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Code of Behaviour
Ballaghlea National School

INTRODUCTION

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of Ballaghlea N.S. has drawn up and made available a Code of Behaviour for its Pupils, Staff and Parents.

The Code of Behaviour details:

1. The standard of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school.

2. The whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour

3. The measures to be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards

4. The procedures to be followed before a pupil is suspended or expelled from the school concerned

5. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed on a pupil

6. The school's Anti-Bullying Policy; and

7. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

The Code of Behaviour of Ballaghlea N.S has been developed in accordance with

'Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools', National Educational Welfare Board, 2008.

POLICY FORMULATION

*In formulating this policy the Board of Management completed the following steps;

I. Parents and staff were informed that an initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was available and they were invited to make submissions on the content of the code within a specified timeframe.

II. II. Class teachers were requested to discuss the topic of 'rules' with their classes and submit a list of pupils suggestions to the principal.

III. III. The initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was reviewed and where appropriate amended in-line with the feedback received.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THE CODE

The aims and objectives of the code are:

• To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
• To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others

• To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences • To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community • To assist school staff, 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.

WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

The Board of Management recognises the importance of creating consistent values, policies, practices and relationships that support the Code of Behaviour. Such an environment may only be formed by involving the entire school community and in this respect the Board acknowledges the importance of the roles played by, the principal, teachers, ancillary staff, members of the board and parents in the review and operation of the Code.

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

Pupils

Class Times: 9.20 a.m. to 3.00pm inclusive of break times and lunch times. .

• Regular punctual attendance is essential.
• When the bell rings at end of break and lunch pupils are to line up promptly and properly in their designated area. Each teacher takes his / her class quietly to their classroom.
• Pupils **may not leave the school grounds** during the school day without the written permission of parent / guardian.
• Pupils should all times show respect to teachers and ancillary staff.
• Pupils should treat their school property, fellow pupils and their property with respect. Hurtful or dangerous play must be avoided.
• Pupils are to wear the full school uniform at all times as per enrolment pack.
• Pupils are to have school half-zip for all sporting activities.
• Pupils are to observe the "out of bounds" areas (staff room, teachers toilets, all storage sheds and store room, and the main and side roads, unless accompanied by an adult.
• It is forbidden to bring chewing gum inside the school ground.
• Bicycles may not be ridden while on the premises.
• Pupils should keep the school and grounds clean and tidy and use the bins that are provided.
• Pupils are to walk on the corridors at all times.
• A high standard of personal hygiene is expected at all times.
• Homework is to be done consistently and with care.
• Pupils should be well behaved and show consideration for other children and adults

Classroom Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- listen – to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking
- work – to the best of his/her ability
- value – school property and the belongings of fellow pupils.
- follow – the direction of his/her teacher
- obtain – his/her teachers permission to leave the classroom
- respect – the teacher, other pupils and visitors to the classroom.

Playground and Playing Pitch Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:
play-safely avoiding rough or dangerous games or play

- follow – the directions of the playground supervisor(s) and show respect listen
- remain – on school grounds at all times and observe "no entry to storage shed" without permission
- avoid– swearing, fighting or name calling
- Line up immediately in designated areas on hearing the bell
- Children cross the road in an orderly fashion in pairs only under adult instruction and supervision.

Behaviour in other School Areas

Each pupil is expected to:

- walk – in the school corridors
- behave in a way that does not endanger themselves or others
- comply with the instructions of the supervisors
- line up in an orderly manner at the end of break times and crossing the road.
- ascend and descend the stairs as instructed by staff.

Behaviour during School Outings/Activities

Each pupil is expected to:

- follow – his/her teacher's directions at all times
- remain – with the teacher/supervisors and group of pupils at all times
- behave – politely towards those they meet on such trips
- observe – the rules of general good behaviour

School Rules for Health and Safety

- No student ever leaves the school grounds unsupervised during school hours.
- Cyclists must dismount and walk when entering or leaving the school grounds.
- Mobile phones are not permitted in school. In the event of a phone being discovered it will be taken from the student and must be collected from the principal's office by a parent/guardian. Repeated offence will lead to the phone being kept for longer periods of time before being returned.
- Children must play safely in designated areas and should not re-enter the school building without permission.

