

St. James' National School

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"Educating for Enrichment and Enjoyment".

"Oiliúint chun tairbhe agus taitneamh a bhaint as an saol"

Code of Behaviour

The Code of Behaviour of Ramsgrange National School reflects the vision and values of our school, its patron and the National Education Welfare Board guidelines for schools. This code was developed in consultation with the staff, parents and the Board of Management, in compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000. It translates the expectations of the school community into practical arrangements, routines and procedures which ensure that its aims are implemented and that the particular needs and circumstances of our school and community are met.

I. Aims:

- To foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour are expected, explained understood and supported.
- To help create a positive learning environment in which all pupils can benefit from the education system and achieve their personal best.
- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community as well as caring for the school and its environment.
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

II. Principles Underlining Our Code:

- Every effort will be made to ensure that our code is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner and that all members of staff adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school.
- Differences amongst our pupils e.g. S.E.N. pupils will be acknowledged.
- A whole school approach will be adopted. This requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation and sense of ownership from all the stake holders – B.O.M., teachers, parents, pupils and ancillary staff.
- Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

Attendance and Dismissal

- School begins at 9:20 am for all classes. Pupils should arrive to school between 9:10 and 9:20am. On entering school in the morning pupils are asked to walk in an orderly fashion to their designated class assembly area . Any pupil arriving before 9:10am remain their parent's responsibility until that time.
- Lunch break is from 12:30 to 1:00pm.
- Infants go home at 2:00pm. All other classes end at 3:00pm. Parents who wish to have their children escorted home should make their own arrangements to have them met no later than 2:00 or 3:00pm as the school cannot accept responsibility for looking after the children after this time.
- Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing, clearly stating the reason for absence. The Principal is required by law to report such absences to the National Educational Welfare Board.
- Pupils are expected to be on time for school each day and, in the event of a late arrival, bring a note to the teacher. Please note that where a child attends school after attendance has been taken he/she will be marked absent.
- No child will be allowed to leave school during school hours without a signed letter stating time child is to be allowed home. Alternatively parents may call to the school and having consulted with the class teacher, the principal or deputy principal, they may bring child home.
- If a child is sick during school hours we will endeavour to contact his/her home. It is important that every child has a phone number where his/her parents can be contacted. Parents who will be absent from home, or normal place of work, should arrange a contact phone number in case an emergency should arise.
- A child who is sick in the morning should not be sent to school unless there are strong indications that it is a minor matter that will not necessitate him/her being sent home.

h) Rules regarding Misc. Items

- Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to have the correct uniform, books and required materials each day.
- Tracksuits and runners are essential for physical education and should be worn only on the appropriate days.
- Jewellery: Students should not wear any jewellery to school. Girls are only permitted to wear stud earrings.
- No dying of hair is permitted.
- Toys and other electronic devices are not permitted in the school.
- Mobile phones are not permitted in the school.

V. Ladder of Intervention

- Consistent clear rules and routines in class and in school assist the majority of pupils to behave appropriately. Minor misbehaviour will be checked regularly by the class teacher.
- More active interventions will be used to help some students manage their behaviour including, Parental Involvement, setting targets for behaviour and monitoring them with the student in a supportive way, behaviour contracts and the involvement of another teacher/Principal/Deputy Principal.
- Interventions tried and how the pupil responded will be noted.

- The interventions tried to date.
- Whether suspension is the appropriate response.
- Whether the pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils e.g. shouting at teacher, being disruptive, refusing to work, not allowing others to work, taking up teacher's teaching time due to inappropriate behaviour.
- Whether the pupil's continued presence in the school at the time constitutes a threat to the safety of pupils/staff e.g. physical fights in school yard, leaving school premises without permission, serious consistent incidents of bullying or racism, use of bad language to any member of school community.

X. Expulsion

The decision to permanently exclude a pupil from Ramsgrange National School will be made solely by the B.O.M. Expulsion is a very serious step and is only taken in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour and only after the school has taken significant steps to address the behaviour. These steps include the following:

- Meeting with parents and pupil to explore ways of helping pupil change his behaviour.
- Making sure that the pupil understands the possible consequences of the behaviour, (if it should persist).
- Ensuring that all other possible options have been tried.
- Seeking the assistance of support agencies e.g. National Education Psychological Service (NEPS), Health Service Executive Community Services (HSE), National Behavioural Support Service (NBSS).

The grounds for expulsion and the factors which need to be considered are similar to those for suspension, however where expulsion is concerned the school will already have tried a series of other interventions including suspension which unfortunately haven't changed the pupil's behaviour.

Expulsion for a first offence.

The following kinds of behaviour may warrant such expulsion:

- A serious threat of violence against another pupil or staff member.
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Supplying of alcohol/drugs.

Procedures in respect of expulsion

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
 - Inform parents in writing of alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
 - Give parents and students the opportunity to respond before a decision is made.
- A recommendation to the BOM by the principal (see page 84 NEWB Guidelines).
- Consideration by the BOM of the principal's recommendations and the holding of a hearing. (see page 84 NEWB Guidelines).
- If BOM is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing, of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. The intention to expel a student does not take effect until 20 school days have elapsed after NEWB have received written notification. The NEWB should be notified using a **Notice of Intention to Expel form** which is available on www.schoolreturn.ie or from their helpline (1890 36 3666). This form should be completed and sent to **School Return Section, National Educational Welfare Board, 16-22 Green Street, Dublin 7.**

Consultations arranged by the EWO.
Confirmation of the decision to expel.

Appeals

Parents may appeal the decision to expel to the Secretary General of DES. The appeals process under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 begins with the appointment of a mediator. An appeal may also be brought by NEPS on behalf of the pupil.

XI. Agreement

Parents/guardians who apply to enrol their children will be given a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour. An agreement signed by the parents/guardians to abide by the Code of Behaviour must be returned in advance of enrolment.

The Board of Management of Ramsgrange National School acknowledges the support of all teaching and ancillary Staff and the Parent's Council in the formulation of this code:

The following policies should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Parental Complaints Procedure
- Attendance Policy