

Code of Behaviour

SN Mhuire, Barntown

Roll No: 17913Q

Introductory Statement:

This code was developed through a process of whole school consultation involving staff, parents' representatives, pupils and the Board of Management of Barntown NS. It followed a review of the existing Code of Behaviour of the school which was carried out with the assistance of a facilitator. It is implemented alongside other school policies such as Anti Bullying and Child Protection, Health and Safety Statement and Risk Assessment along with the school ethos.

It has been drafted in compliance with Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) and with legal requirements and good practice as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB (National Education Welfare Board), 2008*.

The code details:

- The standards of behaviour expected of each pupil attending the school
- The measures that are implemented in the school to encourage and promote positive behaviour among the pupils
- The measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards
- The procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school
- The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil
- The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

In Barntown NS our school motto is *Ag fás le meas, Ag foghlaim le chéile* - Growing in respect, learning together. Respect is a core value in the school and a spirit of mutual respect is promoted within the school community.

The purpose of this policy is to promote positive behaviour. This enables the school to operate in an orderly and harmonious way, thereby enhancing the environment so that pupils can make progress in all aspects of their development. It also ensures a safe teaching and learning environment for all in our school community.

The school seeks to nurture each child to develop his /her potential in a caring environment. This can only be achieved where there is a high level of respect and co-operation between all.

The school's Code of Behaviour reflects the Christian values promoted within the school, with emphasis on forgiveness, reconciliation, new beginnings and hope.

Aims

The aims of this code are;

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff members

- To facilitate the holistic education and development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.
- To enable SNAs to support children's care needs in a safe manner
- To ensure that the school's expectations of behaviour and strategies to support positive behaviour are widely known and understood.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, acceptance and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community
- To assist parents 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.

1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school

In order to achieve and maintain a happy school environment we expect the following from everyone:

- All members of the school community are to show respect and fairness to each other.
- Each pupil is expected to be well behaved and to show respect and consideration for other pupils and adults.
- Each pupil is expected to follow a staff member's instructions and to work to the best of their ability.
- Each pupil is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other children's belongings, and their own belongings and to keep the school environment clean
- Each pupil is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual
- Each pupil is expected to do his/her best both in school and for homework.

2. Whole School Community Approach to promoting positive behaviour

Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of the code. School management and staff should actively foster a school ethos, policies and practices that help to promote positive behaviour and prevent inappropriate behaviour. Senior students in the school can also act as role models for younger pupils, demonstrating positive behaviours and attitudes towards each other.

2.1. The Role of Parents

The parents/guardians and staff work together for the good of each child. With this in mind, parents/guardians are expected to fully support, reinforce and model the values of the school; which seeks to foster the values of the community and promote a positive and supportive attitude to learning and good behaviour.

- Parents should ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually.
- Parents should inform the school if their child cannot attend due to illness or other circumstances.

- Parents should encourage their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work.
- Parents should familiarise themselves and cooperate with the school's code of behaviour and system of rewards and sanctions.
- Parents should communicate with the school and attend meetings if requested to do so.
- Parents should help their children with homework and ensure that it is completed and returned to school.
- Parents should ensure their children have the necessary books and materials for school.
- Parents should monitor the Homework Journal and Aladdin Connect Noticeboard for communications from teachers and/or Principal with regard to their child's behaviour

Parents/Guardians and teachers should interact in a positive manner to support the needs of the pupils and to provide students with a model of good working relationships.

2.2 Role of Staff

While the overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal:

- Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises and play areas.
- Auxiliary staff, particularly SNAs have an important role in supporting the standards of positive behaviour set by the school.
- Every effort will be made by all members of the staff to adopt a positive approach to promoting good behaviour in the school. The Code of Behaviour offers a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are utilised by teachers and SNAs.
- Teachers are sensitive to the needs and particular circumstances of their pupils, using elements of the curriculum particularly the SPHE (Social & Personal Health Education) curriculum to promote positive behaviour and self-esteem.
- Teachers and SNAs will promote respectful ways of resolving conflict.
- The adults in the school have a responsibility to model the school's standards of behaviour, in their dealings both with students and with each other, since their example is a powerful source of learning for students.
- All existing staff members will be given a copy of the Code of Behaviour and new staff members will receive a copy when they begin work in the school.
- In September each class teacher will devise classroom rules with his/her class. Rules will be stated positively. Rules will be displayed in the classroom at the beginning of the year.
- Children will be reminded of school rules regularly and will compose a class charter with their teachers at the start of the school year.
- Teachers will remind their pupils of the rules in the classroom regularly.
- Teachers will use the SPHE curriculum among other programs to teach and re-enforce the classroom rules.
- Teachers will use the rewards and sanctions as laid out in this policy.

