



**Nun's Cross
National School**

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Rationale

- The Board of Management of Nun's Cross NS decided to review the Behaviour Policy to ensure that it is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008*.
- It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) which refers to *the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in Section 23(2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:*
 1. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
 2. The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
 3. The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
 4. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and
 5. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school

School Ethos

Nun's Cross School is under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin and Bishop of Glendalough. The ethos of our school is a major factor in establishing and maintaining strong moral values and high standards of behaviour. This points to the importance of a strong sense of community within the school and the existence of a high level of co-operation among pupils, parents, teachers, ancillary staff, Parents' Association and the Board of Management. This code was developed in draft form in collaboration with parents and teachers, children and Board members. It was then made available to all parents and amended as necessary before being submitted to the Patron for approval.

Mission Statement

Every pupil of Nun's Cross N.S. is nurtured within a committed, caring and mutually supportive community; where staff, parents and the wider community alike, strive to achieve the best possible standards in all areas of school life.

The school is a community where moral values such as honesty, truthfulness, justice, fairness, sensitivity to others and civic responsibility are fostered and developed. The Church of Ireland school is a community where all pupils are equally valued and respected. Pupils experience a sense of caring and belonging. They are treated fairly, and their spiritual, moral and religious development is encouraged as is their intellectual, social and academic achievement. Every Friday the whole school participates in assembly and once per month this takes place in the church and is led by Reverend Rue.

We continuously promote a positive attitude towards learning and enable each of our students to recognise their gifts and work towards achieving their full potential.

OUR VISION FOR RELATIONSHIPS AND BEHAVIOUR.

1. To lead the children towards the development of self-discipline based on consideration, respect and tolerance for others.
2. To maintain good order, obedience and courtesy throughout the school and respect for the school environment. Good behaviour shall be the norm.
3. To operate the school efficiently and to structure in-class discipline so that there exists an efficient and stimulating learning environment.
4. To accommodate individual differences between children.
5. To nurture a happy Christian ethos in the school.

Principles of the code of behaviour.

The child has **the right to an education in a relatively disruption-free, happy, healthy, safe and secure environment, in which all can develop to their full potential and form patterns of good behaviour.** To achieve this a framework is provided which promotes and rewards constructive behaviour and discourages unacceptable and

inappropriate behaviour. Positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are used, placing a greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions. Due consideration in dealing with infringements are given to the fact that children differ as individuals. There are times, however, when sanctions may be necessary to maintain good order, and to discourage offenders.

SCHOOL RULES

These may be amended from time to time in discussion with children.

1. Respect and courtesy. All pupils are expected to treat staff, fellow pupils and visitors with respect and courtesy at all times. Bullying and threatening behaviour are not permitted. Pupils must not behave in any way which endangers themselves or others. The use of foul language is unacceptable.

2. Punctuality. School doors open at 9.00 am with formal teaching time beginning at 9.10 am. Prior to 9.00 am, children are not covered by insurance to be on school grounds.

Classes for Infants end at 1.50 p.m. Classes for all others end at 2.50 p.m.. Parents should collect children punctually and all children should leave by 3.00pm. **Children may leave independently, provided they have supplied the school with a permission slip to this effect. They must leave without delay.**

3. Absences. When a pupil is absent an email must be supplied to Sandra upon their return to school. Please send an email stating the day (s) absent and the reason. Since the inception of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 schools are obliged to report on school attendance. **The school is required to submit to Tusla a pupil absence reports if a child has missed more than 20 days of school.**(See Attendance Policy for more information)

Please inform the school of infectious illnesses.

4. Personal property. Pupils must respect the property of others. Pupils should have their names on *all* their belongings.

5. School property and the school environment.

Pupils must respect all school property and keep the school environment clean and litter-free.

Children must respect the school's books used in the Book Rental scheme.

Children must stay within the boundaries of the school.

6. Behaviour in class.

Children are expected to follow the teacher's instructions.

Children are expected to show respect to teachers and other visitors.

Children must have all books and required materials.

