

DEAR PARENTS,

I would like to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to you and your children as you prepare to join our school community. It is our sincere wish that the time your child spends here will be a rewarding and positive experience. In Knock NS we recognise the important role of parents as the child's primary educators. We believe that children perform better at school when parents are positively involved, and support school activities. Therefore, we strive to foster and maintain a positive relationship and atmosphere between home and school.

The aim of this Information Booklet is to provide parents with an overview of school practices and procedures. It is important that parents familiarise themselves with the contents of this booklet, and if you require further information please contact the School Secretary.

We are grateful to all who make Knock NS the inclusive and effective school it is – our pupils, our staff, our parents and our Board of Management.

Ms Máire Boyle
Principal, Knock

SECTION 1

1. Philosophy and Ethos of our School **Mission Statement**

Our aim is the full and harmonious development of each child, including his/her relationship with God, with others and with the environment, as exemplified by the Gospel Values.

As a Catholic school dedicated to Mary, the Mother of Jesus, our school must firstly be a Christian place, transmitting a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God. Our prime purpose is to integrate the many energies of the school into a holistic vision of what it means to be a human person, created by God in his own image and likeness.

Our school is a centre of formation - enabling each child to become aware of the dignity and value of each person. These values are based on love, justice and caring.

Our school strives to provide its students with education for life and living. We aim to ensure that all children have equal access to the primary school curriculum. Every effort is made to provide a curriculum suitable to the abilities, aptitudes and interests of the children.

We aspire to excellence in all things by insisting on high standards of discipline, punctuality and academic performance.

We aim to nurture the development of the whole person based on order, personal responsibility, interdependence, respect for persons, respect for property, respect for individual differences, views and opinions. We seek to dismantle prejudices and assist children in dealing with conflict and differences.

We see our school, not as an institution, but as a close knit community where pupils, parents, teachers, management board and ancillary staff work together in an atmosphere of harmony, friendship and mutual respect. We recognise the parent as the child's primary and principle educator and the teacher's role as equal and complimentary. We must endeavour to generate in our pupils a sense of responsibility towards the preservation of our environment. By developing a sense of wonder and love of beauty in our children, we can make a valuable contribution to environmental and ecological well-being.

It is in our Religious Education Programme that we give the fullest expression to our school ethos. By nurturing and supporting the work of parents in this area the school will play its part in deepening and strengthening the faith of the children. The school identifies itself with the important work of Knock Shrine in providing hope, compassion, reconciliation and healing for those in need. A sense of place is developed by providing opportunities for the children to participate in the liturgical celebrations.

Mindful of our culture, traditions and rich heritage, this school will be a caring, understanding and compassionate community alive to justice, to the search for truth, to our own unique talents and gifts and open to the wholeness and sanctity of life.

2. Aims of Primary Education

- a) To enable each child to lead a full life as a child.
- b) To equip each child to avail himself/herself of further education.
- c) To prepare him/her to live a full and useful life as an adult.
- d) To help each child to develop self-discipline and acceptable behaviour.
- e) To help each child to think closely and act independently.
- f) To cultivate in the child a sense of self-worth and belonging - thereby enhancing self-esteem.

SECTION 2

1. Your Role as Parents

As some of our children may be cared for by a single parent or guardian, all reference in this booklet are intended to include single parents or guardians as appropriate.

You are the chief educators of your children in faith, civic and Christian values. You can make a positive contribution to their education and to the running of the school by considering the following suggestions:

- a) Talk to your child about school for some time each day.
- b) Look at your child's/children's exercise books; check his/her homework journal, making sure that the work is done neatly and carefully. Assist your children with project work and encourage them to work independently. Check the school bag for letters sent home from school.
- c) Parents can assist the school by talking to their children about school values, by encouraging them to abide by the rules and by ensuring that home-work is allocated due time and effort by the child.
- d) Ensure that clothes are labeled and books covered and named.
- e) Set guidelines for viewing television and playing games on the computer at home.
- f) Develop social skills of tying laces, buttons etc. Encourage your child in the use of handkerchief, toilet training and washing of hands.
- g) Play an active role in School Programmes e.g. Religious and Shared Reading Programmes.
- h) If your child has a particular problem - you should advise the teacher in good time.

2. Home School Links

There are many examples in practice, of effective communication existing between the teachers and parents of our school. This co-operation and support is an essential ingredient in your child's education.

