

Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement

This policy was originally formulated on 11/03/09 using National Educational Welfare Board guidelines in "Developing a Code of Behaviour". This policy followed from a collaborative exercise involving pupils, staff, parents and Board of Management.

It has been reviewed regularly since, most recently January 2025.

Vision Statement of School

Presentation Girls' School is a Catholic Primary School and is conducted in accordance with the ethos of the Presentation Order. We are a caring community who seek to provide a broad and balanced education in an atmosphere of mutual respect with an appreciation of the individual needs of pupils, staff, parents and the wider community.

Rationale

We review our Code of Behaviour regularly. This is a requirement under terms of Educational Welfare Act 2000 and has been carried out in accordance with Child and Family Agency Guidelines.

Aims of Code of Behaviour to:

- ensure a common understanding of behaviour between parents, pupils and staff
- develop a whole school approach to the implementation of our code of behaviour to ensure a pleasant, harmonious environment for pupils, staff and parents.
- engender respect, tolerance and consideration for each other.
- promote positive behaviour and self-discipline recognising the diversity among children and the need to celebrate this diversity.
- clarify the school's response to behaviour that interferes with the wellbeing of any member of the school community.
- inform parents of the strong influence of home values and parental attitudes on behaviour at school.
- Develop respect for school property and its environs.
- ensure the safe and secure operation of the school
- outline the structure of fair and agreed sanctions that will be available to teachers in response to inappropriate behaviour

Promoting Positive School Behaviour

- Our school community works together as a team to create a positive, safe happy school climate which supports and promotes good behaviour.
- Teachers nurture a positive culture of effective teaching and learning which is inclusive and engaging.
- Teachers provide clear messages about their expectations and consistent boundaries are created for pupils.
- Consultation and discussion with pupils ensures that the pupils appreciate and accept the terms of our code of behaviour.

- Pupils are taught to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to help each other to behave well.
- The wider school community is kept informed through the school newsletter and the homework journal of their role in supporting and affirming good behaviour.

In order to uphold this code of behaviour we require pupils to:

- Treat each other with respect and courtesy at all times
- Display courtesy and good manners
- Be responsible and participate as members of the school community
- Promote equality, fairness and respect for social justice
- Show willingness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- Take care of all school property and keep the environment clean, safe and litter free
- To attend school punctually each day
- To work to the best of their ability and always seek to attain high standards for themselves and fellow pupils.
- Adhere to the school uniform policy

Before / After School

- Pupils are not permitted on school premises before specified class arrival times or after specified class dismissal times.
- The Board of Management of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before specified class arrival times or after specified class dismissal times except where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management.
- Participants involved in such activities are the responsibility of the facilitator and are expected to behave in accordance with school behaviour policy during these times.

Positive Strategies for Managing Behaviour

Our code of behaviour requires all members of the school community to adhere to an established set of rules and expectations which prioritises respect for people and property.

General School Expectations:

Children are required to:

- Be courteous and show good manners to all both within and outside of school.
- Be tolerant and co-operative with others.
- Walk along the pedestrian paths (no cycling or scooting) to enter/leave the school grounds.
- Enter and exit the school safely through the designated door
- Walk quietly on the left hand side of the corridors
- Stand back to allow adults pass and be aware of small children.
- Use the handrail when walking on the stairs
- Wear the appropriate school uniform with hair tied back and no jewellery with the exception of a non-smart watch (not capable of audio /visual recording, photos or internet connection) and stud earrings.

Mobile phones are NOT permitted on school premises.

Classroom Expectations

We endeavour to promote positive behaviour and have high expectations for all pupils. Each class formulates an agreed set of guidelines/expectations specific to their class at the start of the academic year encompassing the following general guidelines:

- Come to school fully equipped for teaching and learning
- Stay on task
- Be responsible
- Be respectful
- Be co-operative
- Present neatly written, signed homework
- Keep the classroom tidy

Teachers ensure that the pupils understand and are frequently reminded of these guidelines. A variety of strategies are used in the classroom to foster positive behaviour.

Reward systems are put in place in our school to publicly recognise and acknowledge good behaviour. Teachers adapt the rewards to meet the needs of individual classes and to ensure they are meaningful, relevant and valued. Effort is rewarded as well as achievement. Some examples of these rewards are:

- Star charts
- Stickers/ stamps
- Tick charts
- Homework passes
- Letters/notes of praise in journals
- Treats
- Good behaviour blocks
- Golden Time
- Recognition in classroom in front of class
- Visit to adjoining class or principal for commendation

Playground Expectations

As part of the SPHE and PE curriculum positive strategies to promote good behaviour and suitable playground games are taught by all teachers. A rota is in place for teachers on supervision. SNA's on duty in the yard will assist the teacher in the application of the guidelines. **There are five play areas.** Classes are allocated a specific play area.