Children are expected to work to the best of their ability, and to present written exercises neatly.

7. Homework.

It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis. Children are expected to complete their homework every night to the best of their ability. (Please refer to the Homework Policy for more information)

A child friendly version of these rules is attached. At the beginning of each academic year, each child will sign a copy and keep it in their homework journal. A copy of classroom rules which complement these school rules will also be displayed on the wall of each classroom. Teachers and pupils can also add to these to suit the individual needs of the class.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Positive behaviour shall be rewarded suitably. Accentuating the positive is often more effective than drawing attention to the negative.

Part of the vision of Nun 's Cross National School is to help children achieve their personal best - academically, intellectually, socially and emotionally. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and that similarly children use a variety of approaches to solve problems.

Reward systems which are based on academic merit or particular extrinsic goals continuously undermine the individuality of the children and apply to only a limited number of children. All children deserve

encouragement to attain their own best. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to at all times by adults in the school.

Praise is earned by the maintenance of high standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements.

Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for academic work.

The following are some examples of how praise is given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment [or smiley face/star] in a pupil's exercise book or Homework Journal
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege eg being a line leader, teachers helper etc.
- An informal mention to the parent, or written communication.
- Sharing achievements at assembly time (each week a pupil will be selected for praise by their teacher during assembly time)
- Awarding a homework pass
- no sweets or treats are to be given to pupils as a reward
- no rewards which involve children being unsupervised either inside or outside

PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

The promotion of positive behaviour is the goal of the Code. The day-to-day management of the school and classroom teaching will enable most pupils to behave in ways that support their own learning and development.

Teachers will consistently use a range of strategies for promoting positive behaviour at class and school level.

Students are more likely to behave well when:

- they are given responsibility in the school and are involved in the development of the code of behaviour
- they understand why the code is important and their part in making it work
- they can see that the code works in a fair and consistent way
- there are standards that set high expectations for student behaviour
- the standards are clear, consistent and widely understood
- parents support the school by encouraging positive learning behaviour

- there are good relationships between teachers, parents and students and a happy school atmosphere
- adults model the behaviour that is expected from students.

Other strategies employed by the school to encourage and promote positive behaviour include:

- positive everyday interactions between teachers and students
- good school and class routines
- clear boundaries and rules for students
- Golden Time as a whole class reward system
- helping students themselves to recognise and affirm positive learning behaviour
- recognising and giving positive feedback about behaviour to students and parents
- exploring with students how people should treat each other
- involving students in the preparation of the school and classroom rules.
- The school will also enable children to learn the skills and knowledge they need to behave appropriately through using the programmes Walk Tall, Stay Safe and Relationships and Sexuality Education.
- Discussion of important events and values at Friday Assemblies.
- The use of Circle Time and Role Play.

Roles and responsibilities of adults

AS ADULTS WE AIM TO:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations
- Promote through example, honesty and courtesy
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all
- Discourage physical aggression and encourage 'Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet'.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

In the belief that the most effective schools tend to be those with the best relationships with parents, every effort will be made by the Principal and staff to ensure that parents are kept well informed, that the school provides a welcoming atmosphere towards parents and that parents are not only told when their children have behaved inappropriately but when they have behaved particularly well.

Principal's Responsibilities

- Promote a positive atmosphere 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.
- Record serious incidents on Aladdin with the teacher who observed the behaviour. These records will be password protected and only accessible to the class teacher in line with data protection legislation. The records note interventions tried and how the student has responded to them. Copies of all communications with parents/guardians will be retained in the school. Class teachers will shred personal records at the end of each year.

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 by providing appropriately engaging and differentiated learning activities.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour by following the sanctions outlined below.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour on Aladdin.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with the Principal, other teachers and parents if the behaviours are inappropriate, repetitive and serious and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.
- Develop a behaviour plan for individual pupils if deemed necessary to promote positive behaviours, carrying

out regular reviews with the student and with parents.

- Collaborate with multidisciplinary team members where appropriate when developing and reviewing behaviour plans for individual pupils.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DISCIPLINE AND THE USE OF SANCTIONS.

