

Code of Behaviour

Assumption Junior School

Walkinstown

Dublin 12.



Reviewed September 2018

School Ethos

The Assumption Junior School is a mixed Catholic School in the trusteeship of the Irish Contents

Sisters of Charity and under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. Boys spend three years here, Junior Infants, Senior Infants and First Class they then most transfer to Drimnagh Castle where they complete 2nd-6th class. Girls spend four years in this school they then transfer upstairs to the Senior Girls School where they complete 3rd-6th class.

ASSUMPTION JUNIOR SCHOOL

provides a safe and happy environment, where each child is encouraged..

- to develop their full potential
- to grow in self esteem
- to care for themselves and others

This is achieved through friendly and co-operative relationships between parents, staff and management.

This code was developed with the co-operation of staff, pupils, the Board of Management and parents.

Aims of the Code

- To create a positive and safe learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- To facilitate the education and development of every child
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption
- To encourage the involvement of and communication between home and school in the implementation of this policy

Our School Rules

The school rules should be followed at all times during the school day and on the school premises. (In the line at morning time, in class, on corridors, in toilets, on the yard and after school)

1. Be gentle
2. Be kind and helpful
3. Work hard
4. Look after property
5. Listen to people
6. Be honest

Classroom Rules

Teachers in conjunction with the pupils in their class may come up with a set of classroom rules; these are based on the school rules.

Classroom rules can differ from class to class. Classroom rules should be clear and concise and should be visually displayed in a prominent area of the classroom. As this is a Junior school, classroom rules should include images as well as words so that children have a visual cue and understand the behaviour that is expected of them.

Examples might include

- Put your hand up to speak
- Work hard and try your best
- Be quiet on the corridor
- Listen to teacher and to each other
- Sit on our chairs

Rules on yard

- No rough play
- No fighting or pretend fighting
- Ask permission before leaving the yard

Expectations of Parents and Guardians

The support and cooperation of parents is essential to the effective operation of the Code of Discipline. Each parent should...

- ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually and provided notes to explain absences.
- endeavour to provide positive role models and firm guidance to their child.
- encourage their child to have a sense of respect for themselves and others including their peers, teachers and the wider school community.
- encourage their child to have a sense of respect for property, their own and the property of the school and other children.
- co-operate with school staff and comply with procedures outlined in the school's code of behaviour in instances where their child's behaviour is in breach of that code.
- communicate with the school in relation to any concerns they may have about their child's progress or behaviour.
- discuss with the school issues from home which may have an impact on their child's behaviour.
- discuss with the class teacher, or the principal, any difficulties they may have with the code of behaviour or its implementation
- ensure that their child has adequate rest and nourishment before coming to school.
- ensure that their child comes prepared for school daily with pencils, books etc.
- ensure that homework is completed to the highest standard possible where this is not possible discuss concerns with the class teacher
- where required sign the homework journal/copy to confirm that all homework has been completed.
- provide a note of explanation to the class teacher if for some reason homework cannot be completed.
- provide a note of explanation to the class teacher when a pupil has to leave school early
- show an interest in, support and encourage their children in their school work.
- be aware of the safety of other children and parents by parking safely outside the school and using correct entrances to the school.

- be familiar with the code of behaviour, support its implementation and endeavour to ensure that their child complies with this code

Expectations of adults working with children

Teachers are expected to:

- implement the curriculum as set out by the NCCA
- support and implement the code of behaviour
- treat all children, parents and members of staff fairly and with respect
- reward and praise positive behaviours
- be consistent in dealing with inappropriate behaviours
- deal appropriately with misbehaviour
- be punctual and avoid absenteeism where possible
- provide children with a positive and safe learning environment
- communicate with parents

Parents or other adults working or helping in the school are expected to:

(This includes SNA's, student teachers, caretakers, gardeners, cleaners, parents helping/working in the school and any other auxiliary staff)

- treat all children, parents and members of staff fairly and with respect
- encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves, for others and for property
- report misbehaviour to a teacher
- support the teacher in their effort to engage with the child's/children's learning, both academically and socially
- be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation
- be discreet when dealing with or discussing any school related incidents or issues

