

# **Gaelscoil Inse Chór – Code of Behaviour**

## School Statement

**Gaelscoil Inse Chór is an all-Irish school in which all subjects except English are taught through the medium of the Irish language. Irish is the language of the school and a special emphasis is placed on our traditional culture.**

**Gaelscoil Inse Chór is a Roman Catholic school, under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin. Children of other religions/cultural backgrounds are also welcomed.**

**The aim of the school is to create a positive learning environment which enables each individual child to develop morally, spiritually, physically, academically and culturally. The Code of Behaviour helps to support that aim.**

**The Code of Behaviour is also essential in order to ensure the safety of the children, the staff and the school community. Gaelscoil expects the cooperation of everyone to implement the Code.**

## School Rules

### Punctuality and Attendance

- School starts at 8.50 each morning and each child is expected to be standing in the schoolyard (or in the hall on wet days) in their class line at that time. In the case of any child who is on the school grounds before 8.50a.m, their parent/guardian is responsible for their care.
- The normal school day finishes at 1.30pm for infants, junior and senior, and at 2.30pm for Classes 1 – 6. In the case of children who arrive at school late or who leave early, their parent/guardian is asked to sign the attendance book which is outside the school office.
- Regular attendance at school is expected from every child.
- When a child is absent from school, a letter of explanation is expected on their first day back at school.
- The school is obliged to inform the National Education Welfare Board of any child's absence from school, when that child misses more than 20 school days in one school year.

### Gaeilge/Irish language

- Irish is the official language of the school. Each person inside the school is expected to speak Irish at all times and at any outside events which relate to the school. This is expanded on in our section 'Labhairt na Gaeilge' The emphasis on Gaeilge is highlighted in our Enrolment Policy in order to ensure that understanding around Gaeilge is evident prior to the child beginning school.

## **General Safety**

- Good behaviour is expected of every child at all times; and they're expected to be polite and kind to each other and to adults.
- The school does not tolerate bullying of any kind and the bullying policy is followed in all alleged instances. The Anti-Bullying Policy is on the school website.
- Toys are not to be brought to school. Permission may be given by the teacher for project work, end of term parties etc. Digital consoles are included in this rule ie. PSP, Nintendo DS etc.
- Children are not allowed to use school computers alone. Permission must be sought from the teacher. All school technology is used in a structured manner. Further information can be read in the Health and Safety Policy.
- Children are not permitted to have mobile phones in school. If a phone is seen it will be confiscated and returned to the parent. Under circumstances whereby a mobile phone is deemed necessary, this must be explained in writing. The child must have the phone powered off and out of sight on school grounds.
- On wet mornings, parents are asked to vacate the hall at 8:40am when Ciarán or another staff-member arrives to supervise.
- Each person inside the school building walks at all times except during physical education classes.
- All children walk under a teacher's/SNA's supervision to the school bus or to the classroom doors/porch area when it's time to go home.
- Parents/guardians are asked to fill in a collection form, to give information on who collects their child/ren from school. If the arrangement changes, the school must be informed and the collection form must be amended if necessary.
- Parents must keep the school aware of any changes in their contact details. This point is echoed in the Communications Policy
- If parents/guardians agree that a child may go home without adult supervision, the school should be informed of this in writing.

## **Safety in the Schoolyard**

- In the interests of safety, children in junior and senior infants are permitted to play only on the tarmac yard.
- Every child has to remain within view of the schoolyard supervisors. Therefore, children are strictly forbidden from going behind the trees, behind the prefab rooms and going into Gairdín na n-Óg.
- Children have to ask permission of a yard supervisor in order to go to the toilet, which is in the Artroom.
- Children must go to a yard supervisor in the case of any difficulty or problem, or any injury or sickness. No child is allowed into the school building during break times without getting permission to do so.
- Any child who breaks a rule is sent to the 'balla smaoinimh' or 'reflection wall', in order to think about their behaviour.
- Footballs are not allowed on the yard in the morning before school.
- The bell is rung three times to announce to children that it's time to go to their class lines:
  - First bell: STOP: Every child stops playing immediately.
  - Second bell: SIÚL/WALK: Every child walks to the class line.
  - Third bell: SEAS/STAND: Every child stands quietly in the class line.

## Appearance and School Uniform

- The school uniform is as follows, and one of these two options must be worn at school every day by every child:
  - a) Grey trousers/skirt/pinafore, navy jumper, blue/navy shirt or blue/navy poloshirt.
  - b) Gaelscoil tracksuit, and blue/navy poloshirt.
- On physical education days, the Gaelscoil tracksuit and runners must be worn.
- Shoes with wheels or high heels are not permitted at school.
- Children are not permitted to wear make-up at school.
- In the interests of safety, no jewellery is permitted at school except ear studs and wrist watches.

## Hair

- Children with long hair must have it tied up tightly at all times. This measure is taken in the interest of Health/Safety in an attempt to eliminate head lice in classes. **We ask that all parents take the following measures:- A) If you notice head lice in your child's hair the school should be notified immediately. B) If the school notifies parents of the presence of head lice in your child's class we ask that you treat his/her hair accordingly with the required shampoo. C) We ask that you ensure that all long hair be tied back tightly. Hair should not be loose and free to make contact with others.**
- Children are welcome to wear bandanas in school as an extra measure of protection.
- Each child's hair must be neat at school. Styles/Colouring that draws attention to any child are not permitted.