The overall responsibility for discipline rests with the Principal.

- Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises.
- The degree of misdemeanour will be judged by the teacher and/or principal based on a commonsense approach with regard to the scale and frequency of the misdemeanour.
- Response will be early and positive, when the student does not meet the standards expected in the school.⁷

Classification of Misbehaviours

Misbehaviour falls into one of three categories – minor, serious or gross. The list below is a selection of examples and is not exhaustive. Each incident will be dealt with on a case by case basis and may require an individual approach.

Minor Misbehaviour	Serious Misbehaviour	Gross Misbehaviour
Interrupting class work	Constantly disruptive in class	Bringing weapons or dangerous substances to school
Running in the school building	Telling lies	Smoking
Littering around the school	Blackmail	Persistently engaging in activities which have been identified by members of staff as dangerous or inappropriate
Being discourteous or unmannerly	Stealing	Leaving school premises without permission
Not completing homework without good reason (to include a note from a parent/guardian)	Persistently not working to full potential	Deliberately injuring any member of the school community
Inappropriate behaviour or gestures	Damaging others' property	Setting fire to school property
Name calling	Incidents of bullying/threatening behaviour	Purposely activating school fire alarm
Minor infringement of the school rules	Answering back a teacher	Deliberately leaving taps (fire hose) etc. turned on
Talking out of turn	Continuously not completing homework	Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff or a pupil; (e.g. physical violence, striking, nipping, biting, spitting)
	Endangering self or fellow pupils in the class or the yard	Vandalism
	Using unacceptable language	serious inappropriate behaviour
	Inappropriate use of the internet	assault
	Deliberate, continual disobedience	
	Spitting	

Our duty is to ensure all children feel safe in school and anything which impacts on their feeling of safety in school will be dealt with in school with parental involvement. Teachers 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:

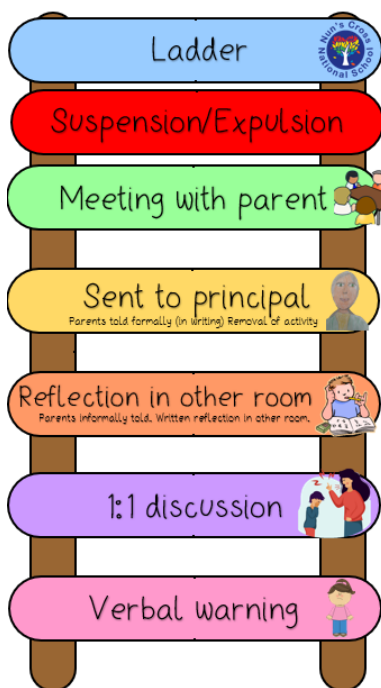
Each day will start with a clean slate.

The regular occurrence of minor misbehaviour will be dealt with as follows, using one or more strategies.

In dealing with misbehaviour a ladder of intervention is implemented by all staff.

As part of the whole-school approach, school staff have an agreed consistent and planned ladder of intervention in response to inappropriate behaviour.

