

Ballinabranna N.S Code of Behaviour.

1. Introduction

The Code of Behaviour was developed by the school staff in consultation with our Parents Association and Board of Management using the Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board as required by section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000. In drafting our Behaviour Code, we were informed by an audit of and evaluation of current practice. The policy was devised to ensure that our Behaviour Policy follows legal requirements and good practice as set out in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools NEWB 2008. Sections of this Code of Behaviour were amended in 2019-2020 and in 2020-2021.

2. Purpose of the Code of Behaviour.

- To provide a happy, secure, positive and supportive environment in which the educational and holistic development of the children will take place respecting the individuality of each child.
- To promote caring and respectful relationships among children, staff and parents.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community.
- To communicate clearly the high standards of behaviour in Ballinabranna N.S. those behaviours which are not acceptable and the measures to be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe these standards.

3. School Mission Statement.

Ballinabranna School is concerned with delivering, by example and instruction, a holistic education spiritually, intellectually, physically and socially to their true potential in a vibrant, caring, supportive and happy Christian context while recognising the uniqueness and dignity of all our pupils having due regard to our relationship with the local and wider community and the environment.

4. Whole School Approach.

Our Code of Behaviour is based on a shared and clear understanding among children, parents, staff and Board of Management of “Good Behaviour”.

A unity of purpose to ensure that each child’s right to fairness, kindness, security, freedom to learn and develop as an individual is respected. Also, to ensure that children are responsible for living up to the age/individual appropriate expectations of behaviour outlined in this policy. The adults in the school community model the school’s high standards of behaviour in their dealings both with students and with each other.

The school expects our staff, parents and pupils to comply fully with public health guidelines in preventing the spread of Covid-19 and to cooperate with the school’s Covid-19 procedures.

Staff contribute to this approach –

- Through deepening their understanding of the factors that affect behaviour and that help students to change behaviour
- Through helping parents to understand how they can help students to behave well in school.
- Through helping students to understand their own behaviour and how to take responsibility for their behaviour and relationships.
- Through adopting a teamwork approach to behaviour.
- Through ensuring that the school ethos, policies and practices are in harmony.
- Through effective teaching and classroom management.
- Through creating a positive school climate.
- Through the effective importing of values, social skills, respect for diversity in the SPHE curriculum.
- Through good communication with parents.

The Board of Management contribute to this approach-

- By having an active role in exploring the behaviours which reflect the school's ethos.
- By ensuring that all members of the school's community are involved in the work on the Code of Behaviour.
- By supporting the staff in implementing the Code of Behaviour.
- By having procedures in place to deal with serious misbehaviour.

Parents contribute to this approach -

- ✓ By meaningfully contributing to the development of the code by examining and providing amendments to the draft policy.
- ✓ By ensuring that children attend school punctually and regularly.
- ✓ Through encouraging their children to do their best and take responsibility for their work actions.
- ✓ Through supporting the schools' efforts to promote and maintain high standards of behaviour.
- ✓ Through prompt communication with staff about issues which might affect their child's behaviour.
- ✓ Through co-operating with the school's rules and systems of rewards and sanctions.
- ✓ Through attending meetings.
- ✓ Through ensuring that children have the necessary materials for school.

Pupils contribute to this approach -

- By adhering to the classroom and school rules.
- By learning to take personal responsibility for their behaviour and the wellbeing of other pupils and teachers.
- By learning the skills of listening, sharing, negotiating and managing differences.
- By taking responsibility for duties in the classroom and school.
- By being involved in school activities.

Our Whole School Strategies to Promote Good Behaviour.

- Providing an excellent learning environment for our children and an external environment to accommodate different play activities.
- Giving children appropriate responsibility in school and involvement in drawing up their own classroom codes of behaviour.
- Ensuring that all are treated in a fair manner.
- Providing clear consistent standards which set high expectations for pupil behaviour
- Setting clear boundaries and rules for children.
- Recognising, praising and rewarding good behaviour "Catch them being good".
- Exploring through aspects of the curriculum how people should treat each other.
- Providing opportunities for children to develop their skills and self-esteem through sporting, artistic, musical and dramatic activities.
- Promoting the Catholic ethos of our school through example, actions and instruction, relating behaviour to the example of the Life of Jesus and his Golden Rule "Love One Another".
- Reminding pupils frequently of how they are expected to behave.
- Communicating pupil's achievements and good behaviour with parents.
- Recognising and celebrating children's success.
- A clear system of acknowledging and sanctioning misbehaviour.
- Employing positive and active classroom management techniques.
- Differentiating learning experiences and homework – having realistic expectations.
- Displaying Positive Behaviour Expectations in classroom and assembly/public areas of the school.
- Understanding the influences which affect the behaviour of individuals and taking cognisance of them.
- Ensuring good relationships between parents, teachers and students and a happy school atmosphere.
- Enjoying parental support for the school code of Behaviour.

