

# Ballylooby National School

## Code of Behaviour

Reviewed and Ratified by the Board of Management on 5/12/2018

### **Introductory statement:**

- In devising a Code of Behaviour for Ballylooby National School, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of the school, thus aiming to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.
- Every effort will be made by the teachers and staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school, offering a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are utilised for the teachers.
- The school recognises the variety of differences, which exist between pupils and the need to accommodate these differences.
- It is acknowledged that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation between and among the educational partners, teachers, pupils and parent/ guardians
- The rules are kept to a minimum and are positively stated in terms of what the children should do. (See Appendix A)
- All efforts will be made to match the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and interests of each pupil to help reduce boredom, lack of

interest and lack of progress.

### **Rationale:**

- The purpose of this policy is to provide clear and practical guidance on our code of behaviour for teachers, staff, pupils, parents/ guardians and any other relevant persons.

The policy will:

- Identify standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school
- Detail measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards
- Set out procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school and the grounds for removing a suspension imposed
- Set out the procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school

### **Aims and Objectives**

In implementing this policy and the appended school rules we hope:

- To create a positive and learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.

- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- To assist parent/ guardians and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

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## **Roles and Responsibilities:**

### **Responsibility**

The responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the partners in education i.e. the Board of Management, Principal and teaching staff, pupils and the parents/ guardians of the pupils in Ballylooby NS.

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

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

### ***Principal's Responsibilities***

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner and arrange for review of the Code, as required.
- Discuss and review breaches of Code of Behaviour that arise with other staff member when necessary.

### ***Teacher's Responsibilities***

- Support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil and affirm good work.
- 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 misbehaviour (Behaviour Tracker)
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parent/ guardians when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern

### ***Pupils' Responsibilities***

- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Respect the school property and the property of other pupils.
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Follow school and class rules.

### ***Parents'/Guardians' Responsibilities***

- Be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and support its implementation.
- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually and in full compliance with the school dress code.
- Co-operate with teachers in circumstances where the child's

behaviour is causing difficulties for others.

- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour.
- Be interested in, support and encourage the children's schoolwork.

### **School Rules**

Respect for person and property and the need for order and boundaries are the underlying principles for our school rules. Our Code of Behaviour focuses on promoting good behaviour, which is built on respect – for ourselves, for each other and for our school. There are a number of specific rules regarding punctuality etc. which are included in Appendix A to this policy, but in general our rules can be expressed as:

- Respect for yourself
- Respect for others
- Respect for your school
- Leaving the grounds without permission is not allowed
- Bad language is not allowed

Behaviour that does not conform to one or more of these rules can be considered unacceptable. Within each rule we have certain expectations

### **Acknowledging Good Behaviour**

Good behaviour is encouraged and acknowledged regularly within the classroom and in the playground area. Rewards may be used as appropriate at the teacher's discretion.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal.
- A visit to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation.
- A word of praise in front of a group or class.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Homework off for a particular group/child.
- A mention to parent/ guardian, written or verbal communication.
- 'Bualadh Bos' in class or a special mention at assembly.
- 'Praise Time': a special mention in class to pupils who make an extra effort to be nice to others.

Field trips and annual school tours will be reserved for those who have consistently strived to behave well.

### **Dealing with Minor Issues**

Pupils are encouraged from a young age to work towards resolving issues themselves and the skills to do so are both taught and modelled by teachers.

The school operates a protocol of resolving issues at the lowest level possible. If a parent/ guardian has a concern the first step in dealing with the issue is to approach the class teacher.

Parents/ guardians who wish to meet with the class teacher/principal are requested to ring and set up an appointment that is suitable to all concerned. Similarly, a teacher who needs to speak to a parent/ guardian will also set up an appointment.

Initially instances of misbehaviour will be dealt with by the class teacher. This will include children being advised about their

behaviour and about how to improve. Teachers can use a problem solving approach in generating solutions & strategies with the pupil. Discussion about behaviour and its consequences will form part of SPHE lessons at all class levels. Teachers will actively promote good behaviour and aim to “catch” repeated offenders at activities where they can give positive feedback, thus promoting better behaviour.

However, where these strategies have failed and where misbehaviour is more serious or persistent it will be necessary to involve others including the Principal, parent/ guardians/ and the Board of Management. The Principal and staff may also seek assistance from NEPS, SESS, HSE or other agencies.