Expectations of pupils

Pupils are expected to

- Listen to the class teacher, work hard, try their best and make best use of their time in school
- Enter and leave the school building in an orderly fashion, using the proper exits at all times. When the bell rings after play-time the children 'freeze' and on the second bell they walk to their class lines. Children do not enter the school building without getting permission from teachers.
- Walk quietly within the school building
- Treat all staff members, themselves and each other with respect and courtesy
- To treat all pupils with respect and to avoid any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to be safe. Fighting, rough play or any physical force is not tolerated.
- Refrain from using inappropriate language towards a member of school staff anywhere within the school or while on a school activity.
- Wear their full school uniform;
- Treat our school environment with respect; the playground is a litter-free zone. Fruit peels, pencil parings etc. are collected for composting. Waste paper and cardboard are collected for recycling. All other empty carton drink containers and wrapping papers are considered household waste and are taken home.
- Stay out of school grounds after hours unless with permission.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

The emphasis is on recognising, rewarding and promoting good behaviour.

Whole school

- School Website is a reflection of the good work that is going on in the school in each class.
- Attendance rewards- Attendance rewards are given to each child who has achieved full attendance each month and at the end of each term.
- Star Cards – Each day the teacher or SNA's on yard choose one child from each class who is behaving well on yard. They receive a sticker for good behaviour.
- Pupil of the week/month – at assembly which are generally held monthly a child will be chosen from a class for an award, it can be for working hard in a particular area or for being kind or caring to others otherwise a name from each class will be called out over the intercom
- Pupils are sometimes sent to the principal for a particular word of praise

Class based incentives are used throughout the school and differ from teacher to teacher, here are some of the ways teachers promote positive behaviour

- Teacher praise and encouragement
- A 'good note' home
- Pupils are sometimes sent to the principal or to another class to show excellent work
- Stamp/ Award books – If a child follows the school and classroom rules they receive a stamp in their stamp/ award book this is initialled by parents each evening.
- Class raffles – some teachers have raffles in the class
- Group rewards – some teachers have a reward system for the best group
- Star Pupil/ Pupil of the week – some teachers pick a pupil of the week
- Class Dojo is used in some classes

As a Junior school we emphasise the importance of good behaviour rather than focusing on 'bad behaviour

Unacceptable Behaviour

While positive behaviour is heavily promoted throughout the school community there are times when behaviour is unacceptable. Below behaviour has been categorised into minor, serious and gross misbehaviour

Minor misbehaviour can include but is not limited to

- interrupting class work and wasting time
- running in the school building
- talking in the class line or at times when talking is not permitted
- leaving assigned seat without permission
- leaving the classroom, PE hall or yard without permission
- leaving litter around the school
- being discourteous or unmannerly
- being untruthful
- not completing class work or homework without good reason
- endangering self/fellow pupils in the school building
- endangering self/fellow pupils in the school yard at break time

Serious misbehaviour can include but is not limited to

- behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation) aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a staff member or another pupil
- cyber bullying
- behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- threats to another person
- damage to property
- theft

Gross Misbehaviour can include but is not limited to

- assault on a staff member or another pupil
- continued aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a staff member or another pupil

- serious theft or serious damage to property

Bullying and bullying behaviour

The Department of Education & Skills issued guidelines on countering bullying behaviour in primary and post-primary schools in 1993 and these guidelines offer a definition of bullying:

“Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, which should not be condoned, can scarcely be described as bullying. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing, it is bullying.”

The school accepts the Department of Education and Skills’ definition of bullying.

The Department of Education & Skills identifies a number of different types of bullying, and the school accepts and concurs with this elaboration of what constitutes bullying. This includes physical aggression, damage to property, extortion including demands for things, intimidation, abusive phone calls, abusive text messages, isolation, name-calling, slugging, cyber bullying, homophobic bullying.

Bullying of any member of the school community, occurring in a context under the control or authority of the school, will not be tolerated. Parents will be expected to cooperate with the school always in dealing with instances of bullying. .