5. Positive Strategies for Managing Behaviour.

Students are more likely to benefit from their education and to be happy in a happy structured environment where high standards of behaviour are expected.

In all areas of Ballinabranna School and in all school activities the following standards and values are expected from students.

- Respect for yourself and others.
- Kindness and willingness to help others.
- Courtesy and good manners.
- Fairness.
- The use of respectful ways to resolve conflict.
- Forgiveness.

The School expects each pupil to –

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Do your best in class and in your homework.
- Keep the rules.
- Respect staff.
- Respect other students.
- Respect the school and its environment.
- Allow other pupils to learn and enjoy school.
- Take part in school activities.
- Follow class rules.
- Act in a safe way.
- Be a good example to others.

Further Details on School Rules

- **Respect**

Pupils should show respect, tolerance and consideration to all adults, teachers, SNAs, secretary, caretaker, school visitors and all other pupils in the school.

- **Punctuality**

The school is open to receive pupils from 9.10a.m and pupils should be in their classrooms at 9.20am. School commences at 9.20a.m. School ends at 2.00p.m for Junior Infants & Senior Infants. School ends at 3.00p.m for all other pupils. Children leave the school at 3.00p.m unless they are involved in an authorised after-school activity.

- **School Uniform**

Parents are asked to ensure that their child wears the proper uniform – navy jumper, navy trouser / skirt, light blue shirt and red tie.

Children should wear suitable footwear and P.E uniform (navy tracksuit bottoms, navy sweatshirt and blue polo shirt) on P.E. days only.

Parents are asked to ensure that their child can put on/take off their coats and shoes, and tie laces. Shoes with Velcro fasteners are ideal!

Parents are asked to label coats, jumpers, hats, scarves etc. and all their child's belongings with their name.

Pupils should be clean, neat and tidy in their appearance.

Hijab: The wearing of the Hijab in school is permitted, except when the pupil is engaged in P.E. and sports' activities. The hijab must be the same colour as the school uniform.

Jewellery: The wearing of jewellery (long earrings, hoops, necklaces, bracelets and rings) is not allowed. The only jewellery allowed is a watch and one pair of stud earrings. If a member of staff deems a piece of jewellery to be a 'risk' to the student and others, she/he may be asked to remove it. The school will not be responsible for any items of jewellery that go missing arising from such a request.

Make-up:

Students are not permitted to wear any make-up, or false nails while attending school. * *Exceptions will be made for students engaged in performances on behalf of the school where such items are so required for the duration of the performance(s) or if make-up is worn as part of the celebration of a religious festival

- Lunches

Pupils are not allowed home for lunch. School lunches should be healthy in line with our Healthy Eating Policy.

- Playtime

During playtime pupils should avoid rough play which may cause injury to others.

- Leaving School Grounds

Pupils may not leave the school grounds except with parent's/teacher's permission. Pupils must be collected and signed out on Aladdin when they leave the school early.

- Medicines

A pupil may not bring medication to school. For prescribed medicines and exceptions please see Administration of Medications Policy.

- School Property

Pupils should treat all school property and the property of others with respect. The school does not accept responsibility for any pupil's property.

- Mobile Phones/Smart Devices

Students are not permitted to have phones or personal smart devices in school or on/at any related school activity, including phones, smart watches and devices capable of taking images. The only exception to this will be where such a device is necessary for monitoring an ongoing health condition such as Diabetes and where the permission of the Board of Management has been sought for such use.

- Lewd Materials

No pupil may bring lewd/pornographic materials to school or any school related activity.

- Substances

Any type of illegal or dangerous substances including cigarettes, matches, lighters or tippex are forbidden.

- Dangerous Objects

A pupil may not bring to school any item which could be a weapon to inflict harm on herself or others.

- Homework

Homework allocated by teacher should be completed each night. Parents should sign the homework journal every night.

- Internet Access

Pupils have access to the internet under the supervision of teachers as per the school's Acceptable Use Policy.

- Assault

A pupil may not verbally abuse or physically assault another child or adult in the school premises/ in the playground or at any school related activity.

