



## **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

## **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.

## **Rationale**

It was decided to review the existing Code of Behaviour because:

- the existing policy was due for review and amendment
- it is important to reflect on current practices and their efficacy
- it is a requirement under DBS Circular 20/90 on School Discipline

## **Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the school**

The Code of Behaviour relates to the ethos of the school in that:

The School is a community where all pupils are respected - irrespective of gender, social background, family circumstances, educational achievement, physical characteristics or intellectual functioning. 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.

The School is a community where moral values such as honesty, truthfulness, justice, fairness, sensitivity to others, and civic and national responsibility are nurtured and protected. It is a goal of the School to prepare its pupils to be responsible and active citizens of Ireland and the world.

## **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.

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 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.

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

### **Guidelines Regarding Daily Activities**

- On arrival pupils leave coats in cloakroom, return to classroom and sit at desks (other arrangements may be made depending on circumstances). J1 and S1 hang their coats in their classrooms.
- Currently we have split lunch breaks: J.I. – 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>. If a pupil cannot stay outside during break-time and lunchtime he/she will stay in the appointed first aid classrooms, Room 4 and Room 8.
- 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 the area by the rowan tree until collected.
- Infant pupils will be collected from their classroom doors at Infant collection time.
- 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 will be used by children from that room and to facilitate the safe movement of children at change over times.
- 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 and walk to their lines at second bell 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.
- Pupils will always play safely .
- Pupils will ask a duty teacher for permission to go inside to the toilet at breaktime.

### **Affirming Positive Behaviour**

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions.

### **Strategies/Incentives**

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment/star on a child's exercise book/project/homework journal etc.
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group/Additional Support Teacher.
- Individual/class merit awards, points system or award stamps.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Written or verbal communication with parent.
- Annual formal awards ceremony in June – including awards and certificates of achievement.

### **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
- Bringing chewing gum to school etc.

### **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
- Inappropriate use of the internet
- Deliberate, continual disobedience

### **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

### **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.
- Communication with parents.
- Detention during break/lunchtime.
- 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.

### **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, email or letter or in person to arrange a meeting 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 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 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 2.35 p.m. (Infants 1.35 p.m.). 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 behaviour policy during these times.

### **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 will be utilized. 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/guardians 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, 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.

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 Local Welfare Education 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 parent/s 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, Special Education, Substance Use Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, SPHE 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, pupils
- Observation of behaviour in class rooms, corridors, school grounds, school outings etc.
- Observations of visitors to the school
- Decrease in number of names, especially repeated names, in detention record sheets

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### *Board of Management's Responsibilities*

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

### *Principal's 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.
- Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
- 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 when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

### *Pupils' Responsibilities*

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others or themselves.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow school and class rules.

### *Parents'/Guardians' Responsibilities*

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- To be interested in, to support and encourage their children's school work and supply necessary books and materials.
- To be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and support its implementation.
- To be careful not to make 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.
- To be courteous towards all pupils and staff; aggressive behaviour either verbal or physical will not be tolerated.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties to others.
- Communicate with the class teacher/principal in relation to any problems which may affect their child's progress or behaviour.

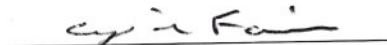
### **Implementation and Review**

The BoM officially ratified the original policy on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2010, and it was implemented in the school from November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010.

The policy will be reviewed regularly 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