

# Mount Sion Primary School

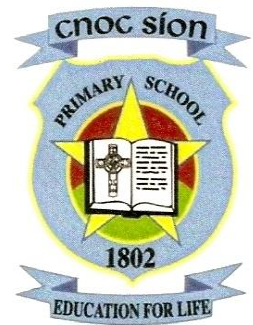
Barrack Street, Waterford.

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# CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

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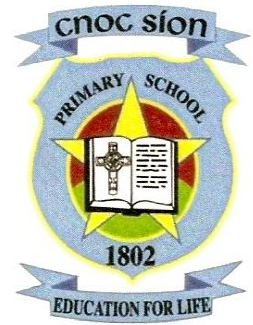
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## **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

The primary objective of the school is to bring about the full development of each pupil. This will be achieved while recognising the uniqueness and dignity of the individual. We aim to provide an atmosphere in the school where there is good order and an environment where both teachers and pupils can work in harmony. School rules are necessary to provide such an environment. Respect for others and co-operation amongst pupils, parents, staff and Board of Management are the guiding factors in our code of behaviour. With such an atmosphere of harmony and good order, pupils will derive maximum benefit from their schooling.

### **AIMS**

1. To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
2. To provide for the safe, effective and harmonious operation of the school.
3. To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others.
4. To develop pupils self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
5. To facilitate the development and education of all the children.
6. To promote equality and fairness among all.
7. To enable teachers to teach without disruption.

## **PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

Mount Sion Primary School recognises that all behaviour is based on the relationships of the community of people who interact on a daily basis throughout the school environs. For such relationships to be positive and effective, respect, consideration and tolerance of others must be to the forefront of all interactions. Furthermore, it is understood that positive relationships must be founded on trust.

The Code of Behaviour recognises that the behaviour of the adults in a child's life, including parents, and teachers, is a significant influence on how a child acts.

The Code of Behaviour gives priority to good behaviour. It is essentially understood throughout the Code that Mount Sion Primary School expects high standards of behaviour. Mount Sion Primary School has high expectations also of the effort put into school life by each pupil and holds as an expectation that each pupil will be able to succeed to the maximum of their ability.

The needs of any pupil whose behaviour is unacceptable will be balanced with the educational and welfare needs of the other pupils in the school.

Where a pupil has difficulties with behaviour, Mount Sion Primary School commits to providing positive support and the active teaching of the relevant skills to the pupil in question.

In Mount Sion Primary School, while committing to the welfare of every pupil and committing to the right of every pupil to participate in and benefit from their education in Mount Sion, where behaviour is unacceptable the needs of all the pupils/Staff will have to be taken into account when dealing with unacceptable behaviour. A balanced approach to the needs of all concerned will be exercised.

The Code of Behaviour of Mount Sion Primary School aims, through its implementation, to promote and provide a positive and safe classroom environment for Pupils, Teachers and Special Needs Assistants.

Through its implementation, the Code of Behaviour aims to promote the conditions where learning and teaching can take place with dignity and free from the threat of violence and aggression for both staff and students. The Code of Behaviour will be implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner.

It is understood that the term 'classroom' includes the traditional physical classroom setting but also includes any place where the class teacher is in charge, e.g. school hall and grounds, school garden, library, swimming pool, bus, street, school tour, fieldtrip, athletics meeting, school sports, matches/games, etc.

## SCHOOL RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

Our rules provide for the establishment of a solid and predictable routine. Such routine is a core factor in providing a stable platform upon which pupils can learn and perform to the best of their ability.

1. School starts at 9.00 a.m. Pupils should be in the yard when the bell rings at 9.00 a.m. Mount Sion Primary School cannot accept responsibility for pupils before 8.30 a.m. Access to the school Junior Yard is allowed at 8.30 a.m. All Senior Pupils (3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Classes) go directly to the Senior Yard at 8.30 a.m. Once a pupil has entered the school grounds, he must remain in either the Junior Yard or the Senior Yard as appropriate and must not leave without permission of the Yard Supervisor or the Principal. School closes at 1.40 p.m. for Infant Classes and 2.40 p.m. for 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Classes. Class teachers will bring their respective classes to the Barrack Street gate. Pupils are not allowed to leave the class line until the class teacher gives permission. Infant pupils will only be allowed home when a parent or assigned adult comes to collect the pupil from the school. On wet or frosty mornings pupils will be supervised inside their classrooms. On such mornings, access to the school is via the main white school door, in the Junior Playground.  
**Pupils may only leave school when accompanied by a parent/guardian, assigned adult or a member of staff.** If a child is sick he must be collected by a parent/guardian or assigned adult. He will not be allowed home by himself.