Sanctions

Sanctions may be imposed in cases of unacceptable behaviour. These may include the following:

- A verbal reprimand by teacher/SNA in which the behaviour is identified and discussed.
Teachers should be sure that the child understands why they are being reprimanded
- If behaviour continues, child will be asked to move their name in accordance with the class behaviour system (mostly used in infant classes) or a point is taken from them on their DOJO. The child should understand why their name has been moved or the point has been taken in the hope that they will try harder and earn the right to move their name back or win their point back for good behaviour.
- If behaviour persists, at the end of the day the child will not receive a stamp in their award book.
- Inappropriate behaviour in yard or in class may lead to temporary separation from peers (e.g. Being sent to another class or being kept off the yard for the small break)
- Where a child continuously misbehaves (s)he may be referred to the principal
- Teacher arranges a meeting with parents to discuss ongoing behaviours
- Principal arranges a meeting with parents if there is no improvement in behaviour

Suspension / Expulsion

Suspension

The decision to suspend a pupil requires serious grounds such as

- The pupil has engaged in repeated instances of misbehaviour and there has been no improvement.
- The pupil's behaviour has had a serious detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- The pupil's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.

A single incident of serious misbehaviour may be grounds for suspension. Serious misbehaviour is defined as any behaviour or acts that would endanger the health and safety of others in the school and/or are in violation of the law.

Suspension allows staff and the pupil time to reflect and gives the staff an opportunity to plan ways to help the pupil change unacceptable behaviour. Students will not be suspended for longer than three days, unless more time is needed to fulfil a particular objective to assist the student.

Suspension is defined as follows: 'requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days'. (*Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare*)

Board Authority to Suspend

The Board of Management of Assumption Junior School, has formally and in writing delegated the authority to impose an Immediate Suspension to the Principal Teacher, in consultation with the Chairperson. An Immediate Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour. In exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally and in writing delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an Automatic Suspension for named behaviours detailed in this policy. An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour. In exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

The Board retains its authority to suspend a student in all other cases/circumstances.

Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension

An Immediate Suspension will be deemed to be necessary where, after a preliminary investigation, the Principal reaches the determination that the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety and well-being of pupils or staff of the school.

An Automatic Suspension is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of Assumption Junior School, having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by Health & Safety Legislation, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur Automatic Suspension as a sanction:

- Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff/coaches/visitors to school
- Acts of violence resulting in serious damage to school property

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension by telephone, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected. In no circumstance will a student be sent home from school prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will issue in due course, but no later than 2 school days after the imposition of the suspension. Such a notification will detail:

- The duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- The reasons for the suspension
- Any study programme to be followed
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Any further consequences/sanctions

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be completed no later than 2 school days after the incident, the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss:

- The circumstances surrounding the suspension
- Interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.
- Consequences of the action which lead to the suspension

The Board of Management of Assumption Junior School acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given:

No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.

Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions

In cases other than those of Immediate or Automatic Suspension the following procedures will apply:

Where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management will initiate a formal investigation of the matter. The following procedures will be observed:

A written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s) containing:

- Details of the alleged misbehaviour
- Details of the impending investigation process
- Notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
- An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.
- Consequences and sanctions

We acknowledge the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given:

- No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Where a decision to suspend has been made the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision.

The letter will confirm:

- The duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- The reasons for the suspension
- Any study programme to be followed
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be

informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

Expulsion

In extreme cases and when all possible avenues of discussion, negotiation and mediation open to us have been exhausted, as a last resort it may be deemed necessary for the Board of Management to expel a pupil from the school in accordance with Section 23 of the Educational Welfare Act, 2000.

Prior to this, the school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour, such as

- Meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways to help the student change his/ her behaviour.
- Ensure the student understands the consequences of their behaviour, if it persists.
- Ensuring all other possible options have been tried.
- Seek the assistance of support agencies, such as the N.E.P.S, H.S.E. Community Services, Student and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Behavioural Support Services and National Council for Special Education, if appropriate

The decision to expel a student requires serious grounds such as

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

While these are similar to the grounds for suspension, factors such as persistence and seriousness of the behaviour as well as a belief the school has exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour will influence the decision of the Board to expel a student.