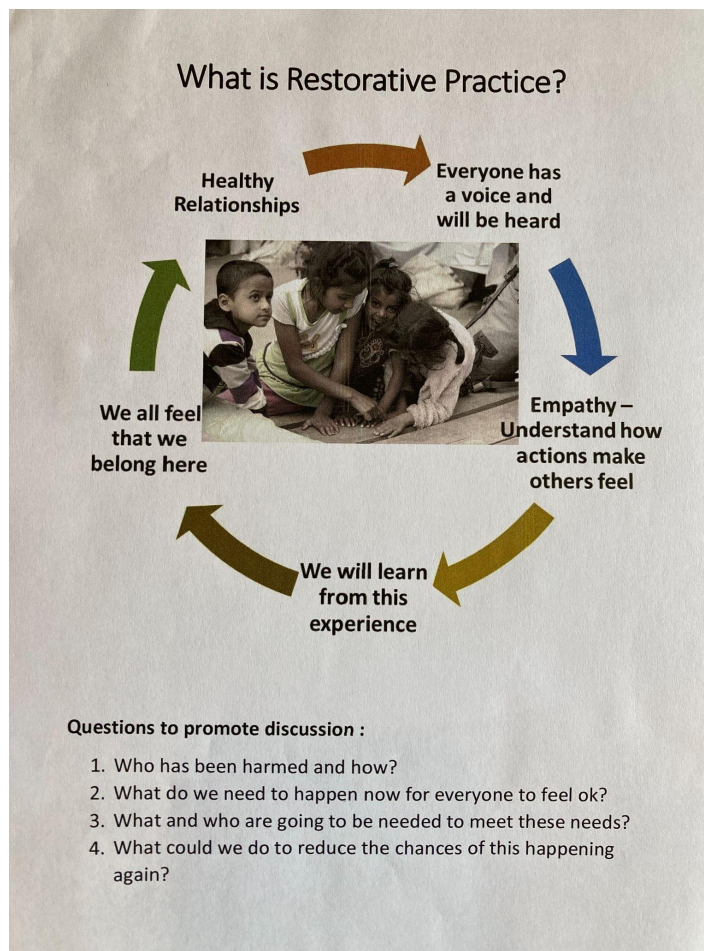
- Six levels at which intervention may take place are outlined below.
- At the first three levels, focus will be placed on methods of restorative practice in dealing with the situation in school. From level three parental involvement will be sought, with the Board of Management intervening if the 6th level of the ladder is reached.



1. **Level One:** Where minor misbehaviour is observed a verbal warning or reminder will be given to the pupil.

2. **If the issue persists, Level Two** will follow, and the teacher will speak with the offending pupil on a one-to-one basis. Restorative practice will be employed to discuss the behaviour and the effect the behaviour is having on the learning environment. Alternatively, some behaviours which are deemed to meet the threshold for this level on the first instance will be dealt with by applying level two ladder sanctions.
3. **Level Three** involves the removal of the offending pupil from the classroom environment, allowing some time out for reflection in another room (10-15 minutes). At this level, the child's parents are informally notified by the teacher and pupils may be asked to complete a written or drawn reflection in the other classroom before returning to their own room. This reflection will focus on the 5 W's of the restorative approach which the children will be scaffolded through. The only teacher who is to speak with the pupil in relation to the behaviour is the teacher of the pupils's own class.
4. **Level Four:** Where the disruptive behaviour persists, the pupil may be sent to speak with the principal where some more reflection on the behaviour will follow. They will bring their written report on the incident, focusing on the restorative approach and the 5 W's. This will be photocopied and taken home to the parents and must be signed. Parents will also be formally notified in writing. Again, if behaviour is deemed to meet the threshold of serious misbehaviour, level four may be implemented, skipping levels one to three. Privileges may be lost at this level (Golden time, play time if a safety issue, competitions and trips), and this will be at the discretion of the class teacher, depending on the efforts being made to improve the challenging behaviour.
5. **Level Five:** A meeting will be arranged between the parents of the child, the class teacher and the principal. A written report will be completed by the teacher, the principal and any pupils who are involved. This will be uploaded to Aladdin and updated as necessary. A behaviour plan may be necessary as behaviour may require continued monitoring.
6. **Level Six:** Where gross misbehaviour or repeated serious misbehaviour is observed. A full written report will be required and the Board of Management will be informed to enact an expulsion or suspension. Chairperson of the Board of Management informed and parents requested to meet with Chairperson or other designated Board member and the Principal.

Restorative Practice Approach



7.

