



# **Cahergal N.S.**

Scóil Náisiúnta An Chathair Sheal

**Roll No: 17807r**

## **Code of Conduct**

## **Code of Conduct – Cahergal NS**

### **Introductory Statement**

This code was formulated by the principal and the teaching staff in consultation with parents and pupils. The policy was approved by the Board.

### **Rationale**

Cahergal N.S. decided to review its Code of Behaviour because the existing policy was due for review and amendment. It is a requirement under section 23 of the Education Act that the B.O.M. of a school must prepare and make available a code of behaviour for its students. The Code is prepared in accordance with Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board

### **Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school**

In Cahergal N.S. we nurture each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment. The talents of each child are valued. This supportive learning environment can only be achieved when there is a high level of respect and co-operation between staff, parents and pupils.

**By enrolling your child in our school you are accepting our Code of Behaviour and the sanctions that we occasionally use to reprimand negative behaviour.**

The aims of the Code of Behaviour of Cahergal N.S. are:

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- To provide guidance for pupils, teachers, parents and guardians on behavioural expectations.
- To provide for the safe and effective operation of the school.
- To develop pupils' self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another, to the whole school community and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption and so optimise the quality of teaching and learning.

## **Implementation**

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Rules will be kept to a minimum and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual differences. Positive behaviour will be encouraged and affirmed. Where difficulties arise, parents/guardians will be contacted at an early stage.

## **General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour**

1. Pupils are expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to feel safe and to learn is unacceptable.
2. Pupils are expected to keep their own area, and the classroom neat and tidy at all times and to keep the playground litter free.
3. Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to wear the correct school uniform, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.
4. Pupils are expected to comply with their teachers' instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
5. Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing, stating the reason for absence.

## **Bullying**

Bullying is repeated verbal, psychological or physical aggression by an individual or group against others. The most common forms of bullying include aggressive physical contact, name-calling, intimidation, extortion, isolation and taunting. Bullying can also take place on online platforms and through the use of technological devices (Cyber-bullying). Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to cooperate fully with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy. The Code of Behaviour applies in instances of bullying.

## **Affirming Positive Behaviour**

The school recognises that a positive, affirming and respectful relationship between pupils and staff is the most effective way of promoting positive behaviour. Towards this end, every effort will be made to nurture good relationships between teachers, parents and students and to create a happy school atmosphere in the school. Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions.

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## Strategies/Incentives

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- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A written comment on a child's exercise book.
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation
- Praise in front of class group.
- Individual class merit awards, stickers or stars.
- Delegation of a special responsibility or privilege.
- Written or verbal communication with parent.
- Positive everyday interactions between teachers and students
- Effective school and class routines.
- Teacher planning and preparation.
- Exploring of social, emotional and behavioural strategies through specific class lessons as part of the Social, Personal and Health Education programme.
- School Assembly:
  - Assembly content and format will aim to inculcate pride and self esteem
  - Positive/ desirable behaviours will be acknowledged
  - Involvement of students in the preparation of classroom rules
  - Pupils' input towards the development of the code of behaviour will be acknowledged.
  - Classes will be taught the code, the rationale behind it and their part in making it work
  - Teachers will ensure that the code is implemented in a fair way
  - The support of parents will be sought in the development, review and implementation of the code of behaviour
  - Adults will model the respectful behaviour that is expected from students.

## Reward Systems

Reward systems are encouraged as part of the schools strategy for identifying and rewarding positive behaviour. They may be used on a class basis to encourage overall good behaviour or as a planned intervention to help an individual or small group to regulate their own behaviour. Consistency, fairness and transparency are encouraged in implementing these systems.

Examples of age appropriate reward systems that can be used are -

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- Individual /class visual reward systems that accumulate towards an agreed reward eg. homework pass, discretionary time
- Identifying special effort
- Achievement Certificates
- Gaeilgeoir na Seachtaine
- Sticker charts – cumulatively rewarding specific desirable behaviours (Support Teachers)
- Golden Time / Play Time.

## **1. Discouraging Misbehaviour**

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The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development.

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These may include in no particular order :

- Reasoning with pupil.
- Seeking an explanation.
- Verbal reprimanding including advice on how to improve.
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class.
- Prescribing extra work.
- Loss of privileges.
- 'On the Spot' sanctions for breaking of breach of rules regarding safety.
- Removal from yard for rough play/ disobedience of playground rules.
- Communication with parents. Note in Homework Journal / Informal chat with parents
- Referral to Principal.
- Principal communicating with parents.

**Detention Level 1:** detention in pupil's classroom / Staff Room during break. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).

