

# **Code of Behaviour – Ballinure National School.**

## ***Introductory Statement-***

This revised policy was formulated by the Principal /staff and Board of Management of Ballinure national School as part of our ongoing planning process. The draft policy was passed to the Parent Association of the school for their input and views. The parent body of the school were invited to view the policy and to offer suggestions and comments which were then taken into consideration.

The pupils of the school were involved in drawing up classroom rules which will apply in each class situation ,taking into account the various age groups within the school.

In particular the senior pupils will be given an opportunity to discuss the need for and the relevance of a School Code of Behaviour,thereby giving them a sense of duty within the school community –to set a good example and to promote positive behaviour at all times.

**Rationale-** The Ed.Welfare Act 2000 ,sets out the law in Ireland in relation to discipline in State primary schools. Under the act the Board of Management of the school is obliged to draw up a code of behaviour for students stating the disciplinary rules and procedures.This policy is based on the belief that every child has a right to an education in a relatively disruption free environment and that every teacher has a right to carry out his/her teaching duties in a positive ,encouraging environment..Rules are necessary to ensure the safety of every pupil and to allow each child to reach his/her potential in the school.Is is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff, pupils ,parents and Board Of Management.

**Link to Mission Statement-** It is stated in our mission statement that we aim to nurture and promote positive self esteem among our pupils.to develop a respect for humanity and an awareness of difference.It is also stated that our pupils should be helped to know right from wrong which we acknowledge is a learning process and with a positive school environment ,every child will be helped to understand the need for good behaviour.

As our school has a **Catholic ethos** ,the Christian message of –**Treat others as you would like to be treated ,will permeate all our school activities .**

As the motto of our school is –**Spreagadh/Moladh/ Comhoibriu** – great emphasis will be placed on encouraging /praising /highlighting desired behaviour.

## **Aims of the Policy-**

- To define a code of behaviour for our school –giving consideration to the particular needs and circumstances of our school .
- To specify our school rules and the desired behaviour which we will all strive towards.
- To outline the type of behaviour that is unacceptable.
- To outline the nature of disciplinary sanctions to be imposed.
- To define the procedure to be followed before a student is suspended .
- To involve all members of the school community in promoting positive behaviour.

## School rules:

School hours **9.20am- 2pm** (infants)  
**9.20 ---3pm** (1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>)

1. **Respect** yourself ,your fellow pupils,your teachers and all
2. Wear the **full** school uniform.Friday is tracksuit day.Please be aware of the need for an appropriate dress code and appropriate clothing and footwear /jewellery for P.E. class and for normal. physical activity in the school.
2. No chewing gum in school.
3. No playing on the road.
4. No makeup .
5. No hurling /football on the concrete/no ball playing before or after school.
6. Classroom rules to be respected and obeyed.
7. Complete assigned homework with care and attention and to the best of your ability..
- 9.Treat others as you would like to be treated yourself-**Bullying is not tolerated in our school .(ref.anti-bullying policy)**
- 10.No phones,i-pods. psp -these will be confiscated ,parents will be required to call to the school to retrieve them .(unless required for ed. use and instructed to bring same)
- 11.Respect the school property and the school environment,**Remember we are a Green Flag school.Be proud of this.**
- 12Be courteous, attentive and determined to do your best,
- 13 .Try you best to get on with others.Everyone has a **right** to feel safe and to be happy in school.Everyone has the **right** to play and join in a game with their peers , if they wish.
- 14 Remember the three R's –Respect the rules. Respect others , Remember rights-**

### The three R:s of desired behaviour for our school-

- a) **Respect the school rules, they are there for your safety and wellbeing. Respond to the school bell.Line up quietly and carefully.**
- b) **Respect others- greet all school staff and visitors respectfully.Stand back to allow adults pass , answer respectfully when spoken to.**
- c) **Speak courteously at all times- No bad or inappropriate language or written messages.**

#### **Respect the property of others-**

**Play together in a fair manner and obey the instructions of the teacher on yard duty. Remember to include others- no one person owns a game or can control a game , we must take turns and include everyone.Remember also that there has to be a winner and a loser in games of football, hurling etc.Some of the great lessons of life are first learned in school /on the playing pitch.Accepting fair play ,victory and defeat graciously is to be commended. Accepting and respecting that we are all individuals and that even though we might not always agree with someone's viewpoint ,we must respect that everyone has a right to an opinion.**

c.) Everyone has rights, the right to play, the right to learn ,the right to be listened to ,the right to be understood, the right to be happy in school – Respect the rights of others.

## Unacceptable/Inappropriate Behaviour-

Any behaviour which is contrary to the school code and or causes injury/harm/upset to another person is deemed unacceptable- hitting, kicking, spitting, throwing objects,name calling ,**bullying of any kind is not acceptable.**

Any behaviour which **is ongoing and is causing a disturbance in the classroom and is impinging on the rights of other children to learn and preventing the teacher from carrying out his/her duties effectively is unacceptable** eg constant talking , distracting others, messing in class, failure to co-operate , disrespectful attitude.

