



Bandonbridge N.S. Code of Behaviour

Date ratified by the Board of Management: 22/10/2010

Date of review: 2015/2016 following new building work at the school

Date of review: Feb 2017

Date of review: Feb 2018

Date of review: Jan 2019

Date of review: Jan 2020

Date of review: Sept 2023

Introduction

It is vitally important that pupils enjoy a pleasant and disciplined atmosphere, so they can develop to their full potential, develop self-discipline, respect each other and respect those in authority. Consequently, it is important that a fair and efficient Code of Behaviour prevails within the school.

The school has a central role in the children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. In seeking to define acceptable standards of behaviour it is acknowledged that these are goals to be worked towards rather than expectations that are either fulfilled or not.

The initial policy was formulated collaboratively by the school staff, parents, members of the Board of Management and senior pupils using the DES Circular 20/90 on School Behaviour and Discipline as well as the NEWB Developing a Code of Behaviour Guidelines for Schools 2008.

Rationale

It was decided to review the existing Code of Behaviour to reflect current practices and their efficacy. It has been two years since school practices and procedures returned to "normal" following the restrictions during and post-Covid. Teaching and ancillary staff members have noted challenges arising from the Covid lockdowns and subsequent restrictive practices i.e. difficulty with routine, anxiety, school refusal. As we grapple with any behavioural consequences, reviewing how we foster positive behaviour and prevent behaviours which negatively impact the pupils and staff, is important.

Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the school

Bandonbridge N.S. is a community where all pupils are respected - irrespective of gender, social background, family circumstances, educational achievement, physical characteristics or intellectual functioning. As a multicultural school, we welcome pupils from a wide variety of countries and cultures and insist on inclusion and tolerance of those we perceive as different. Pupils experience a sense of caring and belonging, they are treated fairly, and their spiritual, moral and religious development is encouraged, as is their intellectual, social and academic development.

We nurture, promote and protect moral values such as honesty, truthfulness, justice, fairness, sensitivity to others, and civic and national responsibility. It is a goal of our school to prepare its pupils to be responsible and active citizens of Ireland and the world. Our Ethos Statement, Vision, Mission and Motto (which was painted on the exterior wall of the school grounds by 6th class 2023) reflect these goals.

Ethos Statement [Ethos | Bandonbridge N.S. \(bandonbridgens.net\)](https://bandonbridgens.net)

Vision: To sow the seed for curiosity, creativity and exploration in a nurturing and inspiring learning environment where all children unlock their potential for a bright future.

Mission:

- We cherish all our pupils equally, irrespective of gender, family background, religion, race or ability.
- We endeavour to create a learning environment when exploration and investigation are encouraged, where civic awareness is fostered and Christian values inform the education provided.
- We nurture mutual respect between adults and pupils as we work towards shared goals.
- We promote inclusion of all, ensuring teaching and learning is cognisant of individuality and the diverse enrolment of the school.
- We cultivate an atmosphere which ensures the wellbeing of all.
- We will provide quality teaching and learning, with additional support for those who need it.

Motto: Hand in hand, we learn and grow

Aims of the Code:

- To allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious way
- To enhance the learning environment 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 develop pupils' self-esteem and their sense of responsibility
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community
- To assist 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.

Guidelines/Content of the Policy

Every effort is made to foster a stimulating and happy atmosphere in the school which is conducive to learning and development. The school adopts a positive approach to behavioural management, which appeals to the child's better nature and encourages an acceptable standard of behaviour. Every effort is made to ensure that the policy on behaviour is implemented in a manner which is consistent and fair to all pupils. The purpose of applying sanctions is to attempt to motivate the child in a positive manner.

Regular efforts are made to counsel pupils to conform to the school's Code of Behaviour. Communication between school and home is encouraged and parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss any problem that arises, with the child's teacher or the principal, at a mutually convenient time.

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, Additional Support Teacher, and or Principal. School staff will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will always be considered. Professional advice from external assessments will be invaluable. SNAs have a role to play in supporting pupils who may need additional guidance throughout the day.

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.

General Guidelines for Behaviour Based on the Characteristic Spirit of the School

- Pupils are always expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable
- Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
- Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to wear their school uniform, to have all books and required materials.
- Pupils are expected to obey a teacher's instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
- Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing by parents/guardians, stating the reason for absence. Parents/guardians can record this information using Aladdin Connect. Failure to attend school regularly will result in a referral to Tusla Education Welfare Office.

These guidelines will form the basis of the Classroom Rules/Class Contract/Colour Rules which may be formulated collaboratively between pupils and teacher at the beginning of the year.

Guidelines Regarding Daily Activities

These guidelines are subject to change if circumstances require a temporary or more long-term change i.e. another pandemic, where the guidelines are insufficient, changes to the playground/school building due to maintenance, upcoming building work for the new ASD classes etc.

