



## **Ballinadee NS Code of Behaviour Policy**

### **Introduction**

Ballinadee N.S. is known in the community as a happy and caring school. From the moment children enter the school they are encouraged to develop habits of self-discipline and to conform to an acceptable standard of behaviour. We provide a safe and positive learning environment within which we seek to develop a mutually supportive attitude where children can understand and express their feelings and respect those of others.

### **General Aims**

We in Ballinadee N.S. aim to:

- Foster Christian and moral values, which develop respect and care, for oneself, other individuals, the community and the environment.
- Maintain a happy and caring atmosphere in which all are valued, secure and motivated.
- Promote the full and harmonious development of the child including his/her relationship with God, with other people and with the environment.

We believe that the promotion of these aims makes an important contribution to the development of responsible citizenship.

### **Objectives for Pupils**

- To develop self-confidence and self-esteem, showing pride in themselves, their achievements, and interest in their activities and pride in their school.
- To develop respect for others' ways of life and different opinions and cultures.
- To help children show sensitivity and consideration for others.
- To develop self-discipline, independence and determination - taking responsibility for their learning and their environment.
- To acknowledge that each and every person who joins the school community has a personal part to play and that each person's talents will be valued and enjoyed.



## **Behaviour Code**

All staff and pupils have been involved in the development of a Behaviour Code as part of the whole school policy on behaviour and discipline. This is expanded into a set of more detailed School Rules for staff reference. The rules are intended to promote a consistency of approach by all adults working with our pupils. Each class teacher develops a set of "Golden Rules". These rules are negotiated and agreed between class teacher and pupils and are displayed prominently within the classroom. The schools code of discipline reflects the Christian values promoted within the school, with an emphasis on forgiveness, reconciliation, new beginnings and hope.

## **Implementation**

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Rules will be kept to a minimum, emphasise positive behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Board of Management**

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the Code
- Ratify the Code

### **Principals Responsibilities:**

- Promote a positive climate in the school
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner
- Arrange for review of the Code as required

### **Teachers Responsibilities:**

- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil
- Recognise and affirm good work
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils
- Be courteous, consistent and fair
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour
- Provide support for colleagues
- Communicate with parents and provide reports on matters of mutual concern
- Report to Principal where necessary



### **SNA Responsibilities**

- To ensure the children in their care are in a safe and secure environment
- To inform teacher of any concerns/report misbehaviour
- Recognise and affirm good behaviour and effort
- Provide support for colleagues

### **Pupils Responsibilities**

- Attend school punctually each day
- Listen to their teachers and act on instruction/advice
- Show respect for all members of the school community
- Respect all school property and the property of others
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling
- Include other pupils in games and activities
- Bring correct materials/books to school
- Follow class and school rules

### **Parents/Guardians Responsibilities:**

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property
- Ensure that children attend punctually each day and are collected punctually
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's schoolwork
- Familiarise yourself and your child with the code of behaviour and support its implementation
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour

### **Adults on school premises:**

It is expected that all adults on school premises will refer matters of discipline to the class teacher or the Principal. It is expected that all adults in the school will encourage good behaviour and discourage poor behaviour, as would any responsible parent. The school works in partnership with parents to support children in every way possible. However, the Education Act places a clear responsibility on schools to ensure that they work together with other agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. As a result, if concerns are raised within the school it will be referred to Social Services. This is in line with Government policy. Should an adult on school premises threaten a child physically or verbally the matter would be referred to the Principal and Board of Management if necessary.

Staff and management are expected to lead by example and provide children with role models of good manners and courtesy to each other and to the children in our care.

### **Rewards**

Part of the vision of Ballinadee 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. 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 (where COVID-19 restrictions allow)
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication
- 'Bualadh Bos' in class or special mention in front of whole school
- Teachers operate reward systems within their classes-these may involve Golden Time or issuing of Homework vouchers

### **Sanctions**

Classroom teachers are urged to ensure a well-disciplined atmosphere from the moment children come in the classroom.

Behaviour will be categorized as minor, serious or gross by the teachers and principal based on a commonsense approach with regard to the gravity of misbehavior and with due regard for the age and emotional development of the child. It must be clear to the pupils involved why the sanction is being applied. Sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

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.

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 and learning ability) 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/correcting pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class (where COVID-19 restrictions allow)
4. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened
5. Loss of privileges-withdrawal of Golden Time, withdrawal of involvement in extra-curricular activities i.e. soccer league, Sciath na Scol etc.
6. Detention during break
7. If a pupil's behaviour is a source of danger/disruption to himself/herself or others he/she may be removed from the activity in which he/she is involved e.g. play, PE, Visual Arts etc.
8. Communication with parents
9. Referral to Principal/Deputy Principal
10. Principal/Class teacher communicating with parents at an early stage
11. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular 7/88 and Education Welfare Act 2000)



## Minor Misbehaviour

Class teachers deal with minor misbehaviours within the classroom using a common sense approach. A firm verbal reprimand is usually sufficient for children who do not behave well or waste time. However, there may be times when other systems will be employed-e.g. puppets, Golden Time, Circle Time etc. This is at the discretion of the class teacher.