2. a) Parents who wish to speak to a Teacher need to request a meeting in advance in their son's homework journal or via a phone call or email to the office. The first port of call for Parents, when dealing with issues relating to children, should always be the Class Teacher. If an issue remains unresolved a further meeting involving the Principal may be arranged following a request to the School office. A teacher may also request a meeting with a Parent/Guardian at any stage throughout the school year. **A teacher is entitled to ask for the Principal to be present at any or all Parent/Teacher meetings.** Informal Parent/Guardian/Teacher meetings with mutual consent may occur at collection times.

It is expected that all meetings with Parents/Guardians and Teachers will be conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Parents/Guardians and Teachers must not take an aggressive stance or demeanour during a meeting being held to discuss the needs of a child. No unscheduled meetings should take place, especially where one party feels that they have a grievance against the other party. The Principal may be called upon by to join a Parent/Guardian/Teacher meeting where it is deemed necessary.

3. a) Pupils should come to school dressed in the school uniform i.e. school tie, navy jumper with Primary School crest, blue shirt and grey pants. The Code of Behaviour applies to every occasion on which the uniform is worn, irrespective of time or location.  
b) Pupils in the Infant Classes should wear the school tracksuit and polo shirt as a uniform.  
c) Pupils from 1st to 6th Classes are allowed to wear the school tracksuit coming to school on P.E. days and other designated days. Other tracksuits are not acceptable.

- d) Pupils should come to school with neat and tidy hairstyles. Dyed hair is not allowed. In the interest of hygiene and self-respect, pupils should come to school in clean uniforms. A routine of cleanliness should be established by each pupil.
  - e) Pupils at Infant level must be toilet trained before they commence school.
  - f) In the interests of health and safety, pupils are not allowed to wear jewellery. Specifically earrings, necklaces, bracelets are not allowed. Piercings of any kind are not allowed.
  - g) Where a pupil has his ear pierced, **he may not wear an earring to school.**
  - h) Pupils are allowed to wear wristwatches.
4. An explanatory note, phone-call, email or verbal report from parents will be required for all absences from school. Parents may also visit the Class Teacher, by appointment, to explain an absence. In order to comply with the Education Welfare Act 2000, a pupil must be reported to the National Educational Welfare Board when his cumulative absences reach 20 days in one school year. Parents will be notified of such reporting. Regular attendance at school is vital for children to derive maximum benefit from their education. It is the responsibility of Parents/Guardians to make sure that their child attends school on a regular basis.
5. a) Pupils are strictly forbidden to leave the school and grounds without permission between 9.00 a.m. and 2.40 p.m.
- b) Parents/guardians who wish their child to leave the school between 9.00 a.m. and 2.40 p.m., must collect their child at the classroom door, or arrange to have the child collected by a responsible adult at the classroom door, with the parents/guardians written consent. In all cases, children must be signed out by the collecting adult. In order to sign a child out the collecting parent/guardian should first report to the school office to notify the Principal or Secretary and then they must sign the Sign-Out register which is located inside the school office. The parent/guardian will be given a Sign-Out Slip which they must present to the teacher before collecting his/her child. A child will **not** be released without a Sign-Out Slip being presented to the teacher.
6. Pupils are expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect, courtesy and politeness at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable.
7. Pupils shall behave in such a manner that allows the teacher to teach and the other pupils to learn.
8. It is understood that homework is not completed until it is handed to the class teacher. Whenever homework is not complete, the pupil is required to present an explanatory note from his parent/guardian to his teacher.
9. Whenever written punishment is not done, an explanatory note from a parent/guardian to the teacher is required. The written punishment must still be done.
10. a) Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance.
- b) Pupils are expected to have all the necessary books and equipment for school and to have PE gear on the appointed day.
- c) Pupils are expected to obey a teacher's instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
- d) **Pupils must have their name on all their possessions. Where a child's possession goes missing and his name is not on that possession the School cannot act properly to retrieve it.**