### **Supervised Detention (Detention Level 2)**

Supervised detention in Staff Room involving separation from peers / prescribed work will be used to deal with unacceptable behaviour in school. This behaviour may consist of:

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- ❖ Incidents of serious defiance
  - ❖ Acts of serious & deliberate aggression
  - ❖ Incidents of disrespect to a staff member
  - ❖ Serious acts of bullying including Cyber Bullying
  - ❖ Vandalism
  - ❖ Repeatedly engaged in the following minor misbehaviours which constitute a serious misbehaviour.

## **2. Examples of minor misbehaviour**

Interrupting class work / Arriving late for school on a regular basis / Running in school building / Talking in class / Leaving seat without permission / Leaving litter around school / Not wearing correct uniform / Being discourteous/unmannerly / Not completing homework/schoolwork without good reason / Rough play in the school yard at break time /Disrespecting the adult in charge / Misuse of phones / gadgets (see Mobile Phone Policy)

### **❖ Guidelines:**

- Supervised detention will run for one, two or three days depending on the seriousness of the incident.
- Detention starts on the day following the incident.

- It involves the pupil being supervised in a classroom “Small Lunch” (10 minutes) and / or ‘Big Lunch’ (30 minutes).
  - Parents will be notified of detention by sending a supervised detention note (**As in Appendix 1**) home for signing with the pupil.
  - If it is not signed the parent will be contacted by phone.
  - Detention will go ahead even if the note is not signed.
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### **3. Behaviour Plan**

For certain pupils with specific behavioural difficulties e.g. ADHD, ODD, an Individual Behaviour Plan may be put in place. This plan will be drawn up in consultation with the parents, class teachers, support teachers and school psychologist (if appropriate).

### **4. Referral Phase**

Should negative behaviour continue following a meeting with parents, a second interview will be arranged between parents and a School Disciplinary Committee (Class Teacher, Principal and/or Deputy Principal).

- A referral for assessment may be agreed if both parties feel that this is appropriate.
- The consequences of continuing misbehaviour will be explained to parents and pupil.
- A Behavioural Contract will be negotiated and agreed between all parties.

### **5. Explanatory Notes on Suspension/Expulsion**

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child’s case. (Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as gross misbehaviour).

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents/guardians will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical/psychological information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils and staff, the Board has authorised the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

This suspension will be ratified by the Board at its next meeting or at a meeting convened specifically to deal with the matter. The procedures to be followed are outlined in **Appendix 2**.

#### Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class. Some form of age appropriate restitution will be required eg written apology.

This suspension will be ratified by the Board at its next meeting or at a meeting convened specifically to deal with the matter.

If a lengthier or further suspension is required then a meeting of the Board will be convened to address the matter.

The procedures to be followed are outlined in **Appendix 2**.

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Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

## 6. Expulsion

Expulsion is the ultimate sanction for serious misbehaviour and will only be considered by the school on very serious grounds, such as when:

- Significant steps have previously been taken to address misbehaviour and have been unsuccessful.
- student's continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to safety.
- A student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others.
- A student is responsible for serious damage to property.
- School authorities have exhausted all possibilities for changing a student's behaviour.
- The Board of Management reserves to itself the right to expel a student from the school.

The procedures to be followed are outlined in **Appendix 3**.

Note: Parents have the right to query any disciplinary decisions.

A Code of Behaviour differentiates between minor and serious offences. However, repeating a minor misbehaviour could be regarded as constituting a serious misbehaviour.

**Examples of Minor Misbehaviour**

Interrupting class work / Arriving late for school / Running in school building / Talking in class / Leaving seat without permission / Leaving litter around school / Not wearing correct uniform / Being discourteous/unmannerly / Not completing homework/schoolwork without good reason / Rough play in the school yard at break time/Disrespecting the adult in charge/ misuse of phones/ gadgets.

**Examples of Serious Misbehaviour**

Constantly disruptive in class / Telling lies / Stealing / Damaging other pupil's/school property/ Bullying / Back answering a teacher / Disobeying teachers' instructions / Using offensive language

**Examples of Gross Misbehaviour**

Bringing weapons to school/ Deliberately injuring a fellow pupil/teacher / Cyber Bullying/ Endangering self/fellow pupils/teacher in the school yard at break time/ Leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission

**School Rules (As in Appendix 4 to Policy)**

School rules are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly.

**Before/After School**

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening time of 9.15 a.m. or after the official closing time of 1.55 p.m. (infants) 2.55 p.m. (other classes) except where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management. Pupils involved in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with school behaviour policy during these times.



## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Board of Management's Responsibilities**

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- Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- Ratify the code.

### **Principal's Responsibilities**

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- Promote a positive climate in the school
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Arrange for review of the Code, as required.