- Covid-19

Staff will support all pupils in implementing current public health guidelines. Pupils are expected to practice good respiratory and hand hygiene and maintain physical distancing where possible.

Positive Strategies for Managing Behaviour in the Classroom.

- Providing clear ground rules for each classroom which are consistent with the ethos as expressed in the Code of Behaviour and which set a positive atmosphere for learning.
- Encouraging pupil input into devising class rules.
- Acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour.
- Sanctioning misbehaviour.
- Problems are noticed and dealt with as soon as possible – early intervention
- Pupils are aware that misbehaviour and failure to adhere to school and class rules will incur clear and consistent consequences
- Timetabling effectively.
- Adults and children modelling appropriate behaviour.
- Teachers use their classroom management skills to promote positive behaviour, involve, motivate and sustain pupil interest
- Parents are welcome in our school and class teachers consult with them, where necessary and beneficial

Positive Strategies for Managing Behaviour in the Playground.

- Providing clear set of playground rules which emphasise behaviour and safe conduct.
- Make clear what activities are permitted and where.
- Allocating various areas to different classes/age groups with clear timetabling.
- Ensuring that children play in areas in which they are visible.
- Monitoring activities and changing or organising activities which will minimise conflict/misbehaviour.
- Constant supervision by teachers on a rota basis. Supervision by SNAs who have a special duty of care to their charges. The SNA refers incidents of misbehaviour to the supervising teacher.
- Organisation of structured games.
- Supervision for children in classroom during wet days with suitable activities – board games, cards, DVD's, drawing etc.
- Incidents of misbehaviour to be dealt with in accordance with the Code of Behaviour. Serious incidents to be reported to the child's class teacher and logged on Aladdin by the class teacher.
- In cases of conflict, pupils may be withdrawn from the playground.

Positive Strategies for Managing Behaviour in Other Areas of the School/Whole School

- All staff share our school ethos which emphasises care, respect, and responsibility
- Adults model the behaviour that is expected from pupils
- Pupils are reminded frequently to walk quietly in the school building and that running, jumping or shouting are not acceptable behaviour.
- Parents are welcome in our school and staff consult with them, where necessary and beneficial
- Problems are noticed and dealt with as soon as possible – early intervention
- Pupils are aware that misbehaviour and failure to adhere to school rules will incur clear and consistent consequences
- Staff treat pupils with respect and build up positive relationships with them
- Pupils are given responsibility in the school, e.g. minding junior classes, distributing letters home, Green Schools' Committee, Fairtrade Committee, Student Council etc
- Pupils understand why the Code of Behaviour is important and understand their role in making it work
- Pupils can see that the Code of Behaviour operates in a fair manner.

School Related Activities.

The standard of behaviour set in the code of behaviour will also apply in any situation where the pupils are still the responsibility of the school.

This includes sports games and training, swimming, school tours, concerts, school masses, retreats, extra-curricular activities and at any time they are representing the school.

Pupils are expected to show a high level of courtesy to others, attention to instruction and safe conduct. Pupils will be aware that their good behaviour reflects well on themselves and on their school.

6. Rewards

Rewards.

Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of our Code of Behaviour. Reward systems are part of class and school strategies to achieve this end. Rewards may also be used as part of an intervention to help an individual pupil manage their own behaviour.

It is important that the use of rewards is effective.

- ❖ They are closely linked in time to the behaviour being awarded.
- ❖ They are meaningful.
- ❖ The pupil understands what the award is for.
- ❖ The award is sensitive to the individual.
- ❖ They are given for effort and not only for achievement.
- ❖ They are used consistently and designed to be inclusive re-all pupils can aspire to receiving awards.
- ❖ They are in proportion to the behaviour being awarded.

Class awards may be – golden time

- Class DVD
- Chosen activity
- Acknowledgement from Class Teacher or Principal
- End of year certificate of achievement
- Public acknowledgement in assembly etc.

Individual rewards may also include – Homework passes

- Story
- Treats
- Privileges
- Public acknowledgement from staff.

Praiseworthy achievements and behaviour may also be communicated verbally or by writing to parents or included in school newsletters.

‘Mol an Óige agus Tíocfaidh sí’.

7. Sanctions.

Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour.

Even minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour can be disciplined, particularly if they are persistent, serious misbehaviour can disrupt the pupils own learning and the learning of others. It can cause distress, anxiety and even pose a threat to the safety of students and teachers.

