a child “is not attending school regularly”.

Record Keeping

Breaches of behaviour are recorded by the class teacher on a specific form on the child’s online Aladdin file. This record will contain:

- incidents of misbehaviour
- interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
- reference to Restorative Practice methods
- reference to child being ‘on report’
- any sanctions imposed, and the reasons they were imposed

Pupils will be told when a record is being made about their behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained.

All records in relation to suspension and expulsion will be carefully recorded and reported. Records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act and the school’s policy on records keeping.

Implementing the Code

Communicating the code

Parents are asked to tick a box on the enrolment form for their child saying they have read the school’s Code of Behaviour. The Code of Behaviour is available on the school website.

The expectations of the Code and the Whole School Rules will be communicated to parents at the Infant parent information afternoon.

Teaching students the behavioural and learning skills they need

At the beginning of each school year the children will be taught the Whole School Rules and the behaviours that are expected from them. This will be done at each class level and referred to regularly throughout the year.

Securing parental support for the Code

Parental understanding and support for the Code will be strengthened through:

- Encouraging parents to share information about anything that might affect a student’s behaviour in school
- Alerting parents at an early stage to concerns about a student’s behaviour
- Clear channels of communication open to parents and information offered to parents such as talks or workshops on behavioural matters and aspects of child and adolescent development.

Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the partners in education, i.e., the Board of Management, Principal and teaching staff, ancillary staff, students and the parents and guardians of the students at Claregalway Educate Together N.S.

Responsibilities of Board of Management

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

Responsibilities of Principal

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner and arrange for review of the Code, as required.

Responsibilities of Teachers

- Support and implement the school’s Code of Behaviour.
- Create a safe working environment for each student and affirm good work.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
- Keep records of instances of misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.

- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

Schools need the support of parents with regard to good behaviour and discipline. Parents can help their children in the following ways:

- Parents should provide their children with positive models of behaviour.
- Children need boundaries and rules about behaviour. Talk to your child about school rules. They help make the school a safe place where everyone can learn and nobody feels left out or threatened.
- Be interested in, support and encourage your child's school work.
- Cooperate with teachers in instances where your child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Answer any phone calls from school promptly.
- Ensure that there is always someone available to collect child from school promptly at school's request.
- Attend meetings at the school as requested.
- Check your child has all their needs for class, i.e., books, copies, pens, pencils, rubber, ruler, etc.
- Share information with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress / behaviour.
- Behave in a respectful manner to all members of the school community.
- Ensure that your child attends school regularly and on time.
- Children are supervised in the mornings from 9.10am. It is parents'/guardians' responsibility to ensure their child is supervised if on site before that time.
- Children must be collected promptly at 2pm or 3pm (or 4pm in the case of Afterschool Activities)
- Inform the school if an unknown adult will be collecting their child.
- Ensure the school has up to date contact information for parents/guardians.

Responsibilities of Students

- Be aware of the school rules and adhere to them.

Appendix 1 Rules of the School Explained

1. Respectful

This means:

- That you will be helpful and treat other students and all staff with good manners and respect.
- That you will respect the instructions of all the school staff.
- That you respect school property and the property of other people.
- That you will be careful with library books and your own books and supplies.
- That you will be honest.
- That you will call others by their preferred names.
- That you will not pick on or bully others.
- That you have respect for other cultures, religions and differences.
- That you use the litter bins.
- That bad language, biting, bullying, kicking, punching, spitting is unacceptable behaviour.

Because:

- Everyone is entitled to good manners and respect.
- Bullying causes fear, hurt and misery.
- Offensive or abusive language shows disrespect and can cause hurt.
- Keeping the school environment pleasant and litter free is everyone's responsibility.
- You would expect the same respect for your property.
- Most of our books are rented and will need to be passed on to another student at the end of the year. If we don't keep our belongings in good condition they won't last for the year.
- Everyone has the **right** to be treated with respect.

2. Ready

This means:

- That you attend school every day unless it is absolutely unavoidable.
- That you are punctual.
- That if you miss school your parent or guardian gives a reason for the absence.
- That you behave yourself on your way to and from school.
- That you have the proper stationery, books and copies required for class.
- That you work to the best of your ability, and allow others to do the same.
- That you listen to your teachers.

Because:

- Time missed is hard to make up.
- The school is entitled to an explanation for your absences.
- The school is responsible for you during the day.
- The school expects that all students can come to and go home from school safely.
- It wastes time if you have not got your pens, copies, and books.
- Having items not needed for class causes distraction and wastes time.

3. Kind

This means:

- That you will be gentle and kind, keeping unhelpful hands, feet, objects and comments to yourself.
- That you do not disturb the class.
- That you sit with the four legs of your chair on the floor at all times.
- That you put your chair up on the desk at the end of the day and help tidy the room.
- That you will put a quiet hand up to speak if the teacher is speaking.

Because:

- Everybody has a right to learn in a caring, safe and respectful environment.
- The teacher is trying to help you.
- Disturbing the class is unfair to others who wish to learn.
- It is dangerous to swing back on the two legs of your chair.
- It is important to take responsibility for tidying up after ourselves.

My Day

Date _____

How I felt this morning _____

How things went in class today _____

How things went in the yard today _____

Things I enjoyed today _____

Things I found difficult today _____

Any other comments _____

Teacher's Comment _____

Parent Comment _____

Signed:

Teacher _____

Parent(s)/ Guardian(s) _____

APPENDIX 3 Suspension

Full details of the legal and procedural requirements of the suspension of a student from school are outlined in [this document](#), Chapters 10 and 11, p.65 and p.69

APPENDIX 4 Expulsion

Full details of the legal and procedural requirements of the expulsion of a student from school are outlined in [this document](#), Chapters 10 and 12, p.65 and p.79