11. When moving about the school, **PUPILS MUST WALK QUIETLY.**
12. Aggressive and bullying behaviour is forbidden.  
“Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conduct by an individual or group against others.” (Dept. of Education & Skills)
13. Pupils are expected to take great care of all school property and not litter the school grounds.  
**Chewing gum is forbidden.**
14. Healthy eating is promoted in Mount Sion Primary School. Pupils are not allowed to bring fizzy drinks, sweets, crisps or take-away foods to school. Such food items will be confiscated and returned to the pupil at ‘home-time’. Pupils may bring one ‘treat’ on Fridays.
15. Pupils must enter and leave the school by the main gate (Barrack St.) **only**. Parents may not drive cars onto the school grounds to bring or collect pupils.
16. Cycling is forbidden on school grounds. Pupils are not allowed use scooters on school grounds.
17. Pupils must turn off mobile phones on entering the school premises and must not turn mobile phones on until they have left the school premises. If a phone is found to be turned on during school time it will be confiscated and stored in the school office. It will be returned to a parent/guardian in person as soon as the parent/guardian comes to the office. If a pupil has his phone confiscated for a second offence the phone will be returned after one week to his parents/guardians.
18. If a pupil uses his phone to record audio or video files of events in school it will be deemed to be a serious misbehavior and will be dealt with in accordance with the procedure for dealing with Major Breaches of Discipline.
19. Any posting of audio or video files relating to pupils, staff or school events on the internet will be deemed to be a serious misbehavior and will be dealt with accordingly.
20. Dogs are not allowed onto school grounds. Owners will be held responsible for injuries or damage caused by their dog(s).
21. IPods, Nintendo Games and all other such media devices are not allowed in school.
22. Smoking is not allowed on school grounds.

## AFFIRMING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewarding and incentives than on sanctions. Positive actions include words of praise and encouragement, merit stickers, stars, reward vouchers, certificates etc.

In order to promote positive behaviour the following strategies will be used.

1. School Assemblies:

An assembly will be held each month, one assembly for classes from Junior Infants to 2<sup>nd</sup> Classes and one assembly for classes from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Classes.

Awards will be presented to the classes who gain the most stars for

	a)	Lining Up
	b)	Brilliant Manners

Each class may draw up a list of rewards in connection with the Lining Up, Punctuality and Attendance awards. Such lists may act as self-motivation incentives in order to promote team work and to help pupils achieve a sense of fulfilling targets which are set by themselves.

Each month a certificate will be given to one boy in each class who uses good manners.

A “Rising Star” certificate will be presented to one boy in each class who displays a particular effort in some aspect of school life.

An End of year Assembly will be held each year in June to honour those boys in each class who have displayed qualities of good behaviour, good attitude, good effort etc. throughout the school year. Three such awards will be given in each class.

2. Individual class teachers may use strategies such as “Pupil of the Week”, “Star of the Week”.

3. Pupils will be acknowledged each week for full attendance during that week. A Class Teacher may reward full attendance with photo display, star display and by qualifying raffle.

4. Other strategies/incentives used may include:-

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment on a child’s exercise book
- A visit to another class or the Principal for commendation
- Praise in front of class group
- Individual class merit awards, points awards or award stamps
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- Written or verbal communication with parents/guardians
- Homework vouchers may be issued as a reward for good behaviour and attitude
- Golden time may be used as a reward by Teachers with their class

## **SANCTIONS and PROCEDURES**

The school staff is conscious of the efforts the pupils make to keep the rules and work diligently in class. While sanctions are necessary, good behaviour and work effort will be rewarded positively.

The school has a graded system of sanctions. In the first instance, sanctions are applied by class teachers. They include extra written work, being separated from the other pupils for a time and loss of privileges. These sanctions are applied for breaches of school rules. **It is important that these corrections be accepted by pupils and the penalties connected with them be carried out, as failure to do so leads to more serious sanctions.**

More serious sanctions are:

- i) Suspension
- ii) Expulsion in extreme cases.