- a) Updated information is available on our school website and by school newsletter. It is important that you check your child's schoolbag regularly for notes. If left unchecked younger children may produce these weeks after they are relevant.
- b) A note in the child's homework journal.
- c) A letter to the parent or teacher.
- d) **Parent/Teacher Meetings:**
Parent/Teacher meetings are held once a year. It is important that you attend these to keep in touch with your child's progress in school. These are usually held in the first term and you will be informed in advance.
- e) If your child is experiencing a particular problem it is essential that you communicate this to the teacher. Letting the teachers know will allow them to help your child to cope. Parents are asked to make an appointment with the teacher.

2. Appointment with Class Teacher/Principal

In order to maintain the integrity of the school day we ask that you make an appointment if you wish to meet the Class Teacher/Principal. Please contact the School Secretary in this regard.

3. School Day

School Opens	-	9.20am
Morning Break	-	11.00am - 11.10am
Lunch	-	12.30pm - 1.00pm
Infants Finish	-	2.00pm
School Closes	-	3.00pm

Parents, please note the school day commences at 9.20am. There are times when children arrive at school before the school day begins, while some children remain after school closing time waiting to be collected. It is very important that parents understand where the responsibility of the school lies in this matter. Due to legal requirements, the school has no responsibility for children arriving before the official opening time or remaining in the school grounds after school. The school does not undertake responsibility for children coming to school or going home from school.

5. Attendance

Pupils are required to be regular and punctual in their attendance at school. School commences at 9.20am, parents are asked to ensure that children are on time. A requirement exists under the Education Welfare Act to report absences in excess of 20 days to the National Education Welfare Board. The Board of Management realises that there are many genuine reasons for children's absence from school. Nonetheless once your child has absences in excess of 20 days you will receive notification of this, as will the NEWB.

6. Absences

All school absences must be accounted for. Parents are asked to submit a written explanation for any/all absences to inform NEWB returns. If a pupil wishes to leave school early, a note from the parent must be given to the class teacher.

7. School Uniform

School uniforms consist of the following:

Infants: Girls & Boys to wear school tracksuit.

Girls - 1 st – 6th	OR (Girls)	Boys - 1 st – 6th
Navy Cardigan	Navy Jumper (crested)	Navy Jumper (crested)
Navy Pinafore (crested)	Navy Pants	Navy Pants
White Blouse	White Blouse	White Shirt
Red Tie	Red Tie	Red Tie
White/Navy Socks	Navy Socks	Navy Socks
White/Navy Tights	Flat Shoes	
Flat Shoes		

Tracksuit

Navy Top (crested) & Navy Fleece **or** Shell Bottoms (Plain Navy bottoms **only**. **No branded bottoms**)
Red Polo Shirt

School Uniform must be worn at all times unless advised otherwise by the class teacher.

Tracksuit may be worn on PE days only, unless otherwise directed.

All of the clothing and personal belongings should be clearly labeled.

10. Information/Communication, Money etc.

All information/communication or anything of a sensitive or confidential nature between school and home should be sent in a sealed envelope showing pupil's name, teacher's name and a brief reference to the enclosed material.

11. Phone Use

Pupils are not permitted to bring mobile phones to school. A member of the School Staff or the School Secretary will convey messages from children to parents or vice versa if necessary.

12. Complaints Procedure

The INTO and CPSMA reached agreement in 1993 on a procedure for dealing with complaints by parents against teachers. The purpose of this procedure is to facilitate the resolution of difficulties where they may arise in an agreed and fair manner. The agreement lays out in five stages the process to be followed in progressing a complaint and the specific timescale to be followed at each stage.

Only those complaints about teachers which are written and signed by parents/guardians of pupils may be investigated formally by the board of management, except where those complaints are deemed by the board to be:

- a) On matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education and Science;
 - b) Frivolous or vexatious complaints and complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in a school; or
 - c) Complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure.
- Unwritten complaints, not in the above categories, may be processed informally as set out in Stage 1 of this procedure.

Stage 1

1. A parent/guardian who wishes to make a complaint should, unless there are local arrangements to the contrary, approach the class teacher with a view to resolving the complaint.
2. Where the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher s/he should approach the Principal with a view to resolving it.
3. If the complaint is still unresolved the parent/guardian should raise the matter with the Chairperson of the Board of Management with a view to resolving it.

Stage 2

1. If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent/guardian wishes to pursue the matter Further, s/he should lodge the complaint in writing with the chairperson of the Board of Management.
2. The chairperson should bring the precise nature of the written complaint to the notice of the teacher and seek to resolve the matter between the parties with five days of receipt of the written complaint.