- Leave the school in an orderly manner at the end of the day.
- Litter Control. Pupils should keep the school and grounds clean and tidy and use the bins provided.

STAFF

It is the principal's responsibility to ensure the school's Code of Behaviour is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils. However each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school.

Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class. They will:

- Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in an age-appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year and when the need to do so arises.
- Ensure the rules are displayed in the classroom.
- Encourage self-discipline and positive behaviour.
- Ensure there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times.
- Implement any reward/sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner.
- Keep a written record of all incidents of continued, serious or gross misconduct. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and, the consequences of its repetition.
- Inform pupils when instances of misbehaviour on their part are being recorded.
- Report repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the principal.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive behaviour in school. Parents/guardians can assist the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, encouraging punctuality and regular attendance and by ensuring that homework is given due time and effort.

Should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child's behaviour they are welcome to make an appointment to discuss their concerns. In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour parents will be invited to participate in the intervention process. All parents must sign the code of behaviour on enrolment.

PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

As a general rule the school will endeavour to create an environment where positive behaviour is reinforced through praise and reward. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school, so that positive behaviour is instantly recognised and positively rewarded. Special attention will be paid to pupils who have previously been associated with poor behaviour so that not only good behaviour but also improvement in behaviour is acknowledged.
A reward scheme for promoting positive behaviour will be used. Such rewards will include;

- Class Behaviour Scores for lining up at

each bell and quiet movement through the school
• Awards and acknowledgement for 'Acts of Kindness' at whole school assemblies
• Small prizes, stickers / stars etc
• Written or verbal communication with parent
• Certificates
• A visit to another class or the principal for commendation
• Individual class merit awards, points awards or award stamps
• Praise in front of class group

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

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 1

Level 1: Inappropriate 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 misbehaviours, 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 misbehaviour 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:
• Gestured warning – look/whisper
• Verbal reprimand/reminder(s)
• Teacher talks to pupil about their behaviour.
• Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
• Within the classroom, pupil may be moved to another table, offside area in the classroom
• Pupil may be sent to another classroom to complete designated work quietly, pupil may be given a behaviour sheet to fill in to emphasise how he can improve his behaviour
• Prescribing additional work
• Loss of privileges
• Parents/guardians to be contacted
• Behaviour contract

Level 1 Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

- Classroom-based interventions, such as Circle Time 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: Inappropriate 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 profane or obscene language.
- Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic
- 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.)
- Disobeying rules in the pitch that leave children in a vunerable/dangerous situation.

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 Level2 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, Deputy 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, disability, 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.

Pupils with Special/Behavioural/Emotional Needs

Pupils with special needs will be required to follow the school's 'Code of Behaviour' but teachers will use their professional judgment in the application of the Code.
Teaching the rules to children with SEN and helping them understand behaviour and its consequences will be a main focus of teacher's work.
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/her behaviour. This may involve working and co-operating with a Special Needs Assistant, and/or agreeing a behaviour plan or IEP. Support services such as NEPS, the SENO and the SESS may be involved in this context.

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 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 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 Ballaghlea 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

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 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 in to 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 Ballaghlea National School acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is 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.

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 Ballaghlea 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);

I. Details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
II. 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 Ballaghlea National School, acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following under takings are given;

a) 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.
b) The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself 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 Science 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 Suspend:
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);
1. Details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
2. 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:
1. inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
2. 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
3. provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)

a) Consideration by the Board of Management of the principal's (or BOM's nominee)Recommendations and 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. II. of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
III. 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

b) **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

1) Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.

2) 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
3) Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted.
4) Will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer.
5) 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 Science under Section29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of Ballaghlea 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.

1) 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 **or** on the day of the absence
- The reason for the absence should be notified to the class teacher
- The absence should be notified in writing by phone call/email or Aladdin connect
- Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided
- Significant absences cause by ill health (i.e. absences longer than 10 school days) should be certified.

The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer 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.

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.

POLICY RATIFICATION

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Ballaghlea National School at its meeting held on _____26/9/24____.

Signed: Jim Grogan Date: 26/9/24 Chairperson Board of Management

Signed: AnneMarie Farrell Date: 26/9/24 Principal