To ensure the safety and security of all pupils in the yard the following guidelines are followed:

- Dangerous games/rough play is not allowed.
- Pupils remain in their designated play area in sight of the supervising teacher.
- Children need permission from the supervising teacher before leaving the playground to use the bathroom.
- At the end of break children follow bell procedure
 - 1st bell "freeze"
 - 2nd bell walk to their assigned class area and line up in roll book order
- Children/Classes receive a star for "the best line".
- On wet days pupils are supervised in their own classrooms and remain seated. Board games and suitable activities are available in each classroom

Playground Misbehaviour

To discourage misbehaviour in the playground the following strategies will be used:

- Warning
- Timeout
- Stand out of line
- Report to class teacher

Bullying or being a party to bullying will not be tolerated under any circumstances and will be dealt with in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy. (Ref School Anti-Bullying Policy)

Out of School Trips / Tours, Swimming etc.

Pupils who misbehave frequently may not be allowed to participate in school outings for their own safety and that of other pupils.

- When taking children on any tours or to extra curricular events the school's Code of Behaviour applies.
- The teacher/supervisor/guide/bus driver must be obeyed at all times.
- When travelling on buses or in cars children remain seated and belted at all times.
- Rules of swimming pools, activity venues are to be followed.

Inappropriate Behaviour

While our policy is designed to promote good behaviour there are occasions when inappropriate behaviour occurs. The degree of misbehaviour will determine the sanction to be imposed.

Our Code of Behaviour prohibits inappropriate sanctions i.e.

- Applying sanctions to whole class /groups in cases of individual or small groups misbehaviour
- Sanctioning a pupil by leaving them in an unsupervised situation (e.g. Corridor)
- Depriving a pupil of access to any part of the curriculum as a sanction unless such action is warranted due to safety concerns.

Recording

A record of incidents of misbehaviour will be kept by each class teacher in the classroom. If an incident is deemed to be of a serious nature a copy of this record will be sent to the principal's office in line with procedures outlined below. In line with the school's policy on record keeping and data protection legislation, records are kept in a secure location.

Classification of Misbehaviours

Misbehaviour falls into one of three categories – minor, serious or gross. Staff and/or the Principal will make judgements based on a common sense approach having regard to the age or vulnerability of the child and the gravity and frequency of any misbehaviour as follows:

Minor Misbehaviour

Minor misbehaviours include but are not limited to:

- Behaviour that is disrespectful (including bad language, name calling)
- Disruptive behaviour around school or Interrupting class work
- Behaviour that is un-cooperative, Running in the school building
- Littering around the school
- Being discourteous or unmannerly
- Not completing homework without good reason (to include a note from a parent/guardian)
- Inappropriate behaviour or gestures
- Name calling
- Minor infringement of the school rules
- Talking out of turn
- Not wearing appropriate uniform

Minor Misbehaviour (in the classroom) – steps taken by teacher

1. Verbal warning - short
2. Non-verbal warning (gesture/cue)
3. Visual prompt – Yellow card
4. Time-out at another table
5. Time-out to age-appropriate classroom JI- Second - 5 mins
3rd – 6th 10 mins Note in journal / folder to parents/ guardians.

If child frequently reaches step 4 and misbehaviour is continuous, skip to step 6

6. Teacher communicate with parents informally
7. Teacher conducts formal meeting with parents
8. Behaviour Management Plan devised in collaboration with parents/ guardians, to be monitored and reviewed periodically as necessary.
9. Referral to Principal
10. Formal communication with parents informing parents of continuous misbehaviour

Serious Misbehaviours

Serious Misbehaviours include but are not limited to:

- *Constantly disruptive in class*
- *Telling lies / Stealing*
- *Persistently not working to full potential*
- *Damaging others' property*
- *Continuously not completing homework*
- *Endangering self or fellow pupils in the class or the yard*
- *Using unacceptable language*
- *Deliberate, continual disobedience*
- *Disrespectful interactions*

- *Being in possession of a mobile phone or other electronic devices without permission*
- *Spitting*
- *Infringing of Covid 19 safety etiquette and measures e.g. close personal contact with other pupils (hugging), pretend coughing or sneezing, sharing/borrowing/touching belongings of others*

Incidents of bullying will be dealt with as outlined in the school's Anti-bullying policy. (See separate policy)

Teachers will take steps as outlined for Minor Misbehaviours above, but depending on misbehaviour may proceed to the following steps when dealing with Serious Misbehaviour;