- On arrival pupils leave coats in cloakroom, return to classroom and sit at desks (other arrangements may be made depending on circumstances). JI and SI hang their coats in their classrooms.
- Currently we have split lunch breaks so 4 class groups are out in assigned areas with assigned teachers and SNAs at any given time.
- In the afternoon pupils collect coats, return to classrooms, collect bags and await dismissal. Pupils travelling by bus will walk to their designated bus. The remainder of the pupils will be escorted to the front of the school and wait in their assigned area, with their class teacher, until collected.
- Pupils will be supervised by a teacher as they go through doorways, when entering or leaving as a group.
- Pupils will walk in the school buildings, to and from play areas, cars, buses, etc. and keep to the left at doorways, passages, etc.
- Pupils will play in their designated areas at break times.
- Ball play will take place on grass areas or the basketball court and all toys/equipment will be used with care.
- The passage between Room 3 and basketball court may be used by children to facilitate the safe movement of children at the beginning and end of breaktimes.
- Climbing on or hanging off any school rails will not be allowed.
- Pupils may not go through the internal gates at break time or at home time until the gate is opened by a member of staff.
- At the end of playtimes, pupils will freeze at first bell. At the second bell, they put away playtime equipment and walk to their lines, unless otherwise instructed.
- Pupils will work to the best of their ability.
- Pupils listen to and show respect to all members of the school community both within the school and on fieldtrips/outings – [see also out Policy on School Tours/Outings \(to be done\)](#)
- Pupils will endeavour to play safely.
- Pupils will ask a duty teacher for permission to go inside to the toilet at breaktime. Only one child is allowed inside at a time, if possible.
- See also our Acceptable Use Policy for guidelines on “netiquette”.

Affirming Positive Behaviour

Bandonbridge N.S. believes that positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions. Ensuring the emotional and physical well-being of pupils (and, to some degree, their families), helps us to recognise the signs which may lead to unacceptable behaviour. Our Support Teachers and Special Needs Assistants play a vital role in affirming and modelling positive behaviour for pupils with Special Educational Needs.

The following strategies/incentives constitute some of those used in our school. It is not an exhaustive list:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment/star on a child's exercise book/project/homework copies etc.
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation
- Praise in front of class group/Support Teacher/EAL teacher
- Individual/class merit awards, points system or award stamps
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- Written or verbal communication with parents/guardians; including, communication relating to individual/group achievements and progress with behaviour management
- 6th class annual awards ceremony in June – including awards and certificates of achievement
- Time spent with SET or SNA to work through social stories, one-to-one counselling, role play etc.
- Golden time, a night off homework etc.

- Lessons which teach/model the behaviours which the teacher would like to promote – during SPHE, Religion, including specific programmes which promote coping strategies which might modify/moderate pupil's behaviours (Friends for Life, Walk Talk, Get Up Stand Up etc.)
- Collaboration between the class teacher and pupils (in older classes particularly) on agreed classroom and playground rules

Unacceptable Behaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher. 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:

- Interrupting class work
- Being discourteous or unmannerly
- Minor infringement of the school rules
- Talking out of turn
- Homework repeatedly not done

Examples of serious misbehaviour:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Behaviour that repeatedly interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Using unacceptable language
- Spitting or shouting in someone's face
- Inappropriate use of the Internet, including Cyberbullying
- Deliberate, continual disobedience
- Absenteeism
- Bringing and using a personal mobile phone or other device in school (without permission from the class teacher/Principal)

Examples of gross misbehaviour:

- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff or a pupil
- Assault on a staff member or pupil
- Leaving school premises without permission
- Serious theft
- Serious damage to property
- Bringing weapons or dangerous substances to school
- Putting a pupil or member of staff in danger by serious defamation/postings on social media etc.

Discouraging Misbehaviour

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development. It must be clear why the sanction is being applied. The consequence must relate as closely as possible to the behaviour. It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions. Group punishment should be avoided whenever possible as it breeds resentment. There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences. It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus. If deemed necessary, a specific class behaviour plan will be drawn up to assist a class to manage behaviour.

Sanctions may include:

- Reasoning with pupil and referral to Code of Behaviour.
- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class.
- Prescribing extra work which relates to the misconduct/completion of work not completed in school or the previous night.
- Communication with parents.
- Referral to Principal.
- Loss of privileges and responsibilities.
- Principal communicating with parents.
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by Department circulars and Education Welfare Act 2000 and National Educational Welfare Board Guidelines).

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health and safety. Our school prefers not to use detention at breaktimes as a sanction for misbehaviour, except in extreme situations where the pupils may be a danger to themselves or others; we recognise the importance of breaktimes for well-being and as an aid to relieve stress/counter a stressful situation.