Sometimes it may be necessary to withdraw a child from group work, if behaviour is persistent. Repeated minor misbehaviour will result in teacher contacting parents/guardian.

### Level 1: Minor Misbehaviour: (including but not limited to the following)

- Bringing electronic equipment or mobile phones to school
- Not following instructions
- Leaving yard during break without permission
- Failure to play safely

### Level 2: Serious Misbehaviour

These include:

- bullying
- disrespectful behaviour towards a teacher or classmate
- purposely damaging other pupils or school property
- leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission.

Children are sent to the Principal following serious incidents. Parents will be notified by phone and a meeting requested.

Parents will be contacted if there are concerns about a child's persistent poor behaviour, if the behaviour is out of character or if it is a one off incident that is unacceptable, with the expectation that school and home will be able to support each other to prevent further occurrences.

Sanctions to be considered in consultation with parents will include:

- Loss of break times
- Use of a behaviour contract or individual rewards system for a set period
- Withdrawal from extra- curricular activities for a set time-to be agreed with principal
- Withdrawal from school teams for a set time



### **Level 3: Gross Misbehaviour**

These include

- aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil
- vandalism of school, teachers or other pupil's property
- stealing, possession/supply or use of alcohol, cigarettes, illegal drugs and or other harmful substances
- Bullying (refer to anti-bullying policy)
- sharing inappropriate explicit sexual material with other pupils
- bringing a weapon to school
- inappropriate use of a mobile phone
- Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions towards another person or group involving gender, religion, disability, or ethnic origin.

*Steps to be taken when dealing with gross misbehaviour*

1. Inform parents of gross misbehaviour
2. Chairperson and principal sanction immediate suspension
3. Permanent expulsion will be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with rule 130 (6) of the Education Act

“ A pupil cannot be struck off the rolls for breaches of discipline without prior consent of patron and until alternative arrangements are made for enrolment of pupil at another suitable school in the locality.”

Parents will be informed of their right to appeal under section 29 of The Education Act.

With regard to pupils with Special Educational Needs these sanctions may be modified on a case by case basis.

### **Suspension and Expulsion**

Before serious sanctions such as detention, 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, SEN team, 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.

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.





## **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.

This policy is made explicit to parents at the New Parents Afternoon. Parents accept our Code of Discipline upon enrolment.

## **Agencies**

Close links are established with external support agencies - Educational Psychologists, Social Services, Health Authority and Gardaí. Contact is made when appropriate.

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

- Informal/formal parent/teacher
- Through children's homework journal (infants do not have a homework journal, please check bags for notes)
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- Email

## **Attendance**

This school aims to ensure there are no unauthorised absences and that children are in school on time. Records of attendance are monitored. Children with poor attendance records in general do not perform well at school and can often be unhappy or lack concentration. Parents are advised and encouraged to ensure that their children attend school every day and on time. Where problems arise, parents are contacted and told of the necessity for good attendance. Tusla is informed when pupils are absent for twenty days.



### **Staff Training**

Members of staff in Ballinadee N.S. regularly attend training on Positive Behaviour Management. Members of staff have attended training on 'The Incredible Years Programme', 'Conflict Resolution', 'Mindfulness' and 'Friends for Life' Programme.



## **Ballinadee National School** **School Rules**

Both in and out of school pupils should behave in a way that will bring credit to themselves and to our school.

### **We expect:**

- ✓ Good behaviour and courtesy
- ✓ Helpfulness and co-operation
- ✓ Respect for possessions and property of the school and others
- ✓ Caring for and conserving the environment around the school site

**Pupils should care for the safety and wellbeing of everyone associated with the school.**

This includes:

- ✓ Walking sensibly in school or in areas where collisions are likely
- ✓ Returning immediately to the teacher if their parent or responsible person is not there to collect them at the end of the day.
- ✓ Avoiding playing games that will distress, offend, or could cause injury to others.
- ✓ Not climbing
- ✓ Not throwing items likely to hurt others e.g. stones
- ✓ Not play fighting-including using sticks or toy weapons e.g. guns, swords.
- ✓ Not using a mobile phone on school premises

**Pupils are expected to be appropriately dressed and equipped for school life.**

This includes:

- ✓ Having the appropriate kit of lessons, including games.
- ✓ Naming all articles brought to school-no responsibility is accepted for loss or damage to valuables brought in.
- ✓ Toys are only allowed with class teachers' permission.
- ✓ Avoiding bringing money into school unless there is a good reason, and always in a labelled envelope.



The school reserves the right to ban any item or practice which, in the opinion of the Principal, could lead to difficulties between children or lessen the image of the school.

### ***Unacceptable Behaviour***

The following forms of behaviour are unacceptable in this school

- ❖ Disobedience, answering back, rudeness or aggression to an adult.
- ❖ Racist or sexist comments, swearing and unkind remarks.
- ❖ Physical violence-biting, spitting, hitting, or kicking
- ❖ Bullying
- ❖ Stealing and damaging property
- ❖ Not keeping our school rules

### **Ratification**

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management of Ballinadee National School on  
...23/01/23

Susan Toal

Susan Toal

Chairperson of Board of Management

Carolyn McHugh

Carolyn McHugh

Principal / Secretary of the Board of Management