

Ballindaggin NS
Code of Behaviour

This Code of Behaviour was formulated during the 2018/19 school year, and will be updated as the need arises, taking cognisance of new directives, practices and procedures.

The Policy was discussed and further developed by the teaching staff of Ballindaggin NS in November 2018.

The policy was provided to the Parents Association and feedback was sought in November 2018. Parental feedback was also sought and received via e-mail in December 2018.

The Policy was discussed, accepted and ratified by the Board of Management of Ballindaggin NS on December 11th 2018.

Rationale:

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

In Ballindaggin National School, 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.

All expectations of behaviour are based on seven key premises, which will be called The St. Colman's Code. They are:

Being Respectful: using nice manners, working quietly, using appropriate language, following teachers directions, listening, waiting your turn to speak.

Being Kind: being caring, being considerate of others and their feelings and thoughts. Playing with other children, including others in games on yard, including others in class activities

Being Responsible: taking care of property, doing homework, arriving on time, having the things you need, following class and school rules, making appropriate judgements about what should be at school, eating a healthy and nutritious lunch, putting litter in the bin.

Being Safe: acting in a considerate, safe manner, playing safely, being careful not to be rough or harm others in any way.

Being Honest: telling the truth even when it's tough, 'owning up' when you're in the wrong.

Being Supportive: Telling when you see someone being hurt deliberately, helping other children in your class, helping other children in the school, helping teachers and other staff, participating in school activities.

Being the Best you can be: Having a positive attitude, always trying to do your best - even when it's not your favourite thing to do.

This code is to be adhered to by all members of the school community: Teachers, SNAs Pupils, Parents, Management and ancillary staff.

The code is displayed in the entrance hall for all to see.

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 availability of policies and an ethos of open communication
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy

Responsibility of Adults (Teachers, school staff & Parents)

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, religious beliefs 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.

School Rules

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 (Restorative Practice)
9. We ask permission to leave the classroom/school/school yard
10. We do our best in class
11. We take responsibility for our 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 keep our hands to ourselves.
3. We are honest. We tell the truth.
4. We are kind. We share.
5. We work hard. We don't waste time.
6. We look after property. We don't damage things.

These 6 "Golden Rules" will be the main ones used for infant classes. Rules apply during school-time and during all school related activities.

Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children, based closely on the "Golden Rules". Class rules 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'). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

Incentives/Reward System

Part of the vision of Ballindaggin National School 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. Our reward system seeks 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.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Stickers, stamps or small prizes
- Homework pass
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication
- Pupil of the week award or special mention by the school principal.
- Class of the month award.

Field trips, annual school tours and any special events will be reserved for those who have consistently strived to behave well.

The '**Class of the month award**' operates as follows:

Marbles will be kept in the school office. Whenever a teacher encounters a pupil who is behaving particularly well, they may give the pupil a marble. This marble is returned to the class of the month collection box in the school reception area. At the end of each month, the class with the most marbles collected will receive the Class of the /month award and each pupil in the class will receive a special treat e.g. pizza, ice-cream, popcorn and a movie.

Examples of very good behaviour where a marble may be given:

- Excellent manners
- Helping other pupils
- Fair play
- Good listening
- Paying very good attention
- Walking quietly in the class line
- Tidying up
- Being a good friend
- Following instructions immediately
- Showing respect
- Trying your best
- Problem solving skills

N.B. These are examples and this is not an exhaustive list.

Unacceptable Behaviour

While teachers and staff will place greater emphasis on positive rewards and strategies, there are times when pupils misbehave and sanctions are required.

Three levels of misbehaviour 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:

Bringing electronic equipment or mobile-phones to school
Not wearing appropriate uniform; bringing in chewing-gum
Not following instructions
Interrupting
Being discourteous or unmannerly
Running in the school building
Leaving litter around school
Not being in line when required
Rough play/behaviour (horseplay)
Using unacceptable language

Examples of serious misbehaviour include:

Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning

Threats or physical hurt to another person
Damage to school property
Damaging other pupil's property
Bringing dangerous equipment to school
Leaving school/school activities without permission.
Telling lies
Stealing
Using offensive language
Deliberately injuring a fellow pupil/endangering self or fellow pupils
Truancy
Copying work / cheating

Examples of gross misbehaviour include:

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

It should be noted that these lists consist of examples only: It is not a totally comprehensive list of misdemeanours.

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

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

VERBAL: name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates.

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

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

Issues in relation to Bullying are explored continually during SPHE lessons and using Circle Time, Drama etc.

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.

In the case where a parent reports a bullying incident, the school reserves the right to inform the relevant parties of the identity of the person making the complaint, when this is deemed necessary. For further information please consult the school's Anti Bullying Policy. **We reiterate that the school should be the first to be informed about the bullying incident.**

What is Restorative Practice?

In Ballindaggin NS incidents in class and on yard are dealt with using the Restorative Practice method.

Restorative Practice (RP) is based on the philosophy and principles of Restorative Justice (RJ).

- Viewing wrongdoing through a “rational” lens – understanding that harm has been done to people and relationships
- Understanding that when such harm is done, it creates obligations and liabilities
- Focusing on repairing the harm and making things right

How does it work?

This means that when things go wrong you

- Involve those responsible for and those affected by the behaviour in solving the problem
- Provide high levels of support for all parties, perpetrators or those affected
- Address the needs of all those involved in the harmful incident
- Provide strong messages and reminders about what behaviours are acceptable and unacceptable

The Restorative Continuum

The Restorative Chat

In the event of a minor issue there are 6 Stages. The teacher or adult will invite both parties to a Restorative Chat where they will

1. Engage– inviting the pupils directly involved into the dialogue
2. Reflect – Encouraging thoughtfulness and empathy
3. Understand – how people have been affected, the harm done
4. Acknowledge the harm done and possible apology
5. Agree – make a plan to fix things
6. Arrange for follow up – making sure the plan is working

The Small Group Conference

In the event of more serious incidents a small group conference may be required to which all pupils affected by the incident are invited.

The Seating plan is circular and the Conference is conducted by a facilitator – an adult familiar with the RP process but one who was not involved in the incident.

There are 5 Stages involved

1. Introduction – The facilitator invites all involved into a room and to take a seat before explaining the rules of engagement
2. Reflection - Encouraging thoughtfulness and empathy
3. Understanding – how people have been affected, the harm done
4. Acknowledgement of the harm done and possible apology
5. Agreement – make a plan to fix things and arranging a follow up
6. Wrapping up – the conference ends when everyone has been invited to contribute and is clear about what they have been asked to do

Sanctions

As well as Restorative Practice and teaching tolerance and respect children in Ballindaggin NS are taught that their actions have consequences.

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.

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 and effected parties (Restorative Justice)
 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
 5. Loss of privileges
 6. Detention during break time
 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)
- This is not an exhaustive list of sanctions. Usually sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

Suspension and Expulsion:

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other

interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, 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 the parents.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. 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.

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, learning support/ resource teacher, and or principal 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 will be invaluable.

Communicating with Parents

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life (in the past or present), which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following methods of communication are to be used within the school:

- Informal/formal parent/teacher meetings or phone calls
- Through children's homework journal
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school

- School notice board
- Twitter/school web-site/school blog
- Aladdin Text Service/ Aladdin Connect

Date: _____

Chairperson BoM

Date: _____

Principal