### **Teachers' Responsibilities**

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

### **Pupils' Responsibilities**

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- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Be respectful at all times-towards teachers, fellow pupils, staff and visitors to the school.
- Listen to teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- Keep work area and classroom clean and tidy
- Keep school and playground litter free.
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow school and class rules.
- Wear correct school uniform.
- Move quietly around the school and avoid disturbing disturbance.
- Complete homework to the best of your ability.
- Participate in all school activities.

## Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities

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- Encourage your child to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
- Ensure that that your child attends school regularly and punctually.
- Provide the implementation.
- Ensure that your child wears his/her school uniform.
- Support the school's Healthy Eating policy.
- Provide the school with a note to explain absences/ delay
- Support and encourage your child's school work.
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and anti-bullying policy and support their
- Collect your child promptly when school is over.
- Give a contact number where you can be reached in an emergency.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where your child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect your child's progress/behaviour.

The school recognises that the parents are the primary educators and their efforts are complemented by the school. Everyone who works in the school is aware of the great responsibility and trust placed on them educating children during their formative years. A warm and friendly atmosphere between parents and teachers helps the children feel safe and secure and so enhances their school lives. **The school needs the support of parents in order to meet realistic expectations with regard to good behaviour and discipline.**

Parents can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to abide by the School Rules, by visiting the school for parent-teacher meetings and by ensuring that home-work is allocated due time and effort by the children.

Additions or amendments can be made to the Code if the need arises during the year.

## Success Criteria

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The success of the Code of Behaviour will be judged on feedback from teachers, parents, pupils as well as observation of behaviour in class rooms, corridors, yard

Implementation Date

Effective from June 2016

Timetable for Review

The Policy will be reviewed every 2 years or more often if the need arises.

Ratification and Communication

Policy was reviewed and ratified by the B.O.M. on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson of B.O.M.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Principal

The ratified policy will be circulated to all parents and will be circulated to new parents when they enrol their child.

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## **Appendix 1**

### Supervised Detention

Supervised Detention is a formal sanction for dealing with serious and unacceptable behaviour in school. It will be used to deal with

1. acts of serious and deliberate aggression
2. incidents of serious defiance
3. incidents of gross disrespect to a staff member
4. serious acts of bullying
5. vandalism
6. repeated incidents of minor misbehaviours which constitute a serious misbehaviour

Guidelines:

- Detention will run for one, two or three days depending on the seriousness of the incident.
- The duration of detention will be decided by the supervising teacher in consultation with the principal.
- Detention starts on the day following the incident
- It involves the pupil being supervised in a classroom during “Small Lunch” (10 minutes) and Lunch Time (30 minutes)
- Parents will be notified by sending the attached note home for signing with the pupil. If it is not signed the note will be posted home. Detention will proceed in any case.

Roles & responsibilities

Supervising Teacher

It is the responsibility of the teacher on duty to:

1. Investigate the incident before making a judgement
2. Isolate the child if necessary
3. Record the incident in the incident copy.
4. Inform class teacher/principal of incident.
5. Discuss the incident/detention with class teacher and principal. Investigate.

It is the responsibility of the Principal to:

1. Allocate Detention Supervision
2. Send the Detention Note home
3. Request meeting with parents if necessary.

## Appendix 2

### Procedures for suspension

#### Normal procedure for suspension

1. Where a preliminary assessment confirms serious misbehaviour, the school will
  - Inform the student and parents about the complaint
  - Explain how it will be investigated and that it could result in a suspension.
  - Give parents and student an opportunity to respond to the complaint.
2. If parents fail to attend or respond the school will make contact again
  - to explain the seriousness of the allegation and rescheduling a meeting.
  - to make clear that a decision on the matter will be reached whether or not they attend or respond
3. The Board will consider all of the details that come to light as a result of the assessment of the situation and will consider whether or not to impose / ratify a suspension.
4. Should a suspension be imposed the principal will notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will outline
  - The period of suspension.
  - The dates when it will begin and end
  - The reason for the suspension
  - Any study programme to be followed.
  - The arrangements for returning to school including commitments to be entered into by student and parents.
  - The provision for an appeal to the Secretary General of the Dept. of Education & Science where the total number of days suspension exceeds 20
5. The school will put together a plan to re-integrate the student following the suspension.
  - A staff member will be appointed to address the need to catch up on work missed.
  - They will also deal with anger or resentment regarding the suspension. They will assist the student to make a fresh start.

#### Procedure for immediate suspension

1. In certain cases immediate suspension may be considered by the Principal. This has been sanctioned by the Board of Management. When this happens a preliminary investigation will indicate the need for suspension
  - Parents will be notified and arrangements made to collect the student from school
  - The formal investigation will begin immediately following the suspension
  - All of the procedures for normal suspension from point 3 (above) will apply to immediate suspension
  - Parents will be informed that the Board of Management will consider all of the details

If the total number of days suspension exceeds 20 the Education Welfare Officer will be notified.