### **Classification of Misbehaviours**

Misbehaviour falls into one of three categories – minor, major or gross. Teachers and/or the Principal will make judgements based on a common sense approach having regard to the age or vulnerability of the child and the gravity and frequency of any misbehaviour as follows:

#### **Minor Misbehaviour**

The following are examples of minor misbehaviour:

*Interrupting class work / Running in the school building / Littering around the school / Being discourteous or unmannerly / Not completing homework without good reason/ Inappropriate behaviour or gestures / Name calling / Minor infringement of the school rules / Talking out of turn / Not wearing appropriate uniform*

*(This list is not exhaustive)*

**Teachers may take the following steps when dealing with Minor Misbehaviour**

- Reasoning with the pupil
- Verbal reprimand;
- Time out (classroom or yard);
- Note from class teacher to be signed by parent/ guardian;
- Record instances of yard misbehaviour in the Yard Behaviour Book and informing class teacher.

**Repeated occurrences of Minor Misbehaviour will be dealt with as follows, using one or more strategy:**

### **Phase 1**

- Temporary separation from peers (within the classroom);
- Additional work
- Referral to another teacher/classroom with specific work
- Privileges are withdrawn
- Detention for part of or all of break time
- Reflection sheet ‘Stop and Think Sheet’ (describing incident). This is signed by the pupil and teacher and sent home to update and inform parent(s)/guardian(s). It is then signed by a parent/ guardian and returned to school (kept on file by teacher)

### **Phase 2**

- Child will be sent to the Principal.
- Child may be placed on a daily report.
- Formal letter or phone call from school Principal informing parent/ guardian of continuous misbehaviour.
- Denial of participation in some class activity e.g. school tour,



sports events

- Class teacher and/or Principal will meet with one/both parents/ guardians
- Chairperson of the Board of Management informed and parents/ guardians requested to meet with Chairperson or other designated Board member and the Principal/ Vice Principal.

### **Major Misbehaviour**

The following are examples of major misbehaviour:

*Constantly disruptive in class / Telling lies / Blackmail / Stealing / Persistently not working to full potential / Damaging others' property / Bullying / Showing disrespect towards a staff member or fellow pupil / Continuously not completing homework / Endangering self or fellow pupils in the class or the yard / Using unacceptable language of a foul or sexual nature / Inappropriate use of the internet/ Deliberate, continual disobedience/ Spitting*

*(This list is not exhaustive)*

*All incidents of bullying will be dealt with as outlined in the school's Anti-bullying policy. (See separate policy)*

**Teachers will take steps as outlined for Phase 1 or Phase 2 above, but depending on misbehaviour may proceed to the following steps when dealing with Major Misbehaviour;**

- Child will be sent to the Principal;
- An account of all incidents will be recorded on the Incident Report Form and retained in the pupil's file.
- Formal letter from school Principal informing parent/ guardian of

misbehaviour;

- Class teacher or Yard duty teacher **and** Principal will meet with one/both parents/ guardians;
- Chairperson of Board of Management informed and parents/ guardians requested to meet with Chairperson or other designated Board member and the Principal;

**Repeated occurrences of Major Misbehaviour will be dealt with as follows:**

- Parent/ guardians will be invited to meet class teacher, the Principal/Vice Principal and/or the chairperson to discuss repeated major incidents of misbehaviour;
- Suspension will be used as a sanction **where all attempts at reasoning with the pupil have failed and where all other efforts of the school in consultation with the parents or guardians** of the pupil have failed to achieve a satisfactory conclusion. Communications to parents/ guardians regarding the suspension of a pupil, or the possibility of considering suspension as a sanction, will be in writing. (Copies of all correspondence will be retained).
- May be classified as gross misbehaviour.

### **Gross Misbehaviour**

The following are examples of gross misbehaviour:

*Bringing weapons or dangerous substances to school / Smoking / Persistently engaging in activities which have been identified by members of staff as dangerous or inappropriate / Leaving school premises without permission / Deliberately injuring any member of the school community / Setting fire to school property / Purposely activating school fire alarm/ Deliberately leaving taps (fire hose) etc. turned on / Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff or a pupil; (e.g. physical violence, striking, biting, spitting) / Vandalism / Serious inappropriate*

*behaviour / Assault*

*(This list is not exhaustive)*

### **Teachers may take the following steps when dealing with Gross Misbehaviour**

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

### **Suspension**

#### **Procedures for Suspension:**

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a pupil and may do so for up to 10 consecutive school days at one time or for 20 days in a school year. The authority to suspend a pupil for up to 3 consecutive school days has been delegated by the Board of Management to the Principal. A single incident of misbehaviour may

be grounds for automatic suspension.

### **Procedures for Suspension Other Than for an Automatic Suspension:**

When a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the principal will:

Inform the student and his/her parents/ guardians about the complaint either by phone or in writing

- Give the pupil and the parent/ guardians the opportunity to respond
- Place the pupil in detention until a determination is made about suspension

Parents/ guardians will be given an opportunity to respond, to make their case for lessening the sanction and for the school to explore with parents/ guardians how best to address the pupil's behaviour.

