



Code of Behaviour

Headfort School adopts a positive approach to discipline, emphasising educative and restorative practices to create a respectful climate of trust. Clear codes of behaviour are communicated to the pupils and pupils are acknowledged and receive positive consequences when they demonstrate the expected virtues and values. There are also negative consequences when these codes of behaviour are not adhered to. To help pupils develop and maintain positive relationships and behaviours, staff employ strategies such as giving positive reinforcement and identifying desirable character traits. We teach pupils to respect differences and show compassion. We provide opportunities to make friends and practise social skills.

This Code of Behaviour is for the information of all members of our school community – pupils, parents, staff, Board of Management and Trustees. Working in partnership with parents is essential for the effective implementation of the code.

Rationale

To provide a secure and orderly atmosphere for all where effective teaching and learning can take place.

To support positive pupil decision making skills and individual professional autonomy of staff

Aims

We aim to:

- create an environment which encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- promote intrinsic motivation for making good choices
- define acceptable standards of behaviour
- encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- promote self-esteem, self-discipline and positive relationships
- ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are shared and understood by all staff, pupils, parents and the Trust
- ensure our school is a safe, caring and supportive environment where pupils can learn and teachers can teach
- encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

Purpose (What we want to achieve)

We want our pupils to:

- be positive individuals who are clear about what is expected of them
- value and support each other and all adults as individuals in a school community
- promote positive behaviour such as honesty and courtesy through their actions
- develop relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others
- treat everyone fairly regardless of age, gender, race or ability
- show appreciation of the efforts of all and the contribution of all
- take responsibility for their own actions and be aware of the choices and consequences that are available to them
- be intrinsically motivated to be the very best they can be.



Behaviour for Learning

Behaviour for Learning is:

- **Positive**, where high expectations are emphasised
- **Values driven**, where the process and method in resolving an issue is equally as important as the sanction or consequence
- **Restorative** rather than punitive, focusing on positive relationships between pupils, and other members of our school community.
- **Relevant** to pupils at all stages of their education, but sometimes requiring a different approach according to age or social maturity.

There will be a shared responsibility within the school for the successful management of behaviour for learning. Pupils will show the values of respect, responsibility, and resilience in their learning.

Respect, responsibility and resilience are themes that are relevant to all members of the school community.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headmaster is responsible for behaviour management, however the responsibility for the effective implementation of the Code of Behaviour, lies with all those who care for and educate our pupils (i.e. the teachers, coaches, matrons and support staff, as well as the pupils themselves). The Headmaster via the Trust has the authority to permanently exclude a pupil if ever necessary (in extreme circumstances).

The Headmaster will:

- Have overall responsibility for the policy and procedures, and answer concerns or queries from all stakeholders relating to its implementation
- Administer the exclusion process in response to major incidents/patterns of behaviour.

The Headmaster, Head of Learning and Head of Boarding will:

- Establish this policy, in consultation with staff and pupils and keep it under regular review
- Ensure that the policy is communicated clearly to staff, pupils and parents
- Publicise the policy, by making it known within the school and by bringing it to the attention of pupils, parents and staff
- Proactively celebrate and recognise positive behaviour and achievement
- Provide 1 to 1 advice and guidance to pupils that require it.
- Proactively facilitate systems to support pupil behaviour
- Lead meetings with all stakeholders to share information and plan support for pupils with behavioural needs or concerns
- Liaise with teachers and other members of staff to share information concerning the behaviour of pupils.



All staff will:

- Be guided by the Code of Behaviour policy, ensuring that it is applied consistently and fairly, understanding that mutual support amongst all staff in the implementation of the policy is essential
- Proactively celebrate and recognise positive behaviour and achievement
- Facilitate systems to support pupil behaviour in the classroom.
- Liaise with the school leadership to share information concerning the behaviour of pupils
- Use the school system to record behaviour incidents
- Have a responsibility for creating a high quality-learning environment which stimulates and motivates pupils.
- Use their professionalism and individuality, to role model and sustain positive relationships
- Feedback on the effectiveness of the policy and procedures
- Ensure that support is provided for staff faced with challenging behaviour
- Ensure that there is consistent implementation of school policy and procedures

Parents/guardians are expected to:

- Take responsibility for the behaviour of their child
- Work in partnership with the school to reinforce praise, and maintain high standards of behaviour in their child
- Raise any issues arising from the implementation of the policy with the school.