Classroom Management Techniques

- A variety of classroom management techniques will be employed by teachers and good school and class routines to stimulate children of all abilities and learning styles.
- Classroom timetables will be set up in such a way as to maintain a good working atmosphere in the classroom.
- Teachers model the expected behaviours for the children.
- Positive feedback to children engaged in good behaviour will be used.

2.3 Role of pupils

Pupils are involved in the ongoing implementation of the Code of Behaviour by;

- Drafting rules for the classroom
- Taking part in Friday whole school assemblies
- Participation on the Student Council
- Reflecting on behaviours and ways of improving behaviour
- Children are encouraged to take on responsibility to report incidents of concerns that they witness – to be upstanders rather than bystanders
- Pupils will be involved in any monitoring and review of the Code of Behaviour.

2.4 .Role of the Board of Management

- The overall responsibility for ensuring that a Code of Behaviour is prepared rests with the Board of Management. The Board has particular responsibility for the ethos of the school, as well as having overall responsibility for school policies.
- The Board of Management is responsible for providing pupils with a safe learning environment and with staff members a safe working environment.
- Final authority rests with the Board in accepting or rejecting any amendments proposed by members of the school community.
- The Board will support the principal and staff in implementing the Code of Behaviour.
- Procedures are in place for the Board to deal with serious breaches of behaviour (see sections on suspension and expulsion)
- The Board will arrange for staff development as the need arises.
- The Board will arrange for regular review of the Code of Behaviour.

3. Expectations regarding pupils' behaviour

School rules are devised with regard to the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community.

The General School Rules listed below provide clear guidelines for all members of the school community and are explained to the different classes in age appropriate language:

- Pupils enter and leave the school building at all times in an orderly fashion.
- In the interest of safety, pupils must walk within the school building
- Pupils are expected to treat all staff members, themselves and each other with due respect and courtesy.

- Physical or verbal abuse of another pupil or staff member is not allowed and is considered a serious breach of the code of behaviour
- Bullying behaviour is never tolerated. Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to be safe is unacceptable.(see School Anti- Bullying Policy)
- Bad language is unacceptable. Inappropriate language if used towards a teacher or when in school or on school related activities is considered a serious breach of the code.
- We encourage pupils to wear appropriate school uniform/PE uniform
- For Health & Safety reasons, parents/guardians are asked to ensure that jewellery is limited to one small stud earring in the bottom of each ear and a watch.
- Make-up is not to be worn during school times.
- Children who cycle to school are to dismount at school gates and walk their bikes to the bicycle racks
- We encourage children to bring healthy lunches (see Healthy Lunch Policy) Chewing gum and glass bottles are not allowed in school
- Mobile phones and electronic devices are not to be brought to school (see Mobile Phone/Electronic Device policy)
- Pupils must respect the school building and property.

These can be summed up as school's **Golden Rules**:

- Being gentle and polite
- Being kind and helpful
- Being honest
- Listening
- Looking after property
- Trying our best
- Saying sorry

Classroom Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the pupils, based closely on the Golden rules. These rules are on display in classrooms. They synopsis for the children what is expected of them, in a language they understand.

For example:

- I will do my work and do it well.
- I will raise my hand if I need to speak.
- I will be prepared and tidy.
- I will follow the teacher's instructions.
- I will use good manners and respect others.
- I will allow other children to be heard and to work.

Playground Rules

It is important, when all the children are in the playground, that we observe some specific rules in order to keep everyone safe.

These are as follows:

- I will play safe and I will always be fair
- I will use kind words and helping hands and not hurt anyone
- I will walk quietly and I will line up when the bell rings.
- I will keep our yard litter free.
- I will only play in my class area.
- If the ball goes outside of the school grounds I will tell the teacher.
- I will not leave the yard without permission.
- I will treat others with respect.
- I will obey the teacher/adult who is supervising the yard

The standards expected in the Code of behaviour apply in any situation where pupils are the responsibility of the school. These include school trips, swimming, going to and from the church, fieldtrips and after school games.