It is important to intervene early and positively when a pupil’s behaviour does not meet the expected standards. The early involvement of parents is important.

Strategies.

In the event of a pupil exhibiting inappropriate behaviour a problem-solving approach will be employed following these steps.

- Gather information – context and factors affecting the behaviour – Record this information with the pupils own written/verbal account if appropriate.
- Discuss possible solutions taking into account the reasons for the behaviour.
- Decide and agree specific strategies.
- Review progress.
- Keep the relationship with the pupils as positive as possible and involve the parents.

A restorative approach is used to restore good relationships when there has been conflict or harm. Restorative Practice is an inclusive way of dealing with harm. It seeks to bring together those most affected to discuss what has happened, acknowledging that they are the best placed to find ways of repairing the harm. Participants are given a place to share their story in a facilitated, safe and structured way.

The 6 question restorative approach is used for sharing the story -

- What happened?
- What were you thinking/feeling at the time?
- What are you thinking/feeling now?
- Who has been affected by this?
- What do you need now to move on?
- What needs to happen now, so that the harm can be repaired?

The teacher discusses each question with the children individually first and then as appropriate with all the children together to resolve the issue.

Recording and Describing Behaviour.

Teacher/s record incidents of pupil misbehaviour, interventions tried and the pupil's/pupils' response/s on the Aladdin System.

Ways of describing behaviour including its nature, intensity and persistence should be agreed by staff involved.

Minor Misbehaviour.

The following unacceptable behaviours are deemed to be minor misbehaviour:(not an exhaustive list)

- Interrupting others, wasting time or distracting others
- Persistently not wearing the correct uniform.
- Wearing unsuitable footwear.
- Wearing jewellery other than a watch and one pair of stud earrings.
- Wearing make-up, and/or false nails /false eyelashes in school. (*Exceptions will be made for students engaged in performances on behalf of the school where such items are so required for the duration of the performance(s) or if make-up is worn as part of the celebration of a religious festival)
- Eating items not permitted under our Healthy Eating Policy in school
- Littering playground or school grounds
- Running in corridor or through the main doors
- At playtime, leaving the playground, and/or re-entering the classrooms without permission
- Using offensive language.
- Neglecting homework on a regular basis, copying homework, or giving homework to be copied by others.
- Cheekiness and sulking.
- Disruptive behaviour in the classroom / bathroom
- Isolated acts of unkindness to any member of the school community, being discourteous or unmannerly.
- Isolated acts which prevent others from learning.

Serious Misbehaviour.

The following unacceptable behaviours are deemed to be serious misbehaviour:(not an exhaustive list)

- Repeated minor misbehaviour
- Blatantly defying a teacher or other adult
- Persistent disobedience, dishonesty, disrespect.
- Physical fighting and deliberately injuring others
- Vandalising, damaging or stealing school property, the property of staff, or the property of other pupils
- Bullying (See school's Anti – Bullying Policy)
- Inappropriate use of the internet
- Possession of a mobile phone in school and/or at any school related activity or outing.
- Bringing lewd/pornographic materials to school. (Any lewd/pornographic materials/mobile phone etc. are confiscated)
- A threat of violence against another child or member of staff on the school premises or playground or at any school related activity
- Behaviour that is hurtful.
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning.
- Threats or physical hurt to another. Willfully coughing or spitting at someone.
- Minor damage to property.
- Minor Theft.

Gross misbehaviour.

The following unacceptable behaviours are deemed to be gross misbehaviour:(not an exhaustive list)

- Repeated serious misbehaviour.
- A serious threat of violence against another child or member of staff on the school premises or playground or at any school related activity
- Actual violence or physical assault on another child or member of staff on the school premises or playground or at any school related activity
- Using or allowing others to use their mobile phone in school or on school related activities
- The taking of unauthorised photos or recordings of other students or staff members and/or posting on social media websites, any unauthorised images etc taken in school or on school activities
- Possession, use and /or abuse of dangerous/illegal substances or medicines
- Supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
- Possession, use and/or abuse of dangerous instruments
- Smoking or having cigarettes, lighters or matches in school or on any school related activity. (Any instruments / materials/phones are confiscated)
- Any wilful or malicious damage to school property or property visited while on a school trip
Serious Damage to Property
- Serious theft
- Sexual violence
- Truancy/leaving the school without permission
- Bullying (See school's Anti – Bullying Policy)
- Pupils using mobile phones to bully other pupils in our school or to send offensive messages and or calls. (See school's policy on mobile phones).

