

CODE OF DISCIPLINE

Reviewed 17th December 2010

Reviewed October 2011

Reviewed and amended April 2014

Reviewed and amended April 2015

In the belief that the most effective schools tend to be those with the best relationships with pupils and parents every effort will be made by the Principal teacher and staff to ensure that parents are kept well informed and that the school provides a welcoming atmosphere towards pupils and parents. Parents will be told not only when their children are in breach of our discipline procedures but also when they behave particularly well.

This code will be reviewed periodically.

MISSION STATEMENT

- The aim of our school discipline policy is to ensure that an orderly environment conducive to effective and efficient learning exists.
- In the Code of Discipline for the school, consideration has been given to our school's and pupils' particular needs and circumstances. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruptive free environment.
- The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- Pupils, Teachers, Parents and Management need to be aware of, and to co-operate with, the school's Code of Discipline.
- Pupils will be treated fairly and consistently and will need to be aware of the consequences of misbehaviour.
- The Code of Discipline has been devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community.
- A high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, pupils and parents.
- The rules are being kept to a minimum and are positively stated in terms of what pupils should do.
- All efforts will be made to match and differentiate the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and interest of each pupil. This should help reduce boredom, lack of interest or lack of progress.

- The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal Teacher. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises and its environs. A pupil will be referred to the Principal Teacher for serious breaches of discipline and for repeated incidents of minor misbehaviour.

Aims

In our Code of Discipline pupils are encouraged to:

- Respect themselves and others and to value their own property and that of others.
- Foster a sense of pride in (i) their personal appearance, school work and (ii) their school, community and country.
- To take responsibility for their actions and to admit and apologise for wrong doing.
- To develop a sense of tolerance and justice in their dealings with others.
- To understand and accept the necessity for rules and the willing observance of them for the common good.

School rules:

Safety:

for my own safety and that of others-

- (a) I should be careful coming to and going from school.
- (b) I should always walk while in the school building.
- (c) I should remain seated in class and while eating lunch.
- (d) I should run in the school yard with due regard for others.
- (e) Bring a note of explanation following absences.
- (f) Hand all notes from the Principal or my teacher to my parents.
- (g) I should never leave the school grounds without the permission of the Principal.

Caring for myself:

- (a) I should confide in my teacher if I am unhappy or unwell.
- (b) I should respect myself and my property; always keep my school bag, books and copies in good order.
- (c) I should always be in school before the bell rings at 8.50 a.m.
- (d) I should show respect for my school and be proud to wear the complete school uniform everyday. I will wear my track suit and runners on P.E. days only.
- (e) I should always be aware of my personal cleanliness.

- (f) I should always bring a sensible, nutritional lunch to school. Crisps or chewing gum are not permitted.
- (g) I should always do my best in school by listening carefully, working as hard as I can and by completing my homework.
- (h) I should obey the traffic wardens and signals on the way to school. I will not cycle in school grounds.

Caring for others:

- (a) I should be kind and respectful to teachers and fellow pupils by being mannerly and polite, by taking turns and by remaining silent and orderly in my class line.
- (b) I should behave well in class so that my fellow pupils and I can learn.
- (c) I should always keep my school clean by bringing unfinished food and drinks, cartons, wrappers, etc. home. I should show respect for the property of my fellow pupils, the school building and grounds.
- (d) I should take anything I find to the 'lost property' basket.
- (e) I should be truthful and honest at all times.
- (f) I will not use anti-social language, either spoken or written.

Bullying:

I should never bully others. I should never allow others to bully me and if it happens I should tell my parents and my teacher. Bullying is always unacceptable.

Strategies/Rewards

Praise may be given by means of any one of the following:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book.
- A visit to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation.
- A word of praise in front of a group or class.
- A system of merit marks/stars.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.
- Homework passes.

Disapproval of unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with as follows:-

(The nature of the behaviour will determine the strategy)

The following regulations will apply in general and for the most part.

Management (Principal, Deputy Principal, Assistant Principals, Class Teachers etc.) reserves the right to determine appropriate action and response in the light of various situations and circumstances. Thus the following strategies may be modified as deemed appropriate by the authorities in the best interest of the school and students.