4. Rewards and Strategies for acknowledging good behaviour.

- Praise good behaviour and achievement.
- Ensure that pupils are treated fairly and equally
- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book
- A note to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or the class
- Delegating some responsibility or privilege
- A mention to a parent written or verbal, either by phone call, through Class Dojo or in the homework journal to inform them of good behaviour
- Use of Class Dojo points (if used by particular teacher)
- Teacher records improvement in the behaviour of a disruptive pupil.
- Pupil/ group of the week in each class
- Certificates for exemplary behaviour, Use of stampers, stickers etc
- Invite principal to come and hear about good behaviour in class
- Behaviour awards/homework vouchers given out at assembly
- Use circle time to discuss positive behaviour
- Achievement notice board
- Allocation of Golden Time as a reward for positive behaviour
- Principal's Award - Class Of The Week

The above list is not exhaustive and consists of examples that are used in the school.

5. Whole school Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour

- Use of an appropriate early warning system with clear indication that a sanction will follow. This allows time for the pupil to amend their behaviour.
- Giving child a time out to allow them to calm themselves

- Teachers will keep a written record of all serious misbehaviour as well as a record of improvements in the behaviour of a disruptive pupil.
- Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher. In cases of serious misbehaviour or instances of gross misbehaviour, parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet with the teacher and/or the Principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of Minor Misdemeanours (This list is not exhaustive)

- Interrupting class work
- Running in the school building
- Leaving assigned seat without permission at break times
- Leaving litter around the school
- Being discourteous/unmannerly
- Not completing homework without good reason.
- Rough play
- Writing and passing notes

Sanctions may include: (This list is not exhaustive)

- Verbal reprimand
- Reasoning or warning
- Repetition of a task if not done satisfactorily
- Time out during class – temporary separation from peers
- Loss of privilege, such as missing a whole class reward, school outing etc.
- In relation to playground incidents a time out area may be used e.g. 'standing at the wall'

Examples of serious misdemeanours (This list is not exhaustive)

- Repeated instances of minor misbehaviour
- Behaviour that consistently interferes with teaching and learning
- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Stealing/damaging property
- Using abusive language towards another child or a member of staff.
- Leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission
- Use of a mobile phone during the school day.

Sanctions may include: (This list is not exhaustive)

- Contact parents /guardians
- Referral to Deputy Principal/ Principal
- Loss of privileges
- Record in Principal's Behaviour Log
- Extra work
- Confiscation of mobile phone for collection

- Principal meets with one or both parents/guardians
- Chairperson of Board of Management is informed and parents/guardians requested to meet with the Chairperson and Principal.

Examples of Gross misbehaviour (This list is not exhaustive)

- Verbal or physical assault on a pupil or staff member (even if a first instance)
- Repeated misbehaviour after sanctions have been put in place
- Sharing of inappropriate content/material on digital devices
- Behaviour that poses a risk to the health and safety of a pupil or staff member
- Serious theft
- Serious damage to property
- Serious repeated bullying incidents
- Sexual assault of another pupil or staff member
- Carrying drugs, alcohol into the school

Sanctions may include: (This list is not exhaustive)

- As for serious misbehaviour (see above)
- Board of Management consulted
- Suspension/Expulsion as per NEWB guidelines (see section 7 & 8 below)

6. Pupils with special /behavioural/ emotional needs

Pupils with special educational needs will be required to follow the school's Code of Behaviour but teachers will use their professional judgement in the application of the Code.

Pupils with special educational needs may require help to understand and observe the code. Pupils with learning difficulties may need to be taught how to relate cause and effects of behaviour in more tangible ways, for example through pictures, film or role-play. They may not be able to predict consequences as easily as their peers and so may be vulnerable.

7. Suspension

The Board of Management will follow the procedures for suspension as outlined in Chapters 10 & 11 of *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008*.

Definition of Suspension: *'requiring the pupil to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.'*

Fair procedures (i.e. right to be heard and the right to impartiality) will be applied.

Accordingly, pupils and their parents will be fully informed about the alleged misbehaviour and the processes that will be used to investigate and decide the matter; and they will be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation before a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed.