Stage 3

1. If the complaint is not resolved informally, the chairperson should, subject to the general authorisation of the Board, and except in those cases where the Chairperson deems the particular authorisation of the Board to be required:
 - supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint; and
 - arrange a meeting with the teacher and, where applicable, the principal teacher
 - with a view to resolving the complaint. Such a meeting should take place within 10 days of receipt of the written complaint.

Stage 4

1. If the complaint is still not resolved the chairperson should make a formal report to the Board within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3(b).
2. If the board considers that the complain is not substantiated the teacher and the complainant should be so informed within three days of the Board meeting.
3. If the Board considers that the complaint is substantiated or that it warrants further investigation it precedes as follows:
 - The teacher should be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage;
 - The teacher should be supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint;
 - The teacher should be requested to supply a written statement to the Board in response to the complaint;
 - The teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of case to the Board. The teacher would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting;
 - The Board may arrange a meeting with the complainant if it considers such to be required. The complainant would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting; and
 - The meeting of the Board of Management referred to in (d) and (e) will take place within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3(b)

Stage 5

1. When the Board has completed its investigation, the Chairperson should convey the decision of the Board in writing to the teacher and the complainant within five days of the meeting of the Board.
3. The decision of the Board shall be final.
3. The Complaints Procedure shall be reviewed after three years.
4. CPSMA or INTO may withdraw from this agreement having given the other party three months' notice of intention to do so.
In this agreement 'days' means school days

1. Code of Behaviour

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This policy was reviewed and redrafted in November 2010. This occurred after the school staff audited the existing code. The policy was then amended to reflect feedback from the audit. Following this process, the draft policy was distributed to parents, published on the school website and parents were given a two week period to examine the code and send feedback to the principal teacher. This feedback was then brought to the Board of Management for discussion. When feedback from all groups was received and the contents of the code agreed it was ratified by the Board of Management in May 2011. This Code of Behaviour was prepared in accordance with the guidelines "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools" published by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB, 2008). The Code of Behaviour also conforms to legislation as required by Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act (2000), in that it specifies the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school.

RATIONALE

The code of behaviour was reviewed for the following reasons:

- To help the school community to promote the school ethos, relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour and prevent unacceptable behaviour.
- To foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour are expected and supported.
- To fulfil requirements specified in the Education Welfare Act, 2000 and to include the good practices set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008*.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHARACTERISTIC SPIRIT OF THE SCHOOL

Our school ethos clearly outlines our commitment to ensuring all children have access to education in a stable and secure learning environment, which encourages respect, trust, care, consideration and Support for others to foster these values. We believe a clearly agreed code of behaviour is extremely valuable and important.

AIMS

The code aims at

- Establishing clearly defined and meaningful standards of behaviour for the school
- Creating a safe and holistic learning environment for all children, where respect and tolerance for all is demonstrated
- Fostering a whole school atmosphere that is conducive to teaching and learning
- Establishing a school environment where children feel safe, secure and confident in their environs
- Encouraging children to have respect for themselves, for other pupils, teachers and school property and the surrounding area

GUIDELINES FOR PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

In Knock NS we firmly believe that each child has a right to education, and that each adult has a right to work in a relatively disruptive free environment. For that purpose there are certain standards of behaviour that the school wishes to promote and expects from pupils. These standards reflect the characteristic spirit and ethos of Knock NS

Expectations of Staff/Visiting teachers

School rules are devised with regard to the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. It is imperative that adults model good example in their interactions with children every day.

Staff are expected to:

- support and implement the school's code of behaviour
- be cognisant of their duty of care
- to be familiar with and follow the school's policy on Child Protection
- create a safe, welcoming environment for each pupil
- praise desirable behaviour
- facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential
- 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 serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour

- record any incidents of misbehaviour on the playground in the yard incident book
- listen, at appropriate times, to pupils' explanations for behaviour;
- provide support for colleagues
- communicate with pupils parents and staff with courtesy and respect and to model good behaviour in their interactions with parents
- provide reports on matters of concern

Expectations of Parents

Parents are expected:

- to nurture in their children a positive attitude towards school and try not to pass on any negative experiences parents may have had themselves while at school
- to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually in full school uniform or tracksuit during the winter months
- to send a written note to the class teacher explaining their child's absence from school
- to ensure the school has up-to-date phone numbers of family/friends to be contacted in case of an emergency
- to arrange and ensure that a family member/friend is contactable and available to attend the school in the event of an emergency
- to ensure their child attends school clean and with a good level of hygiene; to check their child's head regularly for head lice and treat as necessary
- to ensure their child has a healthy lunch in school every day in line with the school policy on healthy eating
- to arrange meetings at an agreed time with the class teacher when they are concerned about any issue relating to their child
- to follow the school's Complaints Procedure if they have a complaint
- to attend meetings that have been arranged between the class teacher and/or principal and parents
- communicate with staff with courtesy and respect and to model good behaviour in their relationship with teachers
- to inform the class teacher of any issues that impact on their child and to follow school procedure for dealing with such issues
- to encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves, for others, for their own property and that of others
- to be interested in, support and encourage their child's school work and homework
- to be familiar with the code of behaviour and other school policies and to support the implementation of these policies
- to co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others;
- to communicate to the school problems which may affect a child's behaviour.

Expectations of Pupils

Pupils are expected:

- to be well behaved and to show respect, consideration and tolerance for other children and adults at all times
- to recognise the rights of others in their classroom and on the playground, pupils should not interfere with other pupils in any way
- to show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own belongings
- to attend school on a regular basis and be punctual

- to do his/her best both in school and for homework
- to co-operate with all teachers, work hard, do their best and make best use of their time in school
- to enter and leave the school building at all times in an orderly fashion
- to walk within the school building in an orderly fashion
- to enter and exit the school hall and classrooms in an orderly fashion
- to leave the school premises in an orderly fashion
- to treat themselves, other children, staff members and adults with due respect and courtesy
- to welcome visitors and to show respect to their elders
- to never bully any person. Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to be safe is unacceptable
- to use appropriate language at all times
- to wear their full school uniform
- adhere to the school's healthy eating policy and defer from bringing chewing gum to school
- to leave mobile phones at home. In the event that a parent needs to be contacted children may call from the school office
- to respect the school building and property; if any deliberate damage is caused, the parent/guardian will be responsible for the cost of repair/replacement
- to refrain from inappropriate behaviour which may include touches, gestures, innuendo etc
- refrain from bringing objects to school that are dangerous and/or pose a threat to student safety, refrain from trading and/or selling said objects
- to value our school environment; the playground is a litter-free zone. Fruit peels, pencil parings etc are collected for composting. Waste paper and cardboard are collected for recycling. No glass bottles or wrappers are allowed on the playground

Bearing these in mind staff are also mindful of the fact that other factors that influence children's behaviour may need to be considered and accommodated.

WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH TO PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

The elements of a whole school approach to behaviour include:

The school ethos, policies and practices are in harmony

We aim to continue to create and maintain a positive school climate that will support and promote good behaviour.

- In so far as is possible the school staff and children will assemble on the first week of each month, the focus of these gatherings will be to support and promote positive behaviour
- All classes will draw up a class contract in the first term of each school year
- All teachers will adopt positive reward strategies in individual classrooms

Engaging in a teamwork approach to behaviour

The staff of Knock NS will be given opportunities to confirm that all school policies and practices support the objectives of the Code of Behaviour. School behaviour will be discussed regularly at whole school level.

A whole school approach to curriculum and classroom

The foundation of positive learning behaviour is effective teaching, and an inclusive and engaging curriculum. Teachers differentiate in order to meet the needs of children in their class.

An inclusive and involved school community

Parents are given opportunities to learn how their commitment to, and relationship with, the school can impact on behaviour and learning.

A systematic process for planning and reviewing the Code of Behaviour

The school engages in the school development planning process, this will ensure that all of our policies, protocols and procedures work harmoniously to sustain a positive environment for teaching and learning.

POSITIVE STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING BEHAVIOUR

The most effective method of managing challenging behaviour is to endeavour to prevent it occurring in the first place. In Knock NS we use the following positive strategies throughout the school in order to promote good behaviour and prevent misbehaviour

Classroom/Assemblies

- Ensuring that pupils are treated fairly, equally and firmly
- Consultation with children and effective implementation of class contract
- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- Matching work with pupil's abilities; children are rewarded at regular stages during the School year for effort/behaviour/skill etc
- Public commendation of improved behaviour upon individuals/class during class/assembly
- Participation in projects and activities in an attempt to accommodate and appeal to all learners
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book
- A visit to another member of staff or the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Delegating some responsibility or privilege
- Mention the incident to a parent – written or verbal
- Teacher records improvement in the behaviour of a disruptive pupil
- Implementation of Programmes such as *Circle Time* to promote positive behaviour
- Teachers are responsible for bringing their classes to the hall, children enter and exit in an orderly fashion. While walking on corridors, entering classrooms and attending support classes children are expected to act responsibly, mannerly and with respect at all times
- Use of the toilets will be monitored by the supervising teacher