## Food and Drink

- Every child must follow the school's Healthy Lunch Policy and parents must sign a consent form accepting this. ***Gaelscoil Inse Chór is a 'Nut-Free School'.***
- Any child not following the Lunch Policy will be given a copy of the policy, to be signed by their parent/guardian. The food/drink will be taken from the child.
- Food and drink are not permitted in the schoolyard.
- Chewing gum is not permitted at school.

## Rules for the School Community

- Smoking is strictly forbidden anywhere on the school premises, indoors or outdoors.
- Parents and others coming to Gaelscoil must be patient when traffic is moving. Only staff cars and the school bus will drive on the avenue at morning time. Parents are asked not to drive on the avenue between 2:20pm and 2:45pm. It is advised that parents park off the avenue.
- Dogs are not permitted on school grounds at any time.
- In order to ensure the children's safety it is strictly the teaching staff only who will correct pupils in the school. Any parent who has an issue with a pupil must report it to a member of the teaching staff. People who choose not to do so may

be asked to stay out of the school grounds. This point is further emphasised in the Child Protection Policy.

- Parents are asked to use as much Gaeilge as possible on school grounds.

### **Homework**

- Homework is always based on work done in class on the same day.
- The purpose of homework is to develop skills in writing, memory and creativity.
- The following provides a **guide** on the period of time to be spent on homework:
  - Infants: up to 15 minutes;
  - R1 & R2: 15 – 30 minutes;
  - R3 & R4: 30 – 45 minutes;
  - R5 & R6: up to 1 hour.
- In case of a child not doing homework, a written explanation must be provided.

### **Strategies to Encourage Good Behaviour**

- Praise from the teacher.
- Prizes for the pupil of the week, of the month and of the year.
- Class prizes each week; freedom from homework; class trips.
- Attendance prizes/certificates.
- Prizes for special efforts speaking Irish – tickets to be entered in a weekly draw. More details on rewards and sanctions on Irish speaking are set out in the Appendix to the Code.

### **Strategies to Deal with Bad Behaviour**

**NB: The following system works on a step-by-step basis. Most difficulties are resolved at the first, second or third steps.**

- A) Reasoning with the child.
- B) Sanctions: Temporary separation from other pupils/ additional work/ ‘balla smaoinimh’ (‘reflection wall’)/ staying in during break time. Continuous or repetitive situations are explained in a letter home from the teacher, which the parent/guardian must sign.
- C) A meeting between parent and teacher at which a behaviour contract is drawn up with the child present. It will be of a positive nature whereby parents, teacher and child will all co-operate to achieve the identified targets.
- D) A meeting between parent and school principal with referral to the behaviour contract.
- E) A meeting between parent and Chairperson of the Board of Management.
- F) A letter from the Board of Management to the parent/s. Following this, suspension from school could take place. In any case of suspension, the agreed process recommended by the INTO (Irish National Teachers’ Union) is followed.
- G) In case of any problems which continue, the situation will be referred to the Department of Education and/or to the Gardaí.

## **Appendix to Gaelscoil’s Code of Behaviour**

This Appendix sets out more details on the system of rewards and sanctions at Gaelscoil Inse Chór. This system is being piloted in relation to speaking Irish by the children.

### **Class Rewards**

- Class trips and other fun activities are organised to give recognition to a class for their work as a team, and for their good behaviour when they follow the school's Code of Behaviour.
- A class trip or another occasion can be organised in recognition of good behaviour from any class. .
- Gaeilge tickets are awarded to those children making an effort with the Gaeilge, and prizes are given on a weekly basis based on these.

### **Yellow and Red Cards (Labhairt na Gaeilge)**

The staff identified the Gaeilge as an area of immediate concern, and chose to focus on 'Labhairt na Gaeilge'. The following is a staged plan which deals only with 'Labhairt na Gaeilge'.

- A child who's heard not doing their best to speak Irish will have their name entered in the book. The child is sent to the 'balla smaoinimh' ('reflection wall'). The 'balla smaoinimh' is an area in the yard where the children can take 'time out'. It may be used only during yard time when the children are under supervision. During this 'time out' the children are given the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and on how it might improve.
- A yellow card is given to the child if a lack of effort is heard for a second time. The card will be sent home to the parents to inform them of this and certain privileges may be withdrawn.
- A red card is given to the child if the yellow cards become consistent, and the parent/s are asked to attend a meeting with the class teacher/principal. The child is now at risk of losing the opportunity to take part in a class trip, if there's no improvement.
- The parent/s are asked to attend a meeting with the Board of Management, if the child is still not doing their best to speak Irish. The child could be suspended from the school as a result of this meeting.

### **Other Relevant Policies**

Various aspects of this policy are referred to in the following policies:-

- Anti Bullying Policy
- Health/Safety Policy
- Acceptable User Policy
- Communications Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Data Protection Policy

Board of Management