Use of Sanctions.

The object of sanctions is to help the pupil to learn and bring about a change in behaviour.

Sanctions should – help the pupil to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable.

– help them to recognise the effect of their behaviour on others.

– help them see that they have choices and that actions have consequences.

- help them take responsibility for their actions.
- reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour.
- signal to other pupils that their well-being is being protected.
- prevent serious disruption to teaching and learning.
- keep pupils and staff safe.

Sanctions should be –

- Applied in a fair and consistent way.
- Timely.
- Proportionate and relate to the behaviour.
- Appropriate to the age and stage of development of the pupil.
- Focused on the behaviour and not the person.

Group punishment should be avoided as it breeds resentment.

Sanctions should relate as closely as possible to behaviour. Therefore, a child, who does not do his work in class or has not completed his homework, may be detained at break time to finish the work.

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health & safety.

Levels of Intervention.

1. Occasional minor misbehaviour should be attended to by the classroom teacher.
2. Some pupils may require more intervention to help them manage their behaviour.
 - Referral to another teacher to work with the pupil.
 - Setting targets for behaviour and monitoring them.
 - Behaviour contracts.

3. Specialised support.

A small minority of pupils may show particularly challenging behaviour. These children will need a sustained response involving school and home.

Local support services may be accessed where necessary such as –

National Educational Psychological Service

HSE Community Psychology Services

National Council for Special Education - National Behavioural Support Service

Child and Adult Mental Health Services

Staged Approach.

- A. Initial minor misbehaviour will be dealt with by the class teacher.
- B. For more persistent, repeated or serious misbehaviour, parents will be involved.
- C. If behaviour persists and/or is of a serious nature the principal will also be involved.
- D. In the event of gross misbehaviour, a formal report will be sent to the Board of Management.

Sanction Steps

The following steps will be taken when children behave inappropriately. They are listed in order of severity. The list is by no means exhaustive.

Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the features by which sanctions should be characterised. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary, to help pupils devise strategies for this.

Strategies 1-5 – Minor Misbehaviour

Strategies 1-10 – Serious Misbehaviour

Strategies 1-11 – Gross Misbehaviour

1. Reasoning with pupil.
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class.
4. Prescribing extra work/homework writing out the story of what happened.
5. Loss of privileges.
6. Detention during break.
7. Communication with parents.
8. Referral to Principal.
9. Principal communicating with parents.
10. Exclusion (Suspension) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000) and formal report to the Board of Management.
11. Exclusion (Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000) and formal report to the Board of Management.

Bullying and Harassment.

Bullying is unacceptable behaviour and is prohibited in this school. All incidents of bullying will be dealt as per our Anti-bullying Policy.

Involving Parents.

Communication with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children's behaviour. A high level of co-operation and communication is important in encouraging positive behaviour. Parents should feel encouraged to speak to teachers in confidence about issues which may affect their child's behaviour.

Communication with parents should be positive and constructive and focused on a positive change in behaviour for the child.

Parents will be informed at stage (B) of our staged approach "For persistent, repeated or serious misbehaviour".

Parents will also be aware of behavioural issues through the following means of home school communication:

- Informal/formal parent – teacher meetings.
- Through the child's homework journal or notes in infants school bags.
- Informal discussions with teachers.
- End of year school reports

If parents have concerns about their child's behaviour, they should follow this staged approach:

- A. Contact the school and arrange an appointment to meet the child's teacher. It is important to give enough details of the purpose of the visit to allow the class teacher to gather information and formulate possible solutions. Meet with the class teacher, allow time to implement suggestions and review progress.
- B. Arrange a meeting with the class teacher and the principal.
- C. Seek advice and help through the school or outside agencies.

8. Managing Aggressive or Violent Behaviour.

Children who are showing signs of emotional disturbance should be referred for clinical psychological assessment through their GP and the HSE. Parental support is expected if a referral is recommended by the school. Appropriate support may be sought through the Special Needs Organiser.

Special education teachers may assist teachers in supporting the management of challenging behaviour and in forming a School Support Plan for this child.

In the case of newly qualified teachers, a trained mentor in the school, the school principal and other staff will assist as outlined in the Droichead Whole School Approach. Staff will be facilitated in accessing professional development courses e.g. SESS, NCSE, Education Centres etc, to help deal with such behaviour.

In the case of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to pupil's safety or the safety of others the child's parents will be contacted immediately and requested to come to the school to collect the child.