**We promote positive behaviour by.....**

All parties in the school community have a role to play....

**Teachers will....**




- a) Treat pupils fairly and respectfully.
- b) Differentiate the curriculum to meet the various needs and abilities within a class situation thereby aiming to elicit a positive response from pupils and to minimise on instances of misbehaviour.
- c) Keep a record of class behaviour, noting instances of ongoing misbehaviour and also noting improvements,
- d) Keep a record of all serious incidents which occur in the yard.
- e) Speak to pupils about respect and explain how it underlines all our dealings with others.
- f) Deal with conflict when and where it arises , following the procedure laid down in this policy.
- g) Praise and highlight positive desired behaviour .Use of rewards,class dojo record system etc.
- h) Supervise pupils during break and lunch time in so far as is humanly possible,in cases where a teacher is absent , a substitute teacher will be employed where such cover is provided for by the Dept. Of Ed/Science.
- i) Monitor yard play where issues have been reported .
- j) Discuss behaviour issues and aim to minimise incidents of misbehaviour.
- k) Communicate with parents either verbally or by letter re- behaviour
- l) In instances of Parental Complaints ,procedure for dealing with complaints as outlined in the C.P.S.M.A book will be adhered to .

School has a statement on promoting Positive Behaviour.

## Parents are requested to...

- a) Speak to your child/children about the importance of **good behaviour** .
- b) Explain the necessity for rules-**read through the school rules with your child/and encourage compliance with them.**
- c) Ensure your child understands that all actions have consequences-if we disregard the school rules then certain sanctions will apply.
- d) Ensure your child has what is needed for class—copies, pencils, colours ,this minimises the likelihood of disturbance in the class,need to borrow things, things going missing etc,Label all your child’s belongings-
- e) Help and encourage your child with their school work- speak positively about the school and praise your child’s efforts- Expect the best from your child and praise every genuine effort.Remember focus on the positive behaviour.
- f) Encourage your child to speak to you about school and speak to the class teacher and principal if you feel your child is experiencing difficulties in class.
- g) **Make a prior appointment** to meet with the teacher or principal , **phone during school hours** and ,mention the nature of your query/concern and a suitable time will be arranged to meet with you to discuss the matter .
- h) Notify the school either verbally or in writing when your child is absent or leaving the school during the day for any reason.
- i) Make sure your child is **on time for school -9.20am** ,and **collect your child on time** ,school finishes **at 3pm** ,parents should be there to collect children .
- j) Co-operate with the school and work with staff to help solve problems.

## Board of Management will..

-  Support the school staff in the implementation of this policy,
-  Review this policy as the need arises.
-  Be briefed by the principal on matters requiring attention – when a matter is referred to the Board ,then they will follow the policy guidelines.

## How are instances of misbehaviour dealt with?

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. The Code also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed.

## Level One

### *Level 1: Behaviours*

Level 1 behaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and common areas. Students learn through their mistakes. To this extent, responses to the daily

behaviours, which occur in school, will be developmentally appropriate, instructive and positive. Children will be taught what is expected and how they should behave. Listed below are some examples of the types of Behaviour that are included in Level 1. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers
- Running in the hallways
- Disturbing the work or play of others
- Disrespectful language, tone, or manner
- Ignoring staff requests

### ***Level 1: Disciplinary Actions***

Consequences for Level 1 behaviour are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Teachers will discipline students at level 1. Some examples of Level 1 responses are:

- Verbal reprimand/reminder(s)
- Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
- Prescribing additional work
- Loss of privileges e.g. representing school at sporting activity.
- Parent contact
- Behaviour contract

### ***Level 1 Supportive Interventions***

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

- Classroom-based interventions, such as Open Circle or class meetings, with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members)
- Discussion of behaviour with the child
- Informal notes regarding incident/intervention/date. This information would be useful should a problem persist.

## **Level Two**

### ***Level 2: Behaviours***

Level 2 behaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and well being of the students and staff. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 2. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Behaviour which is dangerous to self or others (e.g. shoving, pushing, hitting)
- Intentionally damaging school or personal property
- Stealing
- Cheating
- Use of profanity
- Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin
- Disrespectful language or behaviour toward an adult
- Possession or use of dangerous toys or sporting equipment (e.g. bow and arrows, any kind of knives, etc.)
- Leaving the school without permission during the school day or leaving the care of school staff during school outings.

### ***Level 2: Disciplinary Actions***

The disciplining of students for Level 2 behaviour is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour and developmentally appropriate levels. The disciplinary actions at Level 2 are administered by the Principal, and include the formal notification of parents, with written documentation. Some examples of Level 2 responses are:

- In school supervised detention
- Report submitted to the Board of Management
- Meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Suspension from school of one to five days, depending on the severity of the Behaviour
- Implementation of extensive Behaviour management plan

### ***Level 2: Supportive Interventions***

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

- Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Assistant Principal or Principal.
- Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education.
- Referral of a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent).