7.1 Authority to suspend:

The Board of Management of Barntown NS has the authority to suspend a pupil. The Board of Management has formally and in writing delegated the authority to impose an 'immediate suspension' to the Principal where there is a serious threat to safety.

Suspension will be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked.

The decision to suspend a pupil requires serious grounds such as that:

- the pupil's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety to other pupils and staff members
- the pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils
- the pupil is responsible for serious damage to property
- A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

Suspensions can provide a respite for staff and the pupil, give the pupil time to reflect on the link between their action and its consequences and give staff time to plan ways of helping the pupil to change unacceptable behaviour.

7.2 Forms of suspension

Immediate suspension

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff of the school, or any other person. Fair procedures will still be applied.

Informal or unacknowledged suspension

Exclusion of a pupil for part of the school day, as a sanction, or asking parents to keep a child from school, as a sanction, is a suspension. Any exclusion imposed by the school is a suspension, and will follow the Guidelines relating to suspension.

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will observe the following procedures:

- inform the pupil and their parents about the complaint
- give parents and pupil an opportunity to respond

Procedures in relation to immediate suspension

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the pupil, other pupils, staff or others, a preliminary investigation will be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension.

In the case of an immediate suspension, parents will be notified, and arrangements made with them for the pupil to be collected. The school must have regard to its duty of care for the pupil. In no circumstances will a pupil be sent home from school without first notifying parents.

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an immediate or informal 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 two school days after the incident the Board will invite the pupil and his /her parents to a meeting to discuss:

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

7.3 .The period of suspension

A pupil will not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed in order to achieve a particular objective or to ensure the safety of pupils and staff members.

If a suspension longer than three days is being proposed 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 placed a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. The Board will formally review any proposal to suspend a pupil, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*.

7.4. Appeals

The Board of Management will offer an opportunity to appeal a Principal's decision to suspend a pupil. In the case of decisions to suspend made by the Board of Management, an appeals process may be provided by the Patron.

Section 29 Appeal

Where the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*, as amended by the *Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007*.

7.5. Implementing the suspension

Communication with parents regarding suspension of a pupil will be in writing and copies of all correspondence will be retained. In some circumstances it may be necessary to contact parents by phone. The Principal will notify the parents and the pupil 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 arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parents (for example, parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)

- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (*Education Act 1998*, section 29)

The parents/guardians and the pupil will be invited to meet with the Principal and or the Board of Management to discuss the proposed suspension. Where parents do not agree to meet with the Principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension. Where a satisfactory resolution of a problem is achieved, a pupil may be re-admitted to school within the suspension period at the discretion of the Principal and /or the Board of Management.

7.6. Grounds for removing a suspension

A suspension may be removed if the Board of Management decides to remove the suspension for any reason or if the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science directs that it be removed following an appeal under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*.

7.7. After the suspension ends

A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents about the suspension.

Re-integrating the pupil

The school will have a plan to help the pupil to take responsibility for catching up on work missed. The school will arrange for a member of staff to provide support to the pupil during the re-integration process.

Clean slate

When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a pupil will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed the school should expect the same behaviour of this pupil as of all other pupils.

7.8 Records and reports of investigation and decision-making

Formal written records should be kept of:

- 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

Report to the Board of Management

The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

Report to NEWB

The Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines (*Education (Welfare) Act, 2000*, section 21(4) (a))

7.9 Review of use of suspension

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 use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

8. Expulsion (Procedures outlined in the NEWB Guidelines pgs. 83- 86 will be followed)

Definition of Expulsion: *'A student is expelled from a school when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school'.*

Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that will only be taken by the Board of Management of Barntown N.S. in extreme cases of serious, unacceptable behaviour.

The school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:

- meeting with parents 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 their behaviour, if it should persist
- ensuring that all other possible options have been tried
- Seeking the assistance of support agencies (e.g. 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)

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as 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 of classmates, other pupils and staff members
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property

In exceptional circumstances a pupil may be expelled for a first offence for example:

- a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- actual violence or physical and/or verbal assault
- supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
- Sexual assault of another pupil or staff member

The following factors will be considered before proposing to expel a student:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date

When proposing to expel a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.

2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer
6. 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 Science (*Education Act 1998* section 29). An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a student.

Implementation:

This policy will be implemented from 31st August 2020. It will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Ratification by the Board of Management.