Where there are repeated incidents of this nature, a reduced timetable may be implemented for a child until additional resources (e.g. SNA support) are put in place to ensure the safety of this child and other members of the school community.

The child may have to be restrained/removed from the situation for their own safety and the health and safety of others. In such a scenario at least two staff members would be present at all times and the incident will be recorded by the class teacher (or other teacher present) on the Aladdin System and reported to the Board of Management.

9. Suspension.

The decision to exclude a student, through suspension or expulsion, is a serious step warranted only by very serious misbehaviour. As required under section 23(2) of the Education Welfare Act 2000 procedures for suspension and expulsion are included in the Schools Code of Behaviour.

The entitlement to Education is protected in a range of Constitutional and Legal Provisions and in Human Rights Conventions. These legal protections for the individual student's right to education mean that decisions to suspend or expel a student are open to appeal and may be subject to judicial review by the High Court.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered.

Before considering suspension, the following factors should be considered –

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour.
- The context of the behaviour.
- The impact of the behaviour.
- Interventions tried to date.
- Is suspension proportionate?
- The possible impact of suspension.

The decision to suspend requires serious grounds such as:

- a student has engaged in what is deemed as gross misbehaviour (examples listed above)
- The pupil's behaviour has a seriously detrimental effect on the education of others.
- The pupils continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to safety.
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.
- A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

Procedure for Suspension. See Appendix A

When an assessment of facts confirms serious misbehaviour to ensure fair procedure the school will observe the following steps –

- 1 Inform the pupil and parents - of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the allegation and how the issue will be decided.
 - 2 Give the pupil and parents the right to respond
 - The right to respond to the allegations
 - Where the sanction is serious the right to be heard by the decision-making body
 - Where the sanction is serious the right to ask questions of the other party or witnessed if there is a dispute about facts.
- Ensure
- The right to an absence of bias in the decision maker.
 - The right to impartiality in the investigation and decision making.
 - Fair procedures apply to the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour and the process of decision making as to whether the pupil did engage in the misbehaviour and what sanction to impose.
- 3 All matters should be dealt with in a timely manner and in confidence.

The Board of Management and Staff of Ballinabranna NS, will follow the procedures for suspension and expulsion as outlined in the NEWB Guidelines for Schools on Developing a Code of Behaviour (Chapters 10 – 12). NEWB (National Education Welfare Board).

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal/Board may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary when 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 to any other person (NEWB Guidelines p73).

The Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days pending a discussion of the matter with parents.

Automatic suspension will apply in the event of a student engaging in gross misbehaviour (see gross misbehaviours list).

10. Expulsion.

Expulsion may be considered, in an extreme case of unacceptable behaviour. The grounds may be similar to the grounds for suspension with the key difference that school authorities have tried a series of interventions and believe they have exhausted all possibilities of changing a pupil's behaviour having complied with section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. The Board of Management reserves the authority to expel.

Under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, 'A student shall not be expelled from a school before the passing of twenty school days following the receipt of a notification under this section by an educational welfare officer' (Section 24(4)) It is the right of a Board of Management to take '...such other reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school concerned and that the safety of students is secured.' (Section 24(5))

See Appendix B for procedures to be followed for expulsion.
The Board of Management will follow;

- the factors to consider before suspending a student (p.72)
- the factors to consider before proposing to expel a student (NEWB Guidelines p82).

In all cases of suspension, the right to appeal and the procedures to follow should be clearly outlined to the parents.

All decisions regarding suspension and expulsion will be fully documented including -

- The investigation.
- Decision making process.
- The decision and the rationale for the decision.
- The duration of suspension.

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18 are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science against some decisions of the Board of Management, including

- (1) permanent exclusion from a school and
- (2) suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year.

Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student. (See Circular 22/02)

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

The Principal will report all suspensions and expulsions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines.

11. Students with Special Education Needs.

Student with Special Educational Needs may require help to understand and observe the code. They may need intervention to teach them how to relate cause and effect of behaviour. Special behaviour plans may be put in place in consultation with parents to support these children as part of the child's Support Plan. Other pupils will be encouraged to offer peer support and taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs.

While teachers must be seen to be fair in the eyes of the other children who may have exhibited the same type of misdemeanours, they will also show leniency and understanding in relation to children with specific learning/behavioural difficulties. Parents of these children will be kept informed of their child's behaviour on a regular basis and may be requested to work with the school in devising effective strategies to help the child to improve his or her behaviour. This may involve working and co-operating with a Special Needs Assistant (SNA), if an SNA is deployed to assist a pupil/class and/or agreeing a Behaviour Plan. The devising of such strategies may also entail contacting and meeting with relevant out of school agencies as mentioned above.