Playground

- Clear supervision duty rota. The principal, teachers and special needs assistant will supervise yard on rotational basis ensuring that children are visible at all times. Two teachers will be on the playground at morning and lunch time breaks, teachers will be assisted by the schools special needs assistant(s)
- Classes are organised on the playground in particular zones in order to encourage social interaction and play and minimise opportunities for misbehaviour
- Children can engage in a variety of sporting activities during break: playground games, football, soccer, basketball, running, skipping, hula hoops
- Junior and senior playgrounds have playground markings
- Board games and indoor games have been purchased for each classroom to occupy children on wet days during break times
- When the bell rings, children line up in a specified area and continue to their classroom in an orderly fashion
- All children are expected to spend break periods on the playground, unless it is raining whereby they will remain in their classroom under supervision

- Incidents of misbehaviour are recorded in the junior/senior yard incident book. The teacher on the playground deals with the incident, if the incident is more serious in nature it may be referred to the class teacher and/or the school principal. We employ a time-out system, whereby if there are instances of misbehaviour children are separated from others in the playground. In the infant yard the time-out area is adjacent to the main entrance, in the junior yard the time-out area is at the shelter and in the senior yard the time-out area is at the side gable

The above lists are not exhaustive and consist of examples only. The standards and rules contained in this Code of Behaviour apply in any situation where pupils are the responsibility of the school e.g. school trips and tours, sporting events/activities etc.

Rewards and Sanctions

Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour

Each teacher will reward positive and appropriate behaviour as she/he feels is appropriate. Some suggested methods include:

1. Public and private praise of the pupil – in class or at assemblies
2. Award/prize/certificate for good/improved behaviour
3. Golden time
4. No homework
5. Stickers, badges or stamps in books/copies
6. Note home to inform parents of good behaviour
7. Send pupil to other member of staff for praise
8. Special privilege e.g. choosing an activity

Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour

Some examples of inappropriate behaviour include:

Classroom

- Spitting
- Biting
- Rough Play
- Kicking
- Disrupting other children
- Disrupting the teacher in their work
- Swinging on chairs
- Running in the classroom
- Impinging on the rights of other children
- Bullying of others
- Throwing objects
- Name calling
- Not showing respect, tolerance and empathy for and towards others
- Being disrespectful towards adults and elders

Playground

- Pushing and pulling
- Hitting
- Name calling
- Kicking
- Biting
- Spitting
- Bullying of others
- Rough play
- Leaving the school grounds
- Excluding and/or isolating others
- Impinging on the rights of other children
- Being disrespectful towards adults and elders
- Aggressive behaviour
- Violent behaviour

School Building

- Destruction of any property, be it that of others or the school property
- Damage to school furniture, classrooms etc
- Damage to any resources and/or equipment e.g. IT, PE, books etc
- Use of graffiti on school building
- Defacing school building and/or environs in any way
- Littering of the school building and grounds
- Bringing objects that are deemed unsafe/dangerous to school
- Trespassing out of school hours

The above lists are not exhaustive and consist of examples only. Sanctions are used in a corrective way and are intended to help the child to change and improve his/her behavioural patterns. The nature of the misbehaviour and the age of the child will determine the strategy to be employed. In imposing a sanction, it is the misbehaviour that is unacceptable and not the individual. Sanctions will be, as far as possible, relevant to the misbehaviour

Disciplinary Actions and Sanctions to deal with Misdemeanours:

When an incident of misbehaviour occurs the following procedure is followed:

The teacher refers to any supervising teacher

Step 1

1. The teacher explains to the child/class that their behaviour is inappropriate and not acceptable and may give a verbal reprimand
2. The teacher may change the seating arrangements of the class and/or separate the child from the class if the need arises
3. The teacher may write a note/comment in the child's homework diary
4. When appropriate the child/children may be asked to give a written account of what occurred during the incident, parents may be asked to sign the account
5. Where it is deemed necessary the child may be removed from the activity if the level of disruption affects their own or other children's opportunities for learning.
6. The behaviour incident will be recorded by the teacher if she/he feels that it is significantly serious or if it is part of ongoing inappropriate behaviour

7. If the child has caused damage to school or another child's/staff members property, the child's parents/guardians will be expected to recompense for the damage caused
8. Where necessary the incident may be referred to the principal, the teacher and Principal may meet with the child to discuss the incident

Children will not be excluded from any curricular area/activity unless the behaviour is such that will disrupt the class to the extent that it impinges on other children's opportunities for learning.