A pupil will not be suspended for more than 3 days, except in exceptional circumstances where the principal recommends to the Board of Management that a period of suspension longer than 3 days is needed to achieve a particular objective. The Board of Management considers the following circumstances are ones where the Principal would consider recommending 5 days rather than 3 days as an appropriate suspension. Any one of the following on its own may be considered appropriate to warrant a recommendation of 5 days suspension:

- When the pupil fails to recognise or acknowledge the seriousness of the events leading to a proposed suspension
- Where injury has been inflicted on another person to such a degree of severity to warrant medical attention and/or a visit to a

doctor

- Where the pupil continues to display, hostility or aggression

If a suspension longer than 3 days is being recommended by the Principal the matter will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes. The Board of Management has authorised the Principal in writing, with the approval of the Chairman of the Board of Management, to impose a suspension of up to 5 days in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance already provided to the Principal concerning such suspensions.

The Board of Management will not impose a suspension of more than 10 consecutive school days on a pupil at any one time.

The Principal will notify the parent/ guardians in writing of the decision to suspend their child and the letter will confirm:

- The period of suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- The reasons for the suspension
- Any study programme to be followed
- The arrangements for returning to school including any commitment to be entered into by the pupil and the parent/ guardians
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills

A suspension may be removed or altered either immediately or retrospectively if the Board of Management decides, or, if the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills directs it to be removed under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007

Where the total number of days for which a student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days, the parents/guardians may appeal the suspension under Section 29 Education Act 1998 as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007

### **Procedures for Automatic Suspensions**

The Principal has been authorised by the Board of Management to impose an automatic suspension where the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff or any other person or for any one of the named behaviours listed below:

- The use of an offensive weapon or material to inflict injury or harm on another person or to threaten to inflict injury or harm on another person
- The defiant refusal to carry out the instruction of a teacher
- To protect the safety of the pupil or other pupils or staff
- The deliberate destruction of school property

In the circumstances of an automatic suspension, the parent/guardians will be notified and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected. No pupil will ever be sent home alone.

In the circumstances where an automatic suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for one or more of the named behaviours, a preliminary investigation will be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. A formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of an automatic suspension during which the suspended pupil will be invited to the school to be interviewed by arrangement in the school either in the presence of his/her parents/ guardians.

### **Reintegrating the Pupil**

The Principal will arrange for a member of staff to provide support for the pupil during the reintegration process.

### **Recording and Reporting of Suspension:**

A record of the behaviour and sanction imposed will be kept by the class teacher and will include:

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

The school will then expect the same behaviour of this pupil as of all other pupils.

The Principal, if acting on the written delegated authority to suspend, will report all suspensions to the school Chairperson immediately and will also report to the Board of Management with

the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

The Principal will report all suspensions to Tusla in accordance with reporting guidelines (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 21(4) (a)).

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school and to ensure that the use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

## **Expulsion**

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil. This authority is a reserved function of the Board of Management and is not delegated to the Principal.

### **Expulsion procedures:**

Before expelling a pupil, the school will have taken significant steps to address the behaviour and to avoid the expulsion of a pupil including, as appropriate:

- Meeting with parents/ guardians and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour
- Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of the behaviour, if it should persist
- Ensuring that all other possible options have been tried
- Seeking the assistance of support agencies, if appropriate

A proposal by the Board of Management to expel a student requires



serious grounds, such that:

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

### **Expulsion for a First Offence:**

The Board of Management reserves the right to expel pupils for a first offence for the following behaviours:

- A serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Possession and/or supply of illegal drugs to other students in the school
- Serious theft
- Sexual assault

### **Procedures for Expulsion other than for a First Offence:**

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the following procedural steps will apply:

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal and/or Deputy Principal.
- A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal

- Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing
- Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing
- Consultations arranged by an Education Welfare Officer of the National Educational Welfare Board
- Confirmation of the decision to expel

### **Misbehaviour on the Yard**

To pre-empt incidents of misbehaviour on yard, our whole school approach focuses on **RESPECT** – respect for yourself, respect for others, respect for our school. The examples outlined previously of minor, major and gross misbehaviour are equally unacceptable in the schoolyard. We encourage pupils to take responsibility should they accidentally hurt another child, thus showing respect for that individual.

Incidents of yard misbehaviour or verbal abuse of staff/ pupils will be dealt with as follows:

The staff member on duty who notices misbehaviour will do the following;

- Inform teacher on duty.
- Teacher will record misbehaviour and may impose a period of “time out” where the student will be asked to remain in a specified place until told to return to play;
- Inform the class teacher.

When three instances of misbehaviour are recorded over a four week period, an appropriate sanction (e.g. detention for part of or all of lunch time) will be imposed and parent(s)/ guardian(s) will be notified. Repeat occurrences will be subject to one or more strategies

outlined previously in Phase 1 and 2.

