

# Code of Behaviour

## GLEBE NATIONAL SCHOOL

School Address: The Glebe, Donegal Town, Co. Donegal. F94 K407.

Roll Number: 178310

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school.

In Glebe NS, we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school.

The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.

Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school.

### **Aims of the code**

To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour ●

To promote self-esteem and positive relationships

- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others
- To facilitate the 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 ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the parent's handbook, availability of policies in school and an ethos of open communication
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy

### **Responsibility of Adults**

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations.
- Promote positive behaviour, through example, honesty and courtesy.
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment.
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others.
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.
- To discourage physical aggression and encourage '*Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet*'.

A Code of Conduct for staff, pupils and volunteers ensures that the rights of all are upheld.

### **Pupil Expectations**

1. We show respect for self and others
2. We show respect for our own property and the property of others
3. We show respect for other students and their learning
4. We are kind and willing to help others
5. We follow instructions from staff immediately
6. We walk quietly in the school building
7. We show courtesy and good manners
8. We try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
9. We ask permission to leave the classroom/school.
10. We do our best in class
11. We take responsibility for your own work
12. We wear the appropriate uniform.
13. We follow our Healthy Eating Policy.

These can be summed up as 6 Golden Rules

1. We listen. We don't interrupt.
2. We are gentle. We don't hurt others.
3. We are honest. We tell the truth.
4. We are kind.
5. We work hard. We don't waste time.
6. We look after property. We don't damage things.

Rules apply during school-time and during all school related activities.

### **Class Expectations**

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class expectations with the children, based closely on the "Golden Rules". Class expectations will be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Where possible they emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. 'Walk' and not, 'Don't run'). Expectations will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual differences. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

### **Positive Behaviour**

Part of the vision of Glebe NS is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and similarly that children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. We aim to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

Teachers may use some of the following strategies to promote good behaviour:

- Reinforce good behaviours in front of class when it occurs.
- Praise the desired behaviour before correcting the unacceptable behaviour – reverse the focus.
- Quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- Send a "good note" home.
- Send pupil to another teacher for recognition.
- Encourage effort as well as outcome.
- Model a positive approach to mistakes.

- Stamps, Sticker, Stars, Behaviour Rewards.
- Golden Time (being allowed 10-15 minutes to choose and engage in activity which pupil enjoys)
- Cooperative games.
- Use of egg-timers/clocks/kitchen timers.
- Encourage pupils to set individual goals.
- Encourage pupils to assess their own performance.
- Delegate special responsibility or privilege.

### **Unacceptable Behaviour**

Three levels of misbehav

our are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher, or the supervising teacher at break-times. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour, parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of minor misbehaviour include:

- Breaking classroom rules.
- Not following the rules in playground games.

Examples of serious misbehaviour include:

- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Theft
- Leaving school/school activities without permission.
- Bullying \*

Examples of gross misbehaviour include:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil
- Serious Theft
- Serious Damage to property
- Serious bullying
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes

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

VERBAL: name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates.

PHYSICAL: includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping, etc

EMOTIONAL: threats or persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Threats to extort money or possessions.

CYBER: Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, Text, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else.

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

***Should a parent/guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed with a teacher, all staff members are more than willing to facilitate a meeting, made through the proper channels i.e. a phone call to the office, or a note to the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties. The first person to be informed should be the class teacher.***

This arrangement ensures that all concerns are dealt with in a dignified, meaningful manner, without infringing on valuable teaching time.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying. Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same manner as breaches of discipline – already outlined in our Code of Behaviour.

If there is no improvement at this stage the parent/guardian will be called to meet with the Principal to begin with and then the Chairperson of the Board of Management and Principal, where the situation will be discussed in detail. Guidelines will be drawn up for future behaviour in the school and playground. Very occasionally, this may include a request from the teacher/principal that the parent/guardian of the child supervise their child in school or during a school outing.

The school reserves the right to arrange a meeting with the parents/guardians of a child at any time, should the child's behaviour be deemed to be unacceptable.

If a parent refuses to meet with a class teacher the matter will be referred to the Principal. Any refusal to meet with the Principal and/or Chairperson will automatically be referred to the Board of Management and regarded as a serious breach of co-operation in our school behaviour policy.

### **Strategies to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour.**

The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the circumstances involved. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupil devise strategies for this.