Pupils are expected to:

- Abide by the Code of Behaviour
- Take responsibility for their own behaviour and accept the consequences of their actions
- Show respect, responsibility and resilience in their learning and behaviour
- Report incidents of negative behaviour such as disruption, bullying or any form of harassment.

Rewards

Rewards are seen by Headfort as a positive way in which to encourage good behaviour, motivation and academic progress.

Pupils may be rewarded for a number of reasons, including:

- ✓ academic progress
- ✓ tremendous effort
- ✓ exemplary conduct
- ✓ setting the standard to others/being a role model
- ✓ active involvement in activities or projects outside of the school day within the wider community
- ✓ extra-curricular activities
- ✓ high standards of behaviour
- ✓ high levels of attendance or punctuality

- ✓ community spirit
- ✓ leadership within the school community and/or wider community



✓ support or show generosity
sportsmanship

towards others including

All pupil rewards will be recorded in the [Google Form](#) *Character Values- Well done!* found on the bulletin.



Consequences and Correcting Misbehaviour

In conjunction with the family, the school will remind children of acceptable and appropriate ways to behave. The school will help pupils with strategies how to behave. We can apply a wide range of sanctions to pupils who break the school rules, fail to follow instructions or behave in a way that is unacceptable.

Consequences can include:

- verbal reprimand
- removal of Golden time (ability to earn it back)
- short term withdrawing the pupil from a lesson or peer group
- withdrawing participation in a school trip or event
- taking away privileges
- adding back to the school community
- meeting with parents and teachers/ matrons
- detention
- confiscation of property
- internal exclusion from daily activities
- exclusion from school - either for a fixed period or permanent

Suspension and Expulsion

Suspension is defined as: requiring the pupil to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days. Exclusion for part of a school day, as a sanction, or asking parents to keep a pupil from school, as a sanction, counts as a suspension. Suspension will be considered as part of a range of sanctions where a pupil has engaged in a major misdemeanour. While suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern, a single instance of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension. The decision to suspend will be based on the following grounds;

- The seriously detrimental effect on the education of the other pupils or the pupil's behaviour to date
- A serious breach of the code of behaviour
- Whether the pupil's continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to safety
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property
- The purpose of suspension includes: providing a respite for staff and pupils, giving the pupil time to reflect on their actions and the staff time to plan ways of helping the pupil to change their unacceptable behaviour.
- Suspension shall be used as part of an agreed plan to address the pupil's behaviour.

The procedures in respect of suspension are:

- A detailed investigation will be carried out. The principle of impartiality in decision-making means it is preferable that, where possible, the Headmaster arranges for another member or members of staff to conduct the investigation and to present a full report on the facts of the case and any other relevant information to the Headmaster. The



Headmaster is then free to take a view about whether the student did engage in the behaviour and about the sanction, based on the report of the investigation.

- The pupil and parents should be informed about the complaint and an opportunity given to respond. A meeting should be arranged with parents.
- A recommendation made to the Headfort Trust will be made;
- Consideration by the Headfort Trust;
- Confirmation of the decision to suspend is given to the parents.

The Headfort Trust has delegated authority to the Headmaster to suspend pupils for periods of up to three days. If a suspension for a longer period is being proposed, the Headmaster should refer to the Headfort Trust for consideration and approval.

Procedures that ensure fairness when suspending a pupil will include:

- Ensuring other means of intervention and dealing with the behaviour has been tried;
- Parents will have been invited to the school to discuss the intention to suspend.

Implementing the Suspension:

The Headmaster shall notify Parents/Guardians, in writing, of the decision to suspend. This will include:

- Letter stating period of suspension – beginning and end dates;
- Reasons for suspension;
- Any programme to be followed by pupil and or parent;
- Arrangements for returning to school and any commitments to be entered into by pupils and parents;
- Provision for an appeal to The Headfort Trust.