Definition of Expulsion:

‘A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him/her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.’ (*Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board*)

Authority to Expel

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

Procedures in Respect of Expulsion

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will apply:

- a) A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required) As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s):
- details of the alleged misbehaviour
 - details of the impending investigation process
 - notification that the allegation could result in expulsion
 - An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond

- b) The Principal (or BoM nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management Where the Principal (or nominee) forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal (or nominee) makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. In this event the Principal (or nominee) will:

- inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- ensure that parent(s)/guardians have records of:
 - the allegations against the student
 - the investigation
 - written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)

- c) If, having considered the Principal's report, the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student a hearing will be scheduled.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing

- as to the date, location and time of the hearing
- of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- that they may if they so choose be accompanied at the hearing
- The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that:

- the meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
- the principal (or BoM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other's presence
- each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party

- the parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose
- d) Board of Management Deliberations & Actions: Following the hearing where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled the Board
- Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion
 - Will not expel the student before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification
 - Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
 - Will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer
 - Will suspend the student, if it is deemed likely that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils or staff
- e) Confirmation of the Decision to Expel: Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing that the expulsion will now proceed. They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of Assumption Junior School, acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given:

- No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Appealing Suspension/Expulsion

Parents have the right to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, a decision to expel or a decision to suspend where cumulative suspensions reach or exceed 20 days in any school year. The full details of the procedures to be followed can be found in the

Record-keeping

A standardised record sheet (Appendix A) will be used to track an individual pupil's behaviour, when teachers feel that a child is moving from regular minor misdemeanours to regular serious misdemeanours. Such records will contain:

- Incidents of misbehaviour
- interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
- Evidence of improved behaviour
- Any sanctions imposed, and the reasons they were imposed
- Pupils and parents will be told when a record is being made about behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained.

Teachers may also keep records on children to monitor behaviour. When a child is sent to the Principal for a serious misdemeanour she will record any accounts of the misdemeanour, from the pupil and from others who may be involved.

All records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003

Communication with Parents

When it comes to behaviour, parents/guardians will be involved at an early stage, rather than as a last resort. Communication will be verbal or written, depending on the circumstances. The staff is willing to meet parents at any mutually agreeable time to discuss any concerns. One aim of the code of behaviour is to provide a clear, consistent method of communication between home and school to inform the parents about their children's behaviour in school.

In situations where there is evidence of serious ongoing emotional and behavioural difficulties, teachers will work with parents/guardians to have their student referred for assessment by the relevant services.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

While all pupils in the school are subject to the school's code of behaviour, some pupils come to school with special educational needs. Staff at the Assumption JNS have an appreciation and awareness of these complex and individual needs. These needs are taken into account during the implementation of the school's Code of Behaviour. Where a pupil with special needs is in breach of the school's Code of Behaviour the 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 pupils, pupils who may have exhibited the same type of behaviours, they may also need to show leniency in relation to pupils with specific learning/behavioural difficulties. Teachers through their training are aware of different strategies and incentives to deal with challenging behaviour from a pupil with SEN.

Parents of these pupils 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 pupil to improve his/her behaviour. The devising of such strategies may also entail contacting and meeting with relevant out of school agencies.

Such discussions can generate IEP (Individual Education Plan) goals as well as necessary exceptions that may prevent the child from meeting a requirement of the school's code. Children who have special needs which cause them to be unable, as a result of those needs, to understand or respond appropriately to components of a discipline code or school rule should have those exceptions incorporated and addressed in their IEP.

It is the responsibility of the Learning Support team to review the discipline code and determine what specialized help and instruction the child may need to understand the code and consistently demonstrate the appropriate classroom and school behaviours conducive to learning. The School and parents should work cooperatively to change a pattern of negative behaviour.

Mobile Phone Use

Children are not permitted to bring personal mobile phones or personal tablets to school under any circumstances. Where a phone or tablet is brought to school it must be immediately surrendered to the teacher. Parents will be informed that the school does not allow the use of phones or tablets in school.

Evaluation

The success of this Code of Behaviour Policy will be measured through:

- Maintaining or improving the current good behaviour levels in the school
- Fostering happy, confident, well-adjusted children
- Positive feedback from teachers and parents and others involved with the pupils in the school

Ratification and Communication

This Code of Behaviour was ratified by the Board of Management of Assumption Junior School on 25/09/2018.

The Code is available on the school website www.assumptionjns.com and parents will be notified of this by way of a note sent home with all pupils.