## **Bullying**

In addition to our Code of Behaviour, the school also maintains Our Anti-Bullying Policy.

Bullying is repeated aggression – physical, verbal or emotional – conducted by an individual or group against another or others.

The school takes particular care to intervene early in responding to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.

## **Absences/ Communication**

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 18, requires parents/ guardians to notify the school in writing explaining the reason for a child’s absence. This procedure is outlined in the enrolment pack.

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 21(4) requires a School Principal to inform an Educational Welfare Officer in writing if the aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent from school during a school year is 20 days or more. Additionally, Section 21(4) authorises the School Principal to notify an Educational Welfare Officer if, in the opinion of the Principal, a child “is not attending school regularly”.

It is necessary on occasions for a variety of reasons for pupils to leave school early. Written notification of this, outlining the reason(s) must be given to the teacher in advance. Parents/ guardians are required to sign out their child at the office. Under no circumstances are pupils allowed to leave the school building unaccompanied to meet parent/ guardians or others offsite.

## **When the Code of Behaviour Applies**

Our Code of Behaviour applies at all events organised by, on behalf of, or in the name of Ballylooby National School.

- during school hours,
- at all extra curricular classes,
- at swimming classes/school games,
- at School Concerts,
- on School Tours,
- Church e.g. Communion & Confirmation.

### **Implementation**

- From

### **Communication**

- On enrolment
- Copy to all other parent/ guardians

### **Review**

- 2020 or earlier if need arises

## **Appendix A**

### **SCHOOL RULES**

Respect for yourself!    Respect for others!    Respect for your school!

If a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that the rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and wisely.

#### **Respect for Yourself**

**Uniform:** The full school uniform must be worn in school except on occasions when the pupils have been directed to do otherwise.

The school tracksuit may only be worn on PE days, unless otherwise stated by the teacher.

An explanatory note must be produced if the uniform is not worn.

**Earrings:** Stud earrings and a watch are the only pieces of jewellery permitted to be worn.

**Health & Safety:** School rules regarding health and safety must be complied with at all times

**Cigarettes, alcohol and drugs:** Under no circumstances are pupils permitted to be in possession of or under the influence of any of these items.

**Personal property:** Children must have their names on their coats, jumpers and other personal property such as school books, copies, lunch boxes etc.

**Leaving School Grounds:** Once inside the school gates, in the

interest of the safety of pupils, no child is allowed to leave the school grounds unless collected by an adult.

## **Respect for Others**

**Respect and courtesy:** All pupils are expected to treat teachers, staff, their fellow pupils and any visitors with respect and courtesy at all times. The use of foul and unacceptable language, e.g. swearing and language of an inappropriately sexual nature, and/or any form of bullying is unacceptable.

**Illness:** Any infectious illness should be notified to the school immediately.

**Property of Others:** Pupils must respect the property of their fellow pupils.

**Punctuality:** The official opening time of the school is 9:20 am. Supervision before school is from 9.10am to 9.20am. Formal class for infants ends at 2pm. Classes for the other pupils end at 3pm.

**Absences:** A reason for every absence of a child must be submitted to the school in writing. This is a legal requirement of the TUSLA. If a child wishes to leave the school early, notification must be given to the class teacher.

## **Respect for your School**

**School Property and the School Environment:** Pupils must respect all school property, and keep the school environment clean and litter free.

**Forbidden Items:** Chewing Gum, Tipp-Ex, Toy Guns and any dangerous item.

**Mobile Phones:** Mobile phones may not be used by pupils in school

or on the school grounds.

### **BEHAVIOUR IN CLASS**

- Pupils must have all books, required instruments and materials.
- Pupils are expected to work to the best of their ability and to present written exercises neatly.
- Pupils are to show respect for their classmates and to follow their teacher's instructions.
- Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others is unacceptable.

### **BEHAVIOUR OUT OF CLASS**

- Pupils must not behave in any way which endangers themselves or others, either in the environs of the school, on field trips, school tours, in extracurricular activities in school hours or outside of them.
- Any instructions or directions given by the supervising teacher are to be complied with.
- Children must line up promptly in an orderly fashion at commencement of school and the end of breaks.
- Any form of threatening behaviour is unacceptable. If children are victims of bullying, being threatened or blackmailed, teachers must be told so that the matter can be dealt with effectively.

### **HOMEWORK**

- It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis. Teachers shall make every effort to match the curriculum to the aptitude of the pupils. It follows therefore that homework

assignments may vary from pupil to pupil.

- Parents/ guardians are strongly encouraged to take an active interest in their child's homework.
  
- Parent/ guardians should satisfy themselves that all home assignments are completed before signing homework notebooks each night.