- Reasoning with pupils

- Reprimand (including advice on how to improve), by Class Teacher or Principals
- Prescribing extra work
- Communication with parents
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others.
- Loss of privileges
- Detention during break
- Referral to Principal/Deputy Principal/Assistant Principals
- Suspension/expulsion (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by Circular 7/88)

Procedures :

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 of such misdemeanours, as follows:

Example of minor misdemeanours:

Interrupting class work / Arriving late for school / Running in school building / Talking in class line / Leaving seat without permission at lunch time / Placing unfinished food/drink cartons in class bin / Leaving litter around school / Not wearing correct uniform / Being discourteous/unmannerly / Not completing homework without good reason / Not having homework signed by a parent / Endangering self/fellow pupils in the school yard at break time.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with regular occurrences of minor misdemeanours:

Phase 1 (within the classroom)

- Prescribing additional work
- Writing out one copy of school rules as per Homework Journal **OR**
- Write out the relevant rule that was infringed to upper limit of 20 times.

All of the above to be signed by parent.

- Note in homework journal to be signed by parent
- Temporary separation from peers – class time/break time
- Sending child to another teacher
- Warning to pupils whose name appears in yard book more than three times.
Note will be sent to parents if there is further misbehaviour in yard
- Stand outside Principal's Office/Secretary's Office during break

(Misbehaviour in yard consists of any action that puts the safety of self/other pupil at risk).

Examples of serious misdemeanours:

Constantly disruptive in class / Telling lies / Stealing / Damaging school property or other pupil's property / Bullying / Back answering a teacher / Frequenting school premises after school hours without appropriate permission / Leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission / Not working to full potential / Using unacceptable language / Bringing weapons to school

Valuables should not be taken to school. The school is not responsible for the property of pupils left behind on the premises. All damage to school property, including removal of graffiti is to be paid for.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with serious misdemeanours:

- 1) Send to Deputy Principal.
- 2) Send to Principal.
- 3) Principal sends note in journal/letter to be signed by parent.
- 4) Principal meets with one/both parents.
- 5) Chairperson of Board of Management informed and parents requested to meet with Chairperson and Principal.

Examples of gross misdemeanours:

Unauthorised absence from school “mitching”/Setting fire to school property /
Deliberately leaving taps/fire hose turned on / Aggressive, threatening or violent
behaviour towards a teacher/pupil/Smoking/Drinking alcohol/ Possessing or using
drugs/Overt sexual behaviour/ Deliberately injuring a fellow pupil e g
kicking/Repeated bullying of other pupils.

It should be noted that these lists of gross misdemeanours and are not exhaustive and consist of examples only and are not exhaustive.

It is not meant to be a totally comprehensive list of misdemeanours and procedural steps.

Teachers shall keep a written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour as well as a record of improvements in the behaviour of disruptive pupils. Before resorting to serious sanctions, e.g. suspension, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Parents will be involved at an early stage rather than as a last resort.

Communication with parents will be verbal or by letter, depending on circumstances. The parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension will be considered. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher will be regarded as serious or gross behaviour, depending on circumstances.

Steps to be taken when dealing with repeated serious behaviour and/or gross behaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and Principal Teacher. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may have to be suspended for a temporary period. Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of the Rules for National Schools.

In the case of gross misbehaviour the Board will authorise the chairperson or Principal Teacher to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case.

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 Health Boards.

In formulating this code, the Board of Management invited and considered submission from parents relating to the possible content. All members of the teaching staff have been involved in planning the code. A copy of this code is available to all parents on www.theharoldschool.ie

Mobile devices in the possession of students

Students may not have personally owned devices in school unless explicitly requested in notes read and signed by parents/guardians or in cases where students have been granted laptops by the Department of Education. In exceptional circumstances and if agreed in writing between parent and school, a pupil may bring a phone to school, but it must be switched off in the school bag during the school day. If a student needs to make a call or be contacted it must be done through the office. Failure to abide by this rule will result in the confiscation of the device and a parent will be notified to retrieve it from the Principal's Office.

Policy on Uniform

Students of Harold School are expected to wear their correct school uniform to school every day. i.e. navy skirt/trousers, red school jumper, white polo shirt, black/brown/navy shoes. School track suit and runners to be worn on P.E./Gymnastics **only**.

Parents strongly support the wearing of a school uniform. The school will enforce this with parents' co-operation.

Hair and nails should be clean, well groomed and tidy at all times.

Signed: _____

Date: _____