Step 2

If the sanctions at Step 1 fail to resolve the problem or if the class teacher feels that the incident warrants it, he/she will request the parents/guardians of the child to meet with her/him to discuss the child's behaviour. The teacher will have a written record of the behaviour incident(s) to show the parents/guardians. The teacher will arrange to meet with the parents/guardians of the child at a time suitable to both parties. The teacher will write a report documenting the issues discussed at the meeting with the child's parents/guardians. This report will be stored on the child's pupil file. If the parents/guardians refuse to meet with the class-teacher the principal will be informed and Step 3 of the process will be implemented. The class-teacher will record this on the pupil file.

Step 3

If the child continues to behave inappropriately or in the case of serious misbehaviour, the teacher and principal will meet the parents/guardians to inform them that their child's behaviour at school is inappropriate and unacceptable. The principal will outline the situation and the steps taken up to this point to resolve the issue. The child, their parents/guardians, the teacher and principal will be asked to draw up a behaviour contract for the child if deemed appropriate. All the parties involved will be asked to sign the contract signifying a commitment to adherence. The class-teacher, principal and parents/guardians may meet regularly along with the child to discuss adherence to the contract. Positive efforts to adhere to the contract will be affirmed. The principal will inform parents/guardians that if the child fails to adhere to the behaviour contract the process will have to move to the next stage (Step 4). The principal or class-teacher will document the meeting and store records on the child's pupil file.

Step 4

If the procedures followed in stages 1 to 3 have proved unsuccessful and the child continues to behave in an inappropriate and unacceptable manner the principal teacher may decide to suspend the child. The procedures for suspension are outlined below.

SUSPENSION

Suspension is defined as requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days. The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a student. The Board of Management of Knock N.S has delegated this authority to the principal, for periods of up to three days. The BoM has also authorised 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. The BoM has placed a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it.

Immediate Suspension: In exceptional circumstances the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary, where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person.

'Automatic Suspension': The Board of Management may decide, as part of the school's policy on sanctions, and following the consultation process with the Principal, parents, teachers and students, that particular named behaviours incur suspension as a sanction.

The following procedure will be followed before a decision is made to suspend a pupil:

- An investigation of the facts to confirm serious misbehaviour.
- Parents will be informed by phone or in writing about the incident.
- Parents will be given an opportunity to respond.

If suspension is still decided upon

- The principal will notify the parent in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm:
 - The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
 - The reasons for the suspension.
 - Any study programme to be followed.
 - The provision for appeal to the Board of Management.
 - The provision for appeal to the Secretary General of the DES. (Only where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days).
- Where the cumulative total of days reached 6, the NEWB will be notified.

Records and reports.

Formal written records will be kept of:

- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- The decision-making process.
- The decision and rationale for the decision.
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

EXPULSION

Procedures in respect of expulsion.

- A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the principal.
- A recommendation to the BOM by the principal.
- Consideration by the BOM of the principal's recommendations and the holding of a hearing.
- BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing.
- If BOM is of the opinion that the student will be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing, of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. The intention to expel a student does not take effect until 20 school days have elapsed after NEWB have received written notification. The NEWB will be notified using a **Notice of Intention to Expel form** which is available on www.schoolreturn.ie or from the helpline (1890 36 3666). This form will be completed and sent to **School Return Section, National Educational Welfare Board, 16-22 Green St, Dublin 7.**
- Consultations arranged by the EWO.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

APPEALS

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act 1998 section 29)

REVIEW OF CODE

The code of behaviour will be monitored and/or reviewed each year and is deemed necessary