The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross will be judged by the teachers and/or the Principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours, as follows:

### **Examples of Minor Misdemeanours** (This list is not presumed to be exhaustive)

- Interrupting class work
- Arriving late for school
- Running in the school building
- Talking in the class line
- Leaving seat without permission
- placing unfinished food/drink cartons in class bin
- leaving litter around the school
- not wearing the correct uniform
- being discourteous/unmannerly
- displaying a negative attitude towards school activities
- not completing homework without good reason
- not having homework signed by a parent/guardian
- endangering self/fellow pupils/adults in the school yard at break time at a non-malicious level

### **EXAMPLES OF MAJOR BREACHES OF DISCIPLINE**

(This list is not presumed to be exhaustive)

- Bullying / threatening others / physical violence / spitting
- Refusal to do homework / written punishment
- Bad language / name calling and teasing
- Disobedience / disrespect to teachers or other school employees
- Continuous disruption / deliberately wasting time in class
- Vandalism
- Unauthorised absence from school
- Leaving school and grounds without permission during the school day
- Stealing
- Internet bullying
- Bullying by text or by any electronic means



## PROCEDURES FOLLOWING BREACHES OF DISCIPLINE:-

### Examples of Steps to be taken by Teachers when Dealing with Minor Misdemeanours

- Verbal reprimand/reasoning with pupil
- Issuing a White Card for yard misbehaviour

### Steps to be taken when dealing with Regular Occurrences of Minor Misdemeanours

#### Phase 1

- Write story of what happened or write one copy of School Rules or write relevant Rule to upper limit of 20 times – all to be signed by parent/guardian
- ‘What I could have done differently page’ to be completed and signed
- Note in Homework Journal to be signed by parent/guardian
- Temporary separation from peers
- Sending to another teacher
- Denial of participation in some class activity (non-curricular)
- Time-out for pupils whose name appears in the Time-out Book three times. A Green Card will be issued after 6 White Cards in any one ½ term.
- Note to parents concerning further misbehaviour in the yard. (Misbehaviour in the yard consists of any action that puts the safety of self/other pupils/adults at risk)

### Sanctions which may be applied in Phase 1 or in combination with sanctions at Phase 2:

- Child not allowed out to yard
- Removal to Principal’s Office
- Child may be placed on shortened day. Such a shortened day will be discussed with Parents/Guardians and the EWO will be consulted.
- Child may be sent home for disruptive or dangerous behaviour. Parents/guardians will be contacted to come and take the child home.
- Child may be suspended from the playground for periods of time. These periods of suspension from the playground may be for one break, one day, 3 days, one week or may be continuous if child continues to be disruptive. All such suspensions from the playground will be supervised.
- Parents/Guardians may be requested/instructed to come in to school to supervise their child in an area away from the playground. Such a situation may arise where a child is posing a regular and repeated danger to himself and others.
- A child may not be allowed travel on a school trip due to ongoing behavioural problems. Such a sanction will be explained to the child in advance and his parents/guardians will be informed of the possibility of such a sanction being applied. A programme of expected behaviour will be set up in advance of any such sanction.

#### Phase 2

- a)** In each class, a record will be kept by the teacher of Breaches of Discipline. Persistent Minor Breaches constitute a Major Breach of Discipline. Pupils may be given a ‘Fair Chance’ where it is explained to the pupil that he has misbehaved and that he is now being given a chance but that the next misbehavior the pupil engages in will merit a card.

- b)** Any Major Breach of Discipline will be recorded and noted to parents/guardians by green card. This card is a warning to the pupil that his misbehavior has become serious and that a major change is required. It will be explained to the pupil that he does not need to get another card if his behaviour improves. The Class Teacher will be the teacher administering the issue and signing of a Green Card.
- c)** A second Major Breach, occurring within a period of **one** month, will warrant a yellow card. On receipt of a yellow card the parents/guardians will be requested to meet with the class teacher.
- d)** A third such breach, occurring within a further period of **one** month, will warrant a red card and a visit of the parents/guardians to the Principal and/or teacher, and may ultimately lead to the suspension of the pupil.
- e)** A pupil who continues to misbehave following the issuing of a red card may be suspended. The issuing of Suspensions is delegated to the Principal, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Board, by the board of Management. Following sanction the Principal will notify the parents/guardians of the child both by phone or meeting and in writing. Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130 (5) of the Rules for National Schools. A period of suspension may be of one to five days and will be decided upon by the Board. Pupils will be set a body of work to be completed while on suspension. This work must be completed and failure to do so may lead to further suspension. **Ongoing suspensions will require full Board approval.**
- f)** After completing a suspension, the parents/guardians **must** accompany the pupil concerned to the Principal's Office before he is allowed return to class. The behaviour and attitude which led to suspension will be discussed and targeted behaviour will be explained to the pupil.
- g)** If there is no improvement in behaviour within a 4 week period a further period of suspension may be sanctioned. The next period of suspension may be longer.
- h)** In the case of gross misbehaviour, the Board of Management shall authorise the Chairman or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents/guardians.
- i)** Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case in accordance with Rule 130 (6).
- j)** Pupils requiring psychological assessment for behavioural problems will be referred to the appropriate agencies. Help will also be sought from support services within the wider community e.g. Community Care Services provided by the H.S.E.
- k)** In so far as School resources permit, any pupil who receives an assessment for behavioural problems will have the necessary supports put in place in accordance with the recommendations made by the appropriate agency. With support the pupil will be expected to behave in a manner that does not interfere with teaching and learning and does not compromise the safety of others or the pupil himself. With parental involvement the child will be expected to acquire developmentally appropriate skills in order to assist with self-management.
- l)** Approaches to managing behaviour may be modified to ensure that they are developmentally appropriate to a child with Special Educational Needs or behavioural difficulties.