Serious Misbehaviour

All 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 above, but depending on misbehaviour may proceed to the following steps when dealing with Serious Misbehaviour;

- All warnings will be forgone and the child will be removed from the situation and placed close to the teacher.
- The child will be given the opportunity to regulate their emotions safely.
- The teacher will use a restorative approach to elicit from the child the thoughts and feelings that preempted the behaviour before a resolution to the behaviour is agreed upon by both the pupil and the teacher.
- Child will be sent to the Principal
- An account of all incidents will be entered on Aladdin

- Class teacher or Yard duty teacher will meet with one/both parents in person. The principal may also be present at this meeting;
- Formal letter from school Principal informing parent of misbehaviour;

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

- Parents will be requested to meet the principal, the class teacher if deemed appropriate and the chairperson of the Board of Management (or other designated member of the Board) to discuss repeated serious incidents of misbehaviour;
- Suspension will be used as a sanction **where all attempts at reasoning with the pupil have failed and where all other efforts 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 writing. (Copies of all correspondence will be retained)

Gross Misbehaviour (suspension / expulsion)

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

Teachers will take the following steps when dealing with Gross Misbehaviour

- **Principal and Chairperson are informed immediately and suspension sanctioned.** The Board of Management has deferred responsibility to the Principal to impose an initial sanction of up to three days. Further suspensions will require Board of Management approval. This approval may be obtained at a regular meeting of the Board or at an emergency meeting at which the Chairperson and Principal have outlined for the Board the reasons why they feel it is necessary to impose a further suspension. In line with the requirements of the Education Welfare Act (2000), the Board of Management will inform the Education Welfare Board when any pupil's period of suspension equals or exceeds six school days.
- When a student is suspended, the parents/guardians will be requested to remove the student from the school. The Principal will meet with the parents/guardian to outline the decision to implement the

suspension and will present the parents/guardian with a written statement of the terms, duration and date of the termination of the suspension. (see below for further information)

Suspension [temporary].

The board of management has delegated suspension to the principal. It should be done formally and in writing. Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally other interventions will have been tried before suspension and the school staff should have reviewed why these interventions have not worked. **However, a single incident of misconduct may be grounds for suspension.**

A decision to suspend a student requires that:

- The student and parents are informed of the complaint; and
- Parents and students are given an opportunity to respond.

A student should not be suspended for **more than three days**, except in exceptional circumstances, where the principal considers that it is warranted to achieve a particular objective. Where a suspension longer than three days is being proposed by the principal, the matter should be referred to the board. A board of management may wish to authorise the Principal, with the approval of the chairperson of the board, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance concerning such suspensions. The board should normally place a ceiling of 10 days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. Pupils should not be suspended for an indefinite period.

Schools should notify the parents and the student of decisions to suspend in writing. When the suspension ends, a plan should be made to reintegrate the student into the class, and pupils should be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start.

Where the aggregate number of days of suspension reaches 6 or more the National Education Welfare Board shall be informed.

APPEALS

Where a child has been suspended temporarily or permanently the Education Act 2000 provides for an appeal to the Secretary General. The appeal may be made by a parent or by the Education Welfare Board.

Expulsion

The board of management of a school has the authority to expel a student. As a matter of best practice, this authority should not be delegated. Expulsion should be proportionate to the student's behaviour and should only be invoked in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. **This can be a one off incident of extreme gross misbehaviour or repeated incidents of gross misbehaviour that interfere with the education of the pupils or the health and safety of pupils, teachers and staff.** This sanction would be imposed under the Education Welfare Act 2000. The school should have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour, and be satisfied that they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour. There may be exceptional circumstances where a board forms the opinion that the student should be expelled for a first offence, e.g. violence or physical assault.

Decisions to expel should follow fair procedures including:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
2. A recommendation to the board of management by the principal.
3. Consideration by the board of management of the principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of management deliberations and actions following the hearing, including informing the Education Welfare Board of its opinion. **(the student cannot be expelled before the passage of 20 days from the date that the NEWB receives this written notification)**
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

Decisions to expel are subject to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act.

1. Support for all students. Most students behave appropriately, with the help of consistent and clear rules and routines in class and in school. Occasional, minor misbehaviour is attended to routinely and effectively by the class teacher. (See above for minor misbehaviour)

2. Additional support for some students

Some students need more active intervention to help them to manage their behaviour. Without additional help, they may be at risk of failing - behaviourally, socially and educationally. Additional inputs or interventions might include:

- sent to another teacher who can work with the student

- setting targets for behaviour and monitoring them with the student in a supportive way
- Behaviour contracts are used where necessary.