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/ writing out the story of what happened/reflection/apology
5. Loss of privileges
6. Detention during break
7. Communication with parents
8. Referral to Principal
9. Principal communicating with parents
10. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000)

Usually sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

### **Sanction**

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in the Code of Behaviour

- signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
- keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

### **Suspension**

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a pupil. A pupil should not be suspended for more than three days except in exceptional circumstances. The Board of Management normally place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. Any suspension for which the pupil has been suspended in a school year for 20 days or more is subject to appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. A single incident of misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

Suspension is defined as *“Requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.”*

Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally other interventions will have been tried before suspension. The decision to suspend a pupil requires serious grounds such as;

- The pupil’s behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils ●

The pupil’s continued presence in the school at this time 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

### **The school will observe the following**

- Inform the pupil and their parents about the complaint
- Give parents and pupil an opportunity to respond
- Initial suspension no longer generally than 3 days. (except in exceptional circumstances)
- BOM will formally review any proposal to suspend a pupil for 20 or more days in a school year (in total). Any such suspension is subject to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act (1998).

### **Implementing the suspension**

The principal will notify the parents in writing of the decision to suspend their child and the letter will confirm:

- the period of suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end, the reasons for the suspension
- the arrangements for returning to school including any commitment to be entered into by the pupil and the parents,
- the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science. (Education Act 1998, section 29)

### **Reintegrating the pupil and starting with a clean slate**

The pupil will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. The school will then expect the same behaviour of this pupil as of all other pupils.

The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil’s reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil’s own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

### **Expulsion**

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil. Before expelling a pupil, the school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a pupil including, as appropriate:

1. Meeting with parents and the pupil to try to find ways of helping the pupil to change their behaviour.
2. Making sure that the pupil understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist.
3. Ensuring that all other possible options have been tried.
4. Seeking the assistance of support agencies, if appropriate

**A proposal by the Board of Management to expel a pupil requires serious grounds, such that:**

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

The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the code could include

- A serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
- Sexual assault

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

A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.(includes contacting parents re behaviour as with suspension)

A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.(parents informed of the same)

Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing (incl. informing Educational Welfare Officer. The pupil cannot be expelled before the passage of 20 school days from the date the EWO receives the written notification)

Consultations arranged by an Education Welfare Officer(BOM may consider suspending the pupil during this period if the continued presence of the pupil will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils or staff)

Confirmation of the decision to expel. (notifying parents, info on right to appeal-section 29)

**Appeals** 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 Skills 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.

**Absences**

If a pupil is absent from school, parents are required to inform the school in writing as to the reason for their child's absence. As outlined in the Education Welfare Act 2000, the school informs the NEWB of any child who is absent from school for 20 days or more,

**School related activities**

Standards and rules contained in the Code of Behaviour apply to any situation where pupils are still the responsibility of the school i.e. school tours/extracurricular activities etc. Parents, S.N.A.s, coaches etc. are asked to uphold the code when helping out in the school and/or with school related activities.

**Children with Special Needs**

All children are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However the school recognises that children with Special Needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place

in consultation with parents and the class teacher, SET teacher, and or principal and will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments and NEPS will be invaluable. The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with Special Needs, adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

### **Challenging Behaviour**

*“Behaviour of such intensity, frequency and duration that the physical safety of the person or others is likely to be placed in serious jeopardy or behaviour which is likely to seriously limit or delay access to and use of ordinary community facilities...”*

**Emerson et al (1987)**

The following actions may also be taken in the event of a child displaying Challenging Behaviour.

- a) Involving outside agencies e.g. Health Service Executive, Special Education Needs Organiser, NEPS, Psychologist.
- b) Case Conference with parents/guardians, pupil, staff, other professionals.
- c) Individual Behaviour Plan/School Support Plan
- d) Agreed Home-School Communication.
- e) Psychological Assessment.

Examples of Challenging Behaviour may include

- a) Physical Aggression.
- b) Disruptive, Dangerous, Anti-Social Behaviour.
- c) Self-Injury.
- d) Stereo-typical/Ritualistic Behaviour
- e) Destructive Behaviour.

Strategies already outlined in this policy may be used to deal with such behaviour.

**Roles and Responsibilities:** It is the responsibility of the Principal and staff to implement this policy under the guidance of the school’s Board of Management.

**Implementation date:** 4th October 2022

This policy will be implemented immediately following ratification by the Board of Management and communication to the Parents’ Association and reviewed yearly.

**Ratified by the Board of Management:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of the Board of Management )

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal)

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reviewed by the Board of Management: 28th October 2023**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of the Board of Management )

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal)

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_