- Child will be sent to the Principal;
- An account of all incidents will be entered in the Incident Book;
- Parents will be contacted by the Principal to inform them of incident
- Formal letter from school Principal informing parent of misbehaviour;
- Class teacher/ Yard duty teacher **and** Principal will meet with parents/guardians;
- Chairperson of Board of Management informed and parents requested to meet with Chairperson and the Principal;

Sanctions

Sanctions may be applied as follows:

Pupil will be:

- required to complete unfinished work or homework
- asked to apologise verbally and write a note of apology to the offended party / parties
- required to repay money, return or replace goods stolen
- required to withdraw any threats made to in individuals or groups
- withdrawn from play area at break times
- placed in detention under supervision for a specified period after school

Regular occurrences of Serious Misbehaviour will be dealt with as follows:

- Parents will be invited to meet class teacher, the principal and/or the chairperson to discuss repeated serious incidents of misbehaviour;
- Suspension may be used as a sanction **where all attempts at reasoning with the pupil have failed and where all other efforts (including school sanctions where appropriate), of the school in consultation with the parents or guardians** of the pupil have failed to achieve a satisfactory conclusion. Communications to parents regarding the suspension of a pupil, or the possibility of considering suspension as a sanction, will be in accordance with procedures outlined below under Gross Misbehaviour.

Gross Misbehaviour

Gross Misbehaviour includes but is not limited to:

- *Bringing weapons or dangerous substances to school*
- *Smoking/Vaping*
- *Persistently engaging in activities which have been identified by members of staff as dangerous or inappropriate*

- *Leaving school premises without permission*
- *Deliberately injuring any member of the school community*
- *Setting fire to school property*
- *Purposely activating school fire alarm*
- *Deliberately leaving taps (fire hose) etc. turned on*
- *Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff or a pupil; (e.g. physical violence, striking, nipping, biting, spitting*
- *Inappropriate touching*
- *Vandalism*
- *Serious inappropriate behaviour*
- *Assault*
- *Posting or circulating defamatory or insulting comments about members of school staff on social media sites or any on line or offline medium is a gross misbehaviour and constitutes grounds for suspension (ref. Electronic Devices Policy).*

Pupil may be removed to another classroom in the school during the course of the investigation.

Persistent incidents of serious misbehaviour will be classified as gross misbehaviour.

Gross Misbehaviour or repeated incidences of serious misbehaviour

Authority to Impose a Suspension:

The BOM of Presentation Girls' School has delegated authority to the Principal Teacher, to suspend a pupil for periods of **up to three days** for incidents of serious or gross misbehaviour. In exceptional cases where the principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is warranted, the matter will be referred to the BOM consideration and approval. The BOM has also authorised the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the BOM cannot be convened in a timely fashion.

Immediate Suspension:

The BOM has authorised the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension, if warranted, for reasons of the safety of the pupil, fellow pupils, staff and others. In this case parents/guardians will be informed of the outcome of a preliminary investigation and a formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension.

If the parents/guardians do not attend the school meeting as requested, the pupil may be suspended with parent/guardian being contacted prior to the pupil being sent home. In such circumstances, full implementation of formal procedures may be deferred subject to being applied retrospectively as soon as practicable thereafter.

Procedures for Suspension:

In all cases of suspension (immediate or otherwise) the following procedures will apply:

- Parents /guardians concerned will be informed of the complaint, how it will be investigated and the possible outcome leading to suspension.
- Investigations will be conducted by a member of staff other than the Principal who will then decide on the action to be taken.
- Following a complete investigation parents/guardians will be invited to come to the school to be informed of the outcome of the investigation. Parents/Guardians will be given the opportunity to respond.
- The Principal may sanction a period of suspension up to and including three days.

Implementing a Suspension

When a suspension is decided upon, the Principal will notify the parent/ guardian 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
- reasons for the suspension
- study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school
- any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent/guardians
- provision for appeal to the BOM (or Patron, where the BOM has authorised the specific suspension under appeal)

Suspension will be in accordance with the Rule 13O (5) for National Schools and the Educational Welfare Act 2000.

Appeals

The decision to suspend a pupil may be appealed by parents/guardians to the BOM. This appeal must be lodged in writing within 24 hours and will be referred to the BOM who will issue their decision as soon as possible. An exception will be made in the case of an immediate suspension as per Section 11.5 NEWB Guidelines.

A parent/guardian may also appeal a decision to suspend (only where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current year reaches 20 days) to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act 1998 Section 29). Parents will be informed of their entitlement of the BOM in relation to suspension in writing from the Chairperson of the BOM/Principal.

Removal of a Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following a period of suspension, the pupil may return to school. The Principal must be satisfied that the pupils reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupils own safety or that of other pupils in the school. The parents/guardians and pupil(s) concerned must give a signed undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school Code of Behaviour. When the suspension is completed the pupil will be supported to begin again with a 'clean slate' and a behaviour plan may be put in place.