**The following lists the responsibilities of all parties that make up our School Community. This Code of Behaviour will be successful if we all meet these responsibilities.**

### **BOARD OF MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

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

### **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

### **TEACHERS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil
- Recognise and affirm good work
- Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils
- Be courteous, consistent and fair
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour
- Provide support for colleagues
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern
- Model self-discipline and respectful behaviour

## **PUPILS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice
- Show respect for all members of the school community
- Respect all school property and the property of others
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling
- Include other pupils in games and activities
- Bring correct materials/books to school
- Follow school and class rules

### **Safety: - For my own safety and that of others:**

- i. I should be careful coming to and going from school.
- ii. I should always walk while in the school building.
- iii. I should remain seated at all times in class and while eating lunch.
- iv. I should never run wildly in the school yard and always show respect for my fellow pupils.
- v. I should bring a note of explanation following absences.
- vi. I should never leave the school grounds without the permission of the Class Teacher or the Principal.

### **Caring for Myself**

- i. I should respect myself and my property, always keeping my school bag, books and copies in good order.
- ii. I should always be in school before the bell rings at 9.00 a.m. but not before 8.30 a.m.
- iii. I should show respect for my school and be proud to wear the complete school uniform every day.
- iv. I should always be aware of my personal cleanliness.
- v. I should always bring a sensible, nutritional lunch to school. Crisps, minerals, nuts, sweets or chewing gum are not permitted.
- vi. I should always do my best in school by listening carefully, working as hard as I can and by completing my homework.

### **Caring for Others**

- i. 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.
- ii. I should behave well in class so that my fellow pupils and I can learn.
- iii. I should always keep my school clean by bring unfinished food and drinks, cartons, wrappers etc. home. I should show respect for the property of my fellow pupils, the school building and grounds.
- iv. I should be truthful and honest at all times.

## **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.

Mount Sion Primary School is a Bully-free Zone. We are also a Telling School

### **This is our Anti-Bullying Charter**

Every pupil in Mount Sion Primary School has the right to enjoy his learning and leisure free from intimidation, both in the school and in the surrounding community.

Our school community will not tolerate any unkind remarks or actions, even if these were not intended to hurt.

Pupils should support each other by reporting all instances of bullying.

Bullying will be taken very seriously.

We are a "Telling School". Bullying is too important to ignore it.

(Bullying Awareness Week is the third week in September. Winners of the Poster and Poetry Competitions will be posted on the Web and announced in our newsletter)

## **Parents/Guardians Responsibilities**

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property
- Ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's schoolwork
- Sign the homework journal each night
- When a child completes homework at Mount Sion After School Club there is no further expectation/obligation to complete homework that night
- Present a written note of explanation for absences
- Be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and support its implementation
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect the child's behaviour/progress
- Conduct all meetings in school in a respectful and courteous manner
- Discourage children from using physical force as a means of resolving conflict
- Encourage children to listen and to be willing to see another's point of view
- Model self-discipline and respectful behaviour

## **CO-OPERATION OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

**Enrolment at Mount Sion Primary School implies full acceptance of and agreement with this Code of Behaviour.**

**This Code of Behaviour was adopted by the Board of Management of Mount Sion Primary School at a meeting held on May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2005. The Code will be reviewed annually.**

This revised Code of Behaviour, following consultation throughout the year 2011/12 with School Staff and with the School's Parents' Council, was ratified by the Board of Management on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2011.

This Code of Behaviour is immediately effective and was reviewed and sanctioned by the Board on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

Signed:

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Chairperson, Board of Management