REFERENCE TO OTHER POLICIES

- Anti bullying and Child Protection

2. Health and Safety

- a) The class teacher (with each change of class) should be informed if your child has a medical complaint, allergy or any other problem which might affect his/her performance at school.
- b) To develop good eating habits, children are encouraged to bring a nutritious lunch to school. Chewing gum is not allowed. (See Healthy Eating Policy). Please read carefully.
- c) Parents should realise the importance of a good night's sleep, if the child is to be alert and open to learning.
- d) Children should be encouraged to exercise good hygiene practices.
- e) Special attention should be paid to the cleanliness of hair. The school should be informed if you find it necessary to treat your child's hair. The co- operation of all parents is requested in this matter.
- f) In the matter of safety children should not be left alone after school while waiting to be collected. Where parents are delayed or unable to pick up their children at the usual time, arrangement should be made with someone else, well-known to the children, to collect them.
- g) Children remaining in the school yard after 3pm while waiting for parents or buses to collect them, should not in any circumstances leave the school grounds without parental consent.
- h) Infants going home at 2pm should always know who they are going home with. To avoid stress and confusion the teacher should be advised of any change in such arrangements.
- i) The school holds insurance to cover its legal liability for accidental bodily injury to students but claims made by parents in such circumstances will only be met where negligence on the part of the school is proven. However, a Personal Accident Scheme is now available to students. Parents are informed of this at the beginning of each school year.
- j) Parents who give their children permission to leave the school grounds unaccompanied should advise the school in writing in all such cases.
- k) Motorists should exercise extreme care when approaching or leaving the school grounds. To avoid the danger of congestion children should be brought to and collected from the entrance in the Car Park at the back of the school. Parents are asked **not** to park in the set down area at front of school as this will greatly obstruct traffic.
- l) Occasionally after-school activities e.g. training may be cancelled at late notice; parents should advise children in all such cases, to phone home or request their teacher to do so before school closes. Parents should ensure the School Secretary has their current phone numbers/contact numbers.

3. Relationship & Sexuality Education

RSE is an integral part of the Social, Personal and Health Education Curriculum.

The Principal and teaching staff, in consultation with the Board of Management of the School, have the task of developing and implementing a programme designed to meet the needs of the children in the school.

4. **Child Protection**

The Board of Management of Knock National School will abide by the guidelines and procedures on Child Protection as laid down by the Department of Education & Science. The guidelines outline the procedures to be followed by teachers in relation to the reporting of suspected child abuse. The School Principal is the Designated Liaison Person for child protection.

5. **Administration of Medicines**

The Board of Management requests parents to ensure that teachers be made aware in writing of any medical condition that a child may have. (See Enrolment Policy).

Some children may need to have medication administered for an on-going medical condition e.g. asthma, diabetes. In all such cases, the parents/guardians of the child should contact the School Principal/Board of Management to see if suitable agreed arrangements can be put in place to facilitate the administration of such medication. No teacher may administer medicines to any pupil except on the instructions of the Board of Management. Parents/Guardians must sign a consent form for the child to administer the medication to him/herself.

6. **Accidents**

If an accident occurs or if a child is injured inside or outside the classroom our policy is:-

- a) If accident is a minor nature, basic first aid is administered by the teacher.
- b) If a child complains of stomach, head or toothache, his/her parents will be informed as soon as possible and arrangements made to take him/her home.
- c) Serious injuries e.g. suspected fractures, nasty cuts which may require stitches etc parents or contact person is informed. Where neither is available, child is brought to local doctor.
- d) Parents should inform the class teacher/School Principal if the child has any medical condition.

7. **Data Protection**

Please refer to the school website for full details of our Data Protection Policy.

SECTION 3

1. Homework

a) The objective in giving homework is to practice and consolidate work done at school.

B The following guidelines should be helpful bearing in mind the ability of the child:-

Junior Infants	15 - 20 mins
Senior Infants	20 - 30 mins
1st - 2nd Class	30 - 40 mins
3rd - 4th Class	40 - 50 mins
5th - 6th Class	1 hr - 1 hr 20 mins

c) Set aside a quiet regular time free from noise, T.V. etc.

d) The child should be sitting comfortably at a table.

e) Homework time should include time for oral as well as written work.

f) Encourage your child to keep books and copies clean and tidy.

g) If your child is working independently - be available to help and show an interest in what is being done. Praise your child's efforts.

h) Incomplete homework may have to be completed.

i) Badly presented work may have to be redone.

j) If your child is persistently having problems with homework contact the teacher and discuss the difficulties.

k) If for any reason, homework cannot be done let the teacher know.

k) Teacher may request parents to sign the homework journal.

l) Please treat Music practice as part of normal homework. 10 minutes consistent practice a night will improve music immensely.

2. Television

a) Parents should encourage their children to watch educational programmes, documentaries, quizzes, nature programmes, news items etc.

b) Don't allow them to watch unsuitable material.

c) As television is a passive medium it does very little to develop or stimulate the imagination. This time would be better spent reading or enjoying some recreational activity.

d) Children should refrain from watching programs with unsuitable and/or adult content.