## Appendix 3

### Procedures for Expulsion

1. A detailed investigation is carried out under the direction of the Principal.  
In line with fair procedures the principal will:
  - Inform the student and parents about the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
  - Invite parents and student to a meeting where they can respond to allegations before a decision is reached or a sanction imposed.
  - If parents fail to attend, write again explaining seriousness of allegation and rescheduling meeting.
  - Explain that the school is required to come to a decision on the matter whether or not they attend.
  
2. A recommendation is made to the Board of Management by the Principal  
The principal will make a recommendation to the BOM and also
  - inform the parents and the student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
  - will ensure that parents have records of: the allegations against the student; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
  - provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parents
  - notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing
  - advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
  - ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.
  
3. The Board considers the Principals recommendation and holds a hearing  
The Board will
  - review the initial investigation to ensure that fair procedure was followed.
  - hold a hearing if expulsion is to be considered.
  - at the hearing, principal & parents will present their case to the Board in each others presence.
  - allow for each party to question directly the evidence of the other
  - remain impartial between Principal & student.
  
4. Board of Management deliberates and comes to a decision  
The Board will
  - decide whether or not allegations are substantiated
  - decide whether expulsion is the appropriate sanction
  - come to a decision in the absence of principal, parents & student.
  - If expulsion is considered, the Board must notify the EWO in writing.
  - 20 days notice will be given from the date of receipt of the notice by the EWO to the implementation of the expulsion.

- The board will inform the parents in writing of its decision to expel and that the EWO will be notified.
5. Consultation arranged by Education Welfare Officer  
The E.W.O. will
- make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the principal, the parents and the student.
  - convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend.
  - try to negotiate agreement re another intervention as an alternative to expulsion
  - endeavour to make alternative educational arrangements should this fail.
6. Confirmation of decision to expel  
When the 20 day period has elapsed the Board
- will confirm or otherwise the decision to expel.
  - inform the parents of this
  - inform parents of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the DES
  - supply them with the standard form of appeal.
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## Appendix 4

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### Guidelines for Classroom Rules

- Have Manners
- Be kind to everyone in the class
- Listen and learn
- Show respect to teachers
- Follow teachers instruction
- Keep classroom tidy
- No talking while teacher is teaching or correcting
- Hand up before you speak.
- Do homework and classwork well
- Get into my desk after the bell
- Remain seated if teacher is out.
- Never use bad language
- Show respect to other pupils
- Always have required books
- Don't interfere with school or other pupils property

### School Rules

1.Pupils must be present and ready for school work at 9.15a.m.. each day. Classes finish at 2.55p.m.The School Management cannot accept responsibility for children arriving early or staying late.

2.The school day ends for Junior and Senior Infants at 1.55p.m. and they must be collected at that time or travel home on the private bus.

3.Pupils are expected to wear school uniform .Please clearly mark cardigans, jumpers and coats as they are likely to be misplaced.

4.Pupils are not allowed to wear any earrings other than small studs, or to have any sharp objects in their possession due to the dangers involved during play and games.

5.No pupil may leave the school grounds during the school day for any reason unless a written request is received from the parent.



- 6.Children are expected to behave in an orderly manner at all times.
- 7.Climbing walls and cycling in the school grounds is not allowed.
- 8.Pupils must not interfere with or damage school property, teachers' property or other pupils' property. Damage to same may have to be compensated for by parents.
- 9.Pupils must obey the instructions of teachers and classroom assistants at all times.
- 10.Pupils are expected to show school staff respect, courtesy, consideration and tolerance to teachers, visiting teachers, visitors and other pupils. Likewise similar behaviour is expected when on tours and outings.
- 11.Persistent disruptive talking and answering out of turn ,along with sniggering at other children is not acceptable. Unnecessary moving about the classroom disrupts the teacher and wastes pupils' learning time.
- 12.Bad language, bullying and fighting are forbidden.
- 13.The school and grounds must be kept free of litter at all times.
- 14.Chewing gum is prohibited.
- 15.Mobile phones are not allowed in school. In exceptional circumstances if a child needs to bring their phone it has to be handed up to the class teacher in the morning and will be returned at home time. If necessary pupils will be allowed to contact parents using the school phone. (see Mobile Phone Policy)
- 16.Pupils must follow the "bell" instruction, stay in designated area, and may leave the yard only with a teacher's permission
- 17.Pupils must play safely at all times. Anti-social, dangerous or hurtful behaviour is forbidden, (e.g. wrestling, headlocks, piggy backs, bullying, intimidation, teasing, jeering, fighting, spitting, kicking, charging in groups, bad language, exclusion).
- 18.Pupils should leave school in an orderly manner. Pupils must stay inside the school gate until parents arrive.
19. Pupils are not allowed run or play football before or after school.