Expulsion

A pupil is expelled from school when a BOM makes a decision to permanently exclude a pupil from the school, having complied with the provisions of **Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000**.

Expulsion of a pupil from school by the Board of Management will only occur in exceptional circumstances. All other options must first be considered before expulsion.

Misbehaviour causing persistent significant disruption to the teaching and learning, a significant threat to safety are some of the reasons why expulsion may be proposed.

Procedures in Respect of Expulsion (Section 12.4 p. 82 – 86)

Developing a Code of behaviour: Guidelines for Schools NEWB)

Step 1:

A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal

- The pupil and her parents/guardians are informed in writing of the complaint how it will be investigated and that the outcome could lead to expulsion.

- A detailed investigation is carried out by a group of staff members under the direction of the Principal.
- The parents/guardians are then invited to the school to respond to the allegations.

Step 2:

A report and recommendation will be made to the BOM by the Principal

- A recommendation is made to the Board of Management by the Principal
- The parents/guardians are informed. They are given written records of the allegations, the investigation and the grounds on which the expulsion is being recommended.
- The Board is also given a copy of the written records and a hearing is arranged.
- Parents/guardians are notified in good time of the date of the Board hearing and invited to attend
- Parents/guardians are advised of their right to make an oral and a written submission to the Board

Step 3:

Consideration by the BOM of the Principal's report and recommendations.

- The holding of a hearing involving all parties.
- At the hearing the Principal and the parents put their case before the Board in each other's presence.
- Each party may question the other.
- Parents may be accompanied at the hearing and they may appeal for the lessening of the sanction.
- The Board makes its deliberations in the absence of the Principal and the parents.

Step 4:

BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing

- The Board, having considered all the facts, decides if expulsion is the appropriate sanction. The parents/guardians are notified in writing about its conclusions
- The Board notifies the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO), in writing, if they are of the opinion that expulsion is necessary and the reasons for their decision. This information is given to the parents/guardians
- Twenty days must elapse from the time the EWO receives the letter before the pupil can be expelled.

Step 5:

Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer

- Within that 20 day period, the Educational Welfare Officer meets with all parties individually and then convenes a meeting of all willing to attend
- The pupil may or may not be allowed remain at the school while an alternative education plan is being put in place.

Step 6: Confirmation of the decision to expel

- The Board formally confirms the decision to expel to the pupil and her parents/guardians. Parents/guardians are made aware of their right to appeal.

The Educational Welfare Service (TUSLA) will be notified using a *Notice of Intention to Expel Form*

Appeals

- An appeal may be made to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act 1998, Section 29) by a parent/guardian.

- An appeal may also be brought by the Educational Welfare Service on behalf of a pupil. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent (Section 12 – DES Circular 22/02).
- Parents will be informed of their entitlement to appeal a decision of the BOM in relation to expulsion from the Chairperson of the BOM/Principal.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management

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

Principal's Responsibilities

- 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 in accordance with DES circulars and guidelines

Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities:

- Ensure that children attend daily and punctually
- Supervise and sign allocated homework
- Notify the school via Aladdin or in writing reasons for children's absences
- Attend annual parent /teacher meetings
- Inform the teacher in writing of any change of designated person collecting Sign their agreement with the School Code of Behaviour and ensure their child is aware of its content.
- Ensure that children are dressed in school uniform and have all required materials for school.

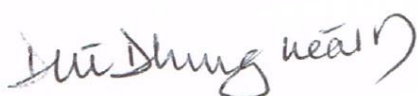
Consultation and Review

The Principal, on behalf of the Board of Management, has consulted with all the relevant parties when drawing up this code of behaviour.

The code will be made available to all parents on the website. Hard copies will be made available by request at the office.

Review in accordance with revised DES circulars / guidelines, or in June 2026.

Ratified by the Board of Management.

Chairperson 

Date

04 February 2025

Presentation Girls' School, Maynooth

Appendix 1

Student Behaviour Contract

I _____, agree to the following:

1. To write a letter of apology to the class teacher for behaving inappropriately in school.
2. To follow the classroom and school rules
3. I _____, promise to display good behaviour at school and on any school-related outings that arise.

I understand that breaking this promise will lead to further sanctions.

Pupil signature: _____

Parent signature: _____

Date: _____

Presentation Girls' School, Maynooth

Appendix 2

Return to school following a suspension

Re: Gross misbehaviour incident

Pupil Name: _____

Following _____ incident of gross misbehaviour, and her ____ day(s) suspension

from school on _____, we wish to confirm that

_____ will behave in accordance with the School Code of Behaviour, in Presentation Girls' School.

Signed: _____ Parents/Guardian

Date: _____

Signed by Principal: _____