3. Learning Difficulties

Please bring to the notice of the teacher, in confidence, anything which you feel may be affecting your child's performance in school, physical, emotional, psychological etc. Please communicate regularly with the school regarding any factors that you consider likely to affect your child's progress in school. Standardised tests are administered annually; as a result of these your child may require extra support in English or Maths. The Learning Support teacher will provide this support. Our school implements the Ready, Set, Go Maths Program as an early intervention strategy.

4. School Assembly

School Assembly is held regularly. Parents will be invited to assembly once a term. This is an opportunity for the whole school to come together to pray and celebrate achievements and special occasions. It also affords time to raise issues that are a concern for the whole school and to define the roles and responsibilities of the pupils.

SECTION 4

Anti-bullying Policy

Please refer to the school website for full details of our Anti-bullying Policy.

SECTION 5

1. Book Rental Scheme

The school operates a book rental scheme from 1st - 6th class where the children may rent their books for the year at a reasonable cost. Workbooks, copies, etc. which are written on are not included in the scheme. Parents receive a booklist each June outlining procedures, conditions etc. of the scheme.

2. Sacraments

First Confession, First Holy Communion and Confirmation are important occasions in the children's lives. Parents play a very important role in helping to prepare their children for the sacraments. The Religion textbooks contain some useful information and guidelines for the parents. Special meetings for parents are organised prior to the celebration of the sacrament. We ask that parents attend and support their children while preparing for each sacrament.

3. Sport

Sport is a very important part of your child's education. The support of parents is important for the child. The fundamental aims of our P.E. programme are:-

- a) The participation of as many children as possible.
- b) The physical, psychological and social development of each child.
- c) Strive to develop qualities of respect, fair play, commitment and sportsmanship.
- d) To develop the basic P.E. skills.
- e) To emphasise the importance of taking part and enjoyment rather than winning.
- f) To develop good lifetime leisure and health habits.

A range of sporting activities are held each year. Children are encouraged to participate and avail of these opportunities.

4. Choir

At times it is necessary to have a school choir. Practices may be held during or after school. Please encourage your child/children to take part.

SECTION 6

School Information Technology Plan

We acknowledge that ICT is a central methodology in the Primary School Curriculum.

1. Aims: That each child will:-

- a) Enjoy working on the laptop/PC, experience a sense of achievement and develop a level of confidence.
- b) Appreciate what the laptop/PC can do and why it will be important in their lives.
- c) Develop the technical skills to operate hardware and software for themselves.
- d) Develop social and personal skills for independent and co-operative use of the computer.
- d) Develop skills in communication, handling information, problem solving and creative and imaginative work.
- f) Develop ways for using the computer to support enquiry, investigation and experiment.

2. Objectives:

- a) To familiarise all children with the various components.
- b) To give the children structured hands on experience using programs suitable to their abilities.
- c) To build up a dictionary of computer based words encountered during this work.
- d) To show the children how to edit and save their work.
- e) Have sufficient skills to usefully edit their own work. To have the ability to confidently use IT software to present and publish their work.
- e) To familiarise the senior pupils with e-mail and Internet and effectively use both tools to enhance learning opportunities.
- f) To use the computer as a learning tool in various curricular areas particularly in relation to Literacy and Numeracy.
- g) Be familiar with using an Interactive White Board and relevant software.

3. Classroom Management/Safety

- a) Children have access to IT suite within which there are several laptops and one White Board.
- b) A classroom based timetable is used to roster the children's time.
- c) Each classroom is equipped with a laptop and data projector. Some rooms have Interactive Whiteboards. Teachers and children have access to laptops, visualisers, digital camcorder, digital cameras to effectively integrate ICT as a methodology.
- d) Hardware is stored in the IT room/classroom and laptop trolley.
- e) A record of children's work is kept. Samples of work may be put on display.
- e) Children will be supervised at all times while using the Internet, in line with the School's Acceptable Usage Policy.
- f) Children will not have access to any Social Networking sites e.g. Bebo, Facebook while in school.
- g) Parents should inform teacher/Principal if they suspect their child/another child in school is a victim of cyber bullying.

4. Internet – Acceptable Use Policy

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the School's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner (See Policy).

5. **Conclusion**

This booklet has been drawn up to ensure the smooth and effective running of the school and for the safety and protection of the children. While some of the regulations apply directly to the children and others require the support and co- operation of the parents, all require the close co-operation of pupils, teachers and Board of Management.

The contents of this booklet should be explained to the pupils.

A copy of this document is also available on the school website.

All school policies are available on the school website www.knockns.ie