3. Specialised support for a small minority of students

A small minority of students may show particularly challenging behaviour.

They may have great difficulty in learning new behaviour and may not respond to low-level interventions. These students will need a sustained and systematic response involving the important adults in their lives, in school and at home. In some cases local support services may need to be accessed to assist in responding to the needs of a student with behavioural difficulties. Sources of support may include the National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive, Community Psychology Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, the National Council for Special Education or Child Guidance Services.

Reporting an inappropriate behaviour

If your child is subject to behaviour that is not appropriate, serious or repeated in nature, the first step is to contact the class teacher.

- In writing, outline the incidence (s) of behaviour that have taken place including times, if possible.
- Arrange a meeting with the class teacher to discuss the incident.
- The teacher will take a short period of time to observe the behaviour herself/himself.
- The teacher will then speak to all parties involved - individually at first.
- A verbal apology will be given to the child (ren) involved.
- A letter /card of apology will be written to the child (ren) involved.
- The child who was behaving inappropriately will receive a sanction deemed suitable for the behaviour.
- If the behaviour is not resolved, the parent can request a meeting with the Principal and class teacher together.

Behaviour that takes place outside school.

Our standards and rules will usually apply in situations where pupils although outside school are still the responsibility of the school, e.g. outings, extracurricular activities, attendance at events organised by the school.

Where a serious incident occurs outside school hours, a judgement will have to be made that there is a clear demonstrable connection with or impact on the school. Legal advice may have to be sought if necessary, as the situation may be very complex. Furthermore, our duty is to ensure all children feel safe in school and anything which impacts on their feeling of safety in school will be dealt with in school with parental involvement.

PASTORAL CARE

Every effort will be made to encourage parents to have an emotionally challenged child referred for psychological assessment without delay. Help will be sought, also, from support services within the wider community, e.g, the GP, National Educational Psychological Service, [NEPS] and/or Community Care Services provided by the HSE, Child Guidance Services, etc.

TIMETABLE FOR REVIEW

The Code will be reviewed on a yearly basis. The Board also reserves the right to add to or to amend this code from time to time as is deemed necessary.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW

Those involved in the review are the teaching staff, Parent Teacher Association, pupils, and the Board of Management.

This Code will be communicated to all new pupils and parents for their acceptance. It is a condition of enrolment at the school that pupils abide by the rules specified in this Code. The Code of Behaviour is also available on the school's website at www.nunscross.ie and hard copies are also available in the secretary's office. At the beginning of each school year students will be reminded of the code of behaviour and after it has been acknowledged, a copy of the code of behaviour must be signed by the children.

Roles and Responsibilities:

All staff members share in the implementation of this policy.

Evaluation:

This policy is monitored on an ongoing basis and amendments will be added when necessary

Review date:

May 2024

Signed: _____ Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date: _____

Appendices

1. STARR Values
2. Junior rules
3. Senior rules

STARR Values



We Are All Stars

 for Self Belief

 for Trustworthy

 for Accepting

 for Resilience

 for Respectful

The graphic is framed by a decorative border of yellow stars of various sizes.

Junior Rules

School Rules



We always try our best



We are always honest and tell the truth



We are kind to each other



We keep trying even when things are hard



We listen to our teacher



We show respect for school and personal property

Senior Class Rules



Self-Belief:

I will always

try my best

to

work hard

and

reach my

FULL POTENTIAL.



Trustworthy:

I will

think

before I act

and make the

BEST decision.



Accepting:

I am

ACCEPTING

of others and myself.

I

INCLUDE

others in my games.



Resilient:

I will

KEEP TRYING

even when I find something difficult.

I can

LEARN FROM MY MISTAKES.

Although things are not always

easy, *I will not quit.*



Respectful:

I will

respect

myself, others, my environment
and property of all

by

thinking

about what I *say* and *do*.