12. Pupil Absences.

Section 18 of the Education Welfare Act stipulated that parents must notify the school of a student's absence and the reason for this absence. Ballinabranna N.S has an Attendance Policy.

- It is important to let the school know of your child's absence at the earliest opportunity.
- The class teacher is to be informed.
- It is important to give details about the reason for absence.
- The school should be informed by note to facilitate record keeping.
- The Educational Welfare Officer will be informed if –
 - a pupil's attendance is a cause of strong concern,
 - when a pupil has been absent for 20 or more days during a school year,
 - if a pupil has been suspended for a period of 6 or more days.

13. Communication of Code of Behaviour.

On registration parents will be provided with a copy of the Code of Behaviour. Confirmation by parents that the code is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that they and their child comply with the code will be a condition of enrolment.

The code be distributed to all staff, including ancillary staff, and will be published in the policy section of our school website. The code will be available for inspection in the "School Plan".

14. Recording Behaviour.

Records on behaviour, incidents, sanctions used, changes in behaviour will be kept in the school accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Students will be told that a record is being made about their behaviour.

15. Our Code of Behaviour has links to the following school policies.

Anti-Bullying Policy.

Attendance Policy.

Communication and Access Policy.

Grievance Policy.

Data Protection Policy.

Admissions Policy.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Healthy Eating Policy

Administration of Medication Policy

16.Success Criteria:

- Observation of positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils

17.Roles and Responsibility:

- The Board of Management of Ballinabranna NS, has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Code of Behaviour is implemented.
- The Principal, Deputy Principal and the school staff will coordinate and monitor the implementation of this policy.
- The pupils of the school will endeavour to do their best to uphold the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Parents/ Guardians of the pupils in the school will be aware of and co-operate with the school's rules and systems of rewards and sanctions. They will be supportive of the school's Code of Behaviour.
Parents/Guardians, subject to the enrolment of their child/children in the school, must confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance of the code by the pupil/s having been requested to do so by the school.

18.Review.

This Code of Behaviour will be reviewed by the Board of Management on a regular basis or when considered appropriate.

The Board of Management reserves the right to amend the policy in line with any changes in legislation, any forthcoming Department of Education and Skills circulars, any forthcoming national guidelines, or any other incidences which may give rise to a revision of the policy.

(Any ratified policy will be distributed to all the partners concerned subsequent to ratification.)

APPENDIX A

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

In the case of gross misbehaviour, the Board of Management has authorised the Principal where he/she deems it necessary to sanction an immediate suspension of from 1-3 days depending on the severity of the misbehaviour. For the purposes of this code suspension is defined as requiring the student to absent himself/herself from school for a specified, limited number of school days. During the period of a suspension, the student retains their place in our school. If possible, consultation with the Board of Management Chairperson should take place before the suspension is imposed. The suspension is ratified at the earliest possible opportunity by the full Board of Management. Where possible, a special meeting of the Board of Management is necessary for any further or longer period of suspension. However, the Principal with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board is authorised to impose a suspension of up to 5 days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance concerning such suspensions. A written commitment to co-operate fully with the school to ensure an improvement in the child's future behaviour will be sought from the parents/guardians. As a last resort expulsion will be considered by the Board in accordance with the rules for National Schools and regulations of the NEWB.

The grounds for suspension:

Suspension should 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 student requires serious grounds such as that:

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

Suspension as part of a behaviour management plan:

Suspension should be part of an agreed plan to address the student's behaviour. The suspension should:

- Enable the school to set behavioural goals with the students and their parents.
- Give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions.
- Impress on a student and their parents the seriousness of their behaviour.

Forms of suspension:

Immediate suspension:

In exceptional circumstances the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary following a preliminary investigation where the continued presence of the student at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of the students or staff of the school or any other person. Fair procedures will be applied. Parents are notified and arrangements are made to have the pupil removed from the school.

Automatic Suspension:

The Board of Management has decided as part of the school's policy on sanctions and following consultation with the Principal, parents, teachers and students that incidents of gross misbehaviour incur suspension as a sanction. Fair procedures will be applied.

Rolling Suspension:

A student may be suspended again shortly after their return to school if they engage in gross misbehaviour that warrants suspension. Fair procedures will be applied.