Following suspension, a plan to re-integrate the pupil will include, where possible, an arrangement for a member of staff to provide support during the re-integration process. Pupil contracts/Support plan/Behavioural support plan will, if necessary, be put in place for the pupil and his/her parents. This will enable the school to set behavioural goals with the pupil and parents. All efforts will be made to support the pupil to adhere to this contract. It will be expected that the parents will support and maintain support at all times for their child. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Headmaster must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupil or staff.

Full fees are payable during any period of suspension. If a pupil is excluded payment of one full term fees in lieu of notice is required.

Expulsion (Permanent Exclusion):

The Board of Management (Headfort Trust) has the authority to expel a pupil. As a matter of best practice this should be reserved for the Headfort Trust and not be delegated.

The school should have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:



meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour

- making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist
- ensuring that all other possible options have been tried

There is a legal requirement to follow due process and fair procedures prescribed in the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 when proposing to expel a pupil. The Board may decide following consultation that certain named behaviours incur expulsion as an appropriate sanction. In exceptional circumstances the Board of Management may form an opinion that a pupil should be expelled based on a single breach of the Code of Behaviour - for example, a serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff; actual violence or physical assault; following due process and fair procedures.

The Board of Management, before reaching a decision to exclude a pupil will ensure its decision will be reached in an unbiased manner. Expulsion will be in accordance with the terms of rule 130 (5) of the Rules for National Schools.

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedure will be followed:

- A detailed investigation carries out under the direction of the Headmaster
- Parent/ guardians will be informed in writing of the alleged behaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion
- Parents/ guardians and the pupil will be given the opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour
- A recommendation to the Headfort Trust by the Headmaster
- Consideration by the Headfort Trust of the Headmaster's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing
- Headfort Trust deliberations and actions following the hearing
- Confirmation of the decision to expel via email/ letter

Grounds for expulsion are:

- Pupil's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- The pupil's presence constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.



The kinds of behaviour that might

result in expulsion for first offence:

- a serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff
- actual violence or physical assault
- supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
- sexual assault

Appeals

A parent may appeal a decision to suspend or exclude their child in writing to the Headmaster who will pass it on to the Trust.

Complaints

We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about the operation of our pupil behaviour, discipline and code of conduct and behaviour policy. However, please follow the complaints policy if a situation arises.

Anti-bullying

Please see the Anti Bullying Policy.

Related Documents

1. School Code of Behaviour , (Appendix 1 to this document)
2. Behaviour referral (Appendix 2)
3. Recommended Questions (Appendix 3)

Monitoring

Board meeting report

Signed: _____ *Mark Pery-Knox-Gore*

Signed: _____

Chairperson of Headfort Trust

Mr Philip McCormick Headmaster

Date: __13/02/25

Date: __13/02/25__

Contact Mr McCormick,
Headfort School,
Kells
Co Meath
A82H7P2.



Appendix 1 - Behaviour Code

This policy sets out expectations for the conduct of staff, volunteers and parents

This policy is divided into 4 primary sections:

- 1. Our Aspirations**
- 2. Code of Conduct for Staff**
- 3. Code of Conduct for Pupils**
- 4. Code of Conduct for Volunteers, Parents and Guardians**

1) Our Aspirations

At HEADFORT we aspire to be the following:

Respectful: (for ourselves; for others; and our community)

- We show respect for ourselves and others
- We listen and speak to others appropriately, and are accepting of their opinions
- We go beyond our self-interests to find ways to serve the needs of others and are accepting of different beliefs and cultures.
- We show kindness, compassion and courtesy, and work together to build a community where everyone is valued
- We respect the environment in which we learn
- We uphold the good name of the school and wear our uniform with pride.

Responsible:

- We are persons of integrity.
- We are responsible for achieving the highest possible learning outcomes.
- We show personal organisation by being punctual to school and by equipping ourselves for successful learning.
- We take an active role in school life, and care for our environment so that we can benefit from it.
- We are responsible for the choices we make.
- We intervene and remind others of their standards of self-discipline and personal responsibility.
- We have a loyalty and a sense of belonging to our school.