Methods for Recording Breaches of Behaviour

- Individual teachers may keep a record of repeated unacceptable behaviour – this will be confidential. If behaviour is charted over a period of weeks both the pupil and parents should be aware.
- Teachers on playground supervision must report incidents of unacceptable behaviour to the relevant class teacher.
- In cases of serious breaches of behaviour, a record of the behaviour and the outcome is kept by the principal.
- All records will be kept in accordance with the *Data Protection Act 1988*, the *Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003* and *GDPR*.

Procedures for Contacting the School/Home in Relation to a Behaviour Problem:

- Parents/guardians will be contacted by phone, Aladdin Connect, email or letter or in person to arrange a meeting (this may be via video conference) at a mutually convenient time if this is deemed necessary. Similarly, parents/guardians may initiate the process.
- Scheduled Parent/Teacher meetings may also give an opportunity for behaviour issues to be discussed.
- At the induction afternoon in June (which may be held remotely during a pandemic/government directive) and the new parent meeting in September, parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the school regarding any issues that may arise concerning their child.
- 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.
- General comment in school newsletter or note/letter to specific group or class.

Before/After School

Parents/guardians are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before the official opening time of 8:45 a.m. or after the official closing time of 2.25 p.m. (Infants 1.25 p.m.). The exception to this is for pupils arriving by school transport. The Principal or teacher designated will supervise these pupils at the front of the school until 8:45.

Where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved of by the Board of Management pupils will be supervised by adult/adults until the activity ends. Pupils involved in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with school Code of Behaviour during these times.

Pupils who travel to school by school bus are expected to sit in their seat and wear their seatbelt for the duration of the journey. The school bus inspector is responsible for behavioural issues on the bus.

Suspension/Expulsion (Refer to: Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB p70-78 and 80-89)

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

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, suspension may be considered. Parents/guardians concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff or another pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour. The exception to this is when the behaviour is via the Internet/social media, where a one off aggressive or threatening post, which has the possibility of circulation, is deemed to be cyberbullying and a 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/guardians will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the chairperson, the class teacher and the Principal. 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 misbehaviour, the 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. In cases of suspension, contact may be made with the SENO, NEPS and the Education Welfare Officer (Tusla).

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. Parents/Guardians will be informed of the right to appeal in relation to expulsion and suspension which would result in a cumulative period of 20 days or more suspension in a school year.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

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

Other Policies

Policies such as the Anti-Bullying Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Inclusion of Pupils with Special Educational Needs, Substance Use Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, SPHE Policy were taken into consideration when drawing up this policy.

Additionally, our school has a Students' Council which allows pupils to have an input into decision making, as well as creating and/or amending school rules.

Success Criteria

The success of the policy will be determined by:

- Positive feedback from staff members, parents/guardians, pupils
- Observation of behaviour in classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school outings etc.
- Observations of visitors to the school

Roles and responsibilities

The Board of Management is responsible for providing a comfortable, safe environment, for supporting the Principal and staff in implementing the code and for dealing with any instances of suspension or expulsion.

The Principal is responsible for promoting a positive climate in the school, ensuring that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner and arranging for an annual review of the Code.

The teachers and SNAs:

- Support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Create a safe learning environment for each pupil.
- Recognise and affirm good work.
- Prepare schoolwork and correct work done by pupils. (teachers only)
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils. (teachers only)
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour. (teachers only)
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour. (teachers only)
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents/guardians when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern. (teachers only)

The pupils are responsible for:

- Attending school regularly and punctually.
- Listening to their teachers and acting on instructions/advice.
- Showing respect for all members of the school community.
- Respecting all school property and the property of other pupils, including assistive technology.
- Avoiding behaviours which would endanger others or themselves.
- Avoiding all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Including other pupils in games and activities.
- Bringing correct materials/books to school.
- Wearing their school uniform.
- Following school and class rules.

The parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Encouraging children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
- Ensuring that children attend regularly and punctually and reporting on absences promptly.
- Taking an interested in, supporting and encouraging their children's schoolwork and supplying necessary stationery/materials. This includes engaging with Parent-Teacher conferences.
- Becoming familiar with the Code of Behaviour and supporting its implementation.
- Refraining from making statements in children's hearing which could be interpreted as being critical of other school pupils, the school or any of the staff. If there are concerns make an appointment to discuss the situation.
- Being courteous towards all pupils and staff; aggressive behaviour either verbal or physical will not be tolerated.
- Co-operating with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties to others.
- Communicating with the class teacher/principal in relation to any problems which may affect their child's progress or behaviour.

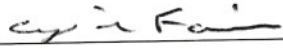
Implementation and Review

The BoM officially ratified the original policy on 22nd October 2010, and it was implemented in the school from November 1st, 2010. The policy will be reviewed annually and, if necessary, amended as the need arises.

Communication

The ratified policy is available to the patron on request. The policy is available to view on our school website and in the office. Applicant parents/guardians must read the school Code of Behaviour before signing an Application Form for Enrolment in Bandonbridge N.S.

Signed



Chairperson, Board of Management