Procedures in respect of suspension:

Where preliminary assessment of the facts confirms gross misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will:

- Inform the student and the parents of the complaint / Let the students and parents know about the complaint, how it was investigated and how it could result in suspension. This ensures that parents are clear about what their child is alleged to have done. It also serves an important function of underlining to parents the seriousness with which the school views the alleged misbehaviour.
- Give parents and students an opportunity to respond.

If after these deliberations a suspension is imposed the parents will be informed in writing of the suspension and its duration. The Board will formally review any proposal to suspend a student where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current year to 20 days.

Appeals:

The Board of Management offers an opportunity to parents/guardians to appeal a Principal's decision to suspend a student

Section 29 Appeal:

Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the total school year reaches 20 days the parent may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 (Amended in 2007). At the time when parents are being formally notified of the suspension, they will be informed of their right to appeal.

Implementing the suspension – Written Notification:

The Principal will notify the parents and student in writing by registered post 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 arrangements to be entered into by the student and the parents.
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.
- The right to appeal to the Secretary of the Department of Education and Skills

Where parents do not agree to meet with the Principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension. After the suspension ends, every effort will be made to re-integrate the student fully into school life. Every support will be given to the student for a fresh start.

APPENDIX B

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

PROCEDURES FOR EXPULSION

EXPULSION:

A student is expelled from our school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude a student from the school having complied with the provision of Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act 2000. The Board of Management has the authority to expel a student and will consider expulsion in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour, where all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour have been exhausted. Due process and fair procedures will apply.

The Grounds for Expulsion:

As expulsion of a student is a very serious step the school will take significant measures to address the misbehaviour and to avoid the expulsion, as appropriate.

- (1) Meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour.
- (2) Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour if it should persist.
- (3) Ensure that all other possible actions have been tried.
- (4) Seeking the support of other agencies NEPS, HSE, etc.

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

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

Expulsion for a first offence:

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student may be expelled for a first offence. These circumstances would include:

- (1) A serious threat of violence against another student or a member of staff.
- (2) Actual violence or physical assault.
- (3) Supplying illegal drugs to other student's in the school.
- (4) Sexual assault

Procedure in respect of expulsion:

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms gross 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 deliberation and action following the hearing.
- (5) Consultation arranged with the Education Welfare Officer.
- (6) Confirmation of the decision to expel.

Step 1:

The student and his parents will be informed about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion. Parents and the student will be given an opportunity to respond to the complaint. The parents will be informed in writing. A meeting with the student and parents will be scheduled. If the student and the parents fail to attend the meeting the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and failing that the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour. The school will record the invitation.

Step 2:

Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The Principal should:

- (1) Inform the parents and the student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- (2) Ensure that the parents have records of: (i) allegations against the student, and (ii) the investigation, and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- (3) Provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to the parents.
- (4) Notify the parents of the date of hearing by Board of Management and invite them to the hearing.
- (5) Advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management.
- (6) Ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

Step 3:

The Board will review the initial investigation and satisfy themselves that it was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. It will review all documentation in the circumstances of the case. Where the Board of Management decide to consider expelling a student, it must conduct a hearing which should be conducted in accordance with Board procedures. At the hearing, the Principal and the Parents put their case to the Board in each others presence. Each party should be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. The Board is impartial between the Principal and Parents. After both sides have been heard the Board should ensure that the Principal / Parents are not present for the deliberation.

Step 4:

Having heard from all the parties the Board of Management will decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction. If the decision is to expel the Board should notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing and the reasons for this opinion (as required by the Education Welfare Act 2000,) (Section 24 (1).) The Board of Management should refer to NEWB reporting procedures for proposed expulsion. The student cannot be expelled before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Education Welfare Officer receives this written notification.

The Board of Management will inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process and that they are informing the Educational Welfare Officer.

Step 5:

In the interests of the educational welfare of the student all those concerned will come together with the Educational Welfare Officer to plan for the student's future education.

Pending these consultations about the students continued education the Board of Management may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of students is secured. (Educational Welfare Act 2000, Section 24 (5). The Board may consider it appropriate to suspend the student during this time, where there is likelihood that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others or represents a threat to the safety of students or staff.

Step 6:

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. Parents will be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents and the student will be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record will be made of the decision to expel the student.

Appeals:

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the D.E.S. An appeal may also be brought by the NEWB on behalf of a student.

The appeals process is carried out under Section 29 of the Educational Welfare Act 1998.

This Policy will be reviewed at regular intervals