Resilient:

- We show resilience in our own learning
- We readily seek advice and guidance from others, and learn to adapt when we make mistakes
- We recognise the importance of working independently and collaboratively, and have faith in ourselves and in others
- We strive to be the best we can be, and show curiosity, determination, and resolve
- We view the future with optimism and are active citizens in our school community.



All members of the school community shall be kind, respectful, responsible, and self-disciplined. We aim to support each other to be the best people we can be. We work together to maintain a safe and pleasant learning environment.

2) Code of Conduct for all Staff

This policy is taken from the Staff Handbook. As an employee, it is essential to maintain a high standard of professionalism and respect in all interactions with fellow employees, pupils, and members of the public. This code of conduct outlines the expected behaviour, emphasizing civility, while prohibiting rudeness, objectionable behaviour, insulting language, or any actions that may harm others.

- 1) Professionalism and Respect:** 1.1 Treat all fellow employees, pupils, and members of the public with courtesy, fairness, and respect, regardless of their background, status, or beliefs. 1.2 Engage in professional conduct that upholds the reputation and integrity of the organization at all times. 1.3 Avoid any behaviour that may be perceived as discriminatory, offensive, or harassing towards others.
- 2) Communication:** 2.1 Use respectful and constructive language in all forms of communication, including verbal, written, and electronic exchanges. 2.2 Listen actively and attentively to others, demonstrating empathy and understanding. 2.3 Resolve conflicts or disagreements in a professional and respectful manner, seeking mediation or assistance when necessary.
- 3) Privacy and Confidentiality:** 4.1 Respect the privacy and confidentiality of fellow employees, pupils, and members of the public, adhering to all applicable laws and regulations regarding the handling of sensitive information. 4.2 Refrain from sharing confidential or proprietary information without proper authorization. 4.3 Safeguard personal and sensitive information from unauthorized access or disclosure.
- 4) Professional Development:** 5.1 Continuously seek opportunities for professional growth and development, staying updated with relevant industry standards, best practices, and educational advancements. 5.2 Maintain professional competence and integrity by participating in required training and adhering to the organization's policies and procedures.
- 5) Ethical Conduct:** 6.1 Conduct oneself with honesty, integrity, and transparency in all professional activities. 6.2 Avoid engaging in any form of dishonesty, or any behaviour that compromises academic or professional integrity. 6.3 Report any unethical conduct witnessed or suspected, following the appropriate channels outlined in the organization's reporting policies.
- 6) Compliance with Policies and Regulations:** 7.1 Familiarize oneself with and adhere to all organizational policies, procedures, and regulations relevant to the role. 7.2 Seek clarification or guidance from appropriate authorities if any policy or regulation is unclear or requires further explanation.



- 7) Conclusion:** This code of conduct serves as a guideline for all employees to uphold the values of professionalism, respect, and ethical behaviour. By adhering to these principles, we can create a positive and inclusive environment for employees, pupils, and members of the public. Failure to comply with this code may result in disciplinary action, which can include but is not limited to counselling warnings, suspension, or termination of employment.

3) Code of Conduct for Pupils

We expect pupils to follow this code of conduct:

- Support and abide by the school mission and values
- Abide by the school's policies and procedures
- Show respect for people and property
- Be cooperative
- Take responsibility for their actions including their learning
- Follow directives/instructions from staff
- Be honest in their academic work
- Support the learning of others by exhibiting considerate behaviour such as listening and not disrupting classes
- Avoid harassment of any kind, and report any observed harassment
- Refrain from using profane or abusive language or gestures
- Be sensitive to and tolerant of others
- Refrain from conspicuous outward displays of physical affection
- Abide by the disciplinary steps taken to deal with unsatisfactory behaviour
- Ensure that the school remains a pleasant, safe and clean environment
- Comply with immigration and other regulatory requirements that may be applicable

4) Code of Conduct for Volunteers, Parents and Guardians

The school recognizes that our parents, guardians and volunteers are one of our greatest assets. The contribution made by parents, guardians and volunteers are an integral part of making Headfort the special place that it is.

