

Ballinamore Community School

Code of Behaviour

RATIONALE

The Code of Behaviour is the set of programmes, practices and procedures that together form the school's plan for helping students in the school to behave and learn well.

The code of behaviour helps the school community to promote the school ethos, relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourages good behaviour and prevent unacceptable behaviour. The code of behaviour helps staff, students and parents to work together for a happy, effective and safe school. The code expresses the vision, mission and values of the school and its trustees.

MISSION AND AIMS

Our Mission is the provision of a broad, relevant curriculum for our students, through which they can develop their full potential. We aim to prepare our students to participate as good Christians and as good citizens in society.

It translates the expectations of staff, parents and students into practical arrangements that help to ensure continuity of instruction to all students. It helps to foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour are expected and supported.

The code of behaviour enables school authorities to strike an appropriate balance between their duty to maintain an effective learning environment for all and their responsibility to students whose behaviour presents a challenge to the teaching and learning process. The code of behaviour is a key tool in enabling the school authorities to support the learning of every student in the school.

In order to have the best chance of achieving its objectives, the code of behaviour addresses: -

- the standards of behaviour expected in the school
- the plan for promoting good behaviour
- the ways in which the school responds to unacceptable behaviour
- the plan for implementing the code of behaviour
- school procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

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| Provides clarity | <p>The code of behaviour describes the school's expectations about how each member of the school community (students, staff and parents) will help to make the school a suitable environment for teaching and learning.</p> <p>The code also describes how the school will respond to behaviour that interrupts, diminishes or prevents teaching and learning in the school.</p> <p>The code makes it clear that an orderly, harmonious school requires students to behave in accordance with that code.</p> |
| Affirms that everyone's behaviour matters | <p>The school climate and atmosphere are created by the actions and behaviour of everyone in the school.</p> |
| Focus on promoting good behaviour | <p>The code gives priority to promoting good behaviour. The tone and emphasis of the code is on setting high expectations and affirming good behaviour.</p> |
| Balances needs | <p>The code makes clear that the educational needs of a student whose behaviour is unacceptable will be balanced with the educational needs of other students in the school and no one student will be allowed to adversely effect other students rights and needs.</p> |
| Recognises that relationships are crucial | <p>The quality of relationships between teachers and students is a powerful influence on behaviour in a school. Our code aims to foster relationships of trust and respect between students and teachers.</p> |
| Focusing on personal responsibility | <p>The code helps our young people to experience the value of being responsible, participating members of the school community.</p> |
| Ensuring fairness and equity | <p>The code is informed by the principle of fairness. It respects the principles of natural justice, and ensures a consistent approach to behaviour on the part of all school personnel.</p> |
| Promoting equality | <p>The code promotes equality for all members of the school community. The code prevents discrimination and allows for appropriate accommodation of difference, in accordance with Equal Status legislation.</p> |

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| Recognising educational vulnerability | The code of behaviour reflects the school's commitment to provide positive support, including active teaching of relevant skills, for those students who are more vulnerable to behaviour problems. |
| Attending to the welfare of students | The code of behaviour is based on a commitment to the welfare of every student, including the right to participate in, and benefit from, education. |
| Attending to the welfare of staff | The code helps to promote a positive and safe working environment for all staff, including