## **Level Three**

### ***Level 3: Behaviours***

Level 3 behaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal well being of the pupils and staff of the school. They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment. Situations, which include illegal activity, may result in contact with the Garda Síochána after parental involvement. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 3. Please note that the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Setting fires
- Intentional possession or use of weapons
- Violent fighting or intentionally causing physical harm to others
- Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, physical condition, handicap, or ethnic origin

### ***Level 3: Disciplinary Actions***

Behaviour at Level 3 may involve suspension from school. The length of the suspension will depend upon the severity and frequency of the specific Behaviour. Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension is contained in this document. Level 3 responses:

- **Suspension from school for one to five days:**  
This response will occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour or Level 2 behaviour of significant severity. The Principal following due process and procedure, can issue a suspension.
- **Suspension from school for five to ten days:**  
This response will occur with the repeated incidence of Level 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this Behaviour. A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management.
- **Expulsion:**  
Repeated incidents of Level 3 behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled.

# PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSIONS & EXPULSIONS

## Suspension

### *Definition of Suspension:*

*'requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days'*

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

### *Authority to Suspend:*

The Board of Management of Ballinure National School has formally and in writing delegated the authority to impose an 'Immediate Suspension' to the Principal Teacher, . An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally and in writing delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an 'Automatic Suspension' for named behaviours detailed in this policy. An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

The Board retains its authority to suspend a student in all other cases/circumstances.

### *Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension*

An 'Immediate Suspension' will be deemed to be necessary where after a preliminary investigation the Principal reaches the determination that the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety and wellbeing of pupils or staff of the school. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

An 'Automatic Suspension' is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of *Ballinure National School*, having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by Health & Safety Legislation, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur 'Automatic Suspension' as a sanction;

- Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff
- or
- Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property
- or
- Leaving the school without permission during the school day.

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension by telephone, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected. In no circumstance will a student be sent home from school prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will issue in due course, but no later than 2 school days after the imposition of the suspension. Such a notification will detail:

- the duration 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 arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be completed no later than 2 school days after the incident the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss;

- the circumstances surrounding the suspension,
- interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.

The Board of Management of Ballinure National School acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given;

- No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.

### ***Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions:***

In cases other than those of Immediate or Automatic Suspension the following procedures will apply;

Where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management of *Ballinure National School* will initiate a formal investigation of the matter.

The following procedures will be observed;

A written letter containing the following information will issue to Parent(s)/guardian(s);

- details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
- An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.

The Board of Management of *Ballinure National School* acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

- No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Where a decision to suspend has been made the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision. The letter will confirm:

- the duration 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 arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.

## **Expulsion**



### ***Definition of Expulsion:***

*'A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.'*

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

### ***Authority to Expel:***

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

### ***Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:***

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

- a) A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required)

As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s);

- iii. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
- iv. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond

- b) The Principal (or BoM Nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management

Where the Principal (or nominee) forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal (or nominee) makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

In this event the Principal (or nominee) will:

- i. inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- ii. ensure that parent(s)/guardians 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
- iii. provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)

- c) Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's (or BOM's Nominee) Recommendations & the Holding of a Hearing

If, having considered the Principal's report, the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student a hearing will be scheduled.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing

- i. as to the date, location and time of the hearing
- ii. of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- iii. that they may if they so choose be accompanied at the hearing

The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that;

- i. the meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
- ii. the principal (or BoM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other's presence
- iii. each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party
- iv. the parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose

d) Board of Management Deliberations & Actions following the Hearing

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled the Board

- i. Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.
- ii. Will not expel the student before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification
- iii. Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
- iv. Will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer
- v. Will suspend the student, if it is deemed likely that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils or staff.

e) Confirmation of the Decision to Expel

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing that the expulsion will now proceed. They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of Ballinure National School acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

- i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- ii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

## NOTIFICATION OF A CHILD'S ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should adhere to the following procedures when notifying the school of a pupil's absence;

- The school should be notified of the absence on the first day the pupil returns to school
- The reason for the absence should be notified to the class teacher
- The absence should be notified in writing by *letter / using the school journal*
- Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided

- Significant absences caused by ill health (i.e. absences longer than 10 school days) should be certified.

The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more, where the child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular and when the pupil is removed from the school register

## 10. RECORDS

A standardised record system will be used to track an individual pupil's Behaviour. Such records will contain;

- Incidents of misbehaviour,
- interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
- Evidence of improved behaviour
- Any sanctions imposed, and the reasons they were imposed

Pupils will be told when a record is being made about their behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained.

All records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003.

**RATIFICATION:**

**THIS POLICY WAS REVIEWED AND RATIFIED BY THE B.O.M ON 25/03 2019.  
REVIEWED DEC.2020**