We ask that you:

- Treat pupils, staff and all members of the Headfort community with respect and courtesy.
- Assist in creating an environment that is free from harassment, discrimination and intimidation
- Work cooperatively with all Headfort staff
- Report any illegal or concerning activity to the Headmaster.
- Keep the school up to date with any health, wellbeing or mental health concerns of your child



- Use appropriate communication in verbal and written communication. Please ask questions before forming assumptions or judgments
- Consider carefully if it is your child's interest to be exposed to the communication that is being shared
- Seek clarity in an appropriate manner by approaching the correct person in the school. Please refrain from gossip and negativity about the school and the community.
- Understand that the work conducted with pupils and staff maybe confidential
- Maintain confidentiality by not discussing pupils progress, behaviour or other personal information other than with the relevant member of staff.
- Respect the private emails of others by using bcc function as required.
- The responsibility for the operation of the school, and Headfort House and grounds and all aspects of school life lies with the Headfort Trust. They have delegated responsibility for this to the Headmaster. We expect all parents, volunteers or guardians accept and follow this structure. Parents are encouraged to make suggestions and give ideas regarding the school either directly to the Headmaster or appropriate member of staff or through the PA. We expect parents, guardians and volunteers to operate solely inside the structures and systems created by the school.

We do not tolerate:

Verbal harassment, abuse or intimidation on any staff or parents whilst on school property or via email, letter or social media. Any concerns should be brought directly to the attention of the appropriate person, avoiding rumours and speculation. Concerns presented in good faith and through appropriate channels will be addressed conscientiously, and no retributive action will be taken against those who raise such concerns.

If you choose not to follow this code:

The Headmaster will seek to remedy any breaches of this code in the first instance. If necessary, the appropriate authorities may need to be contacted. The school reserves the right to limit physical access to school activities or the school itself and limit communication with school staff. If a resolution cannot be found the school reserves the right to have a child withdrawn from the school when a parent, guardian or child engages in a serious persistent breaches of this Code which relates to pupil, member of staff, member of the Headfort Trust, another parent or to the reputation of the school.



Headfort School
 Kells
 Co. Meath
 A82 H7P2
 +353 (0)46-9271116

Appendix 2: Behaviour Referrals

Use of restorative techniques, questioning and ways of making it right are listed in appendix two. Punitive punishments should not be adopted by the class teacher. Consequences should support this policy and the school mission and values.

<p>Academic Incident eg classroom related, performance, academic honesty, behaviour, homework etc</p>	<p>Teacher: Alerts pupil. All levels: Speak to pupils. Removal of Golden time Record on the Google Behaviour Form. If necessary contact home.</p> <p>School Leadership: will gather all information from behaviour charts and monitor it. Will liaise with teachers. Will meet with parents if necessary. Will refer serious cases to Headmaster</p>
<p>Pastoral Incidents/ Boarding incidents: eg pupil absence, phone use, uniform issues, personal hygiene, friendship issues</p>	<p>Teacher/ Matron to deal with if low level or to report on Google Behaviour Form. Information given to relevant Form teacher or Matron and Head of Learning</p>
<p>High Level Pastoral Incidents: theft, serious friendship issues, safeguarding, wellbeing, self harm, mental health, threats, racism, vandalism, bullying etc</p>	<p>Reporting teacher to use behaviour google form or safeguarding recording form depending on the nature of the incident. Leadership to gather all the information, speak to the pupil/ mediate/ action plan etc. Record action on google behaviour form. Meet with parents if necessary. Decide on consequences/ refer to Headmaster.</p>



Appendix 3: Recommended Questions:

<p>When challenging behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● What happened?● What were you thinking of at the time?● What have you thought about since?● Who has been affected by what you have done?● In what way have they been affected?● What do you think you need to do to make things right?	<p>To help those affected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● What did you think when you realised what had happened?● What impact has this incident had on you and others?● What has been the hardest thing for you?● What do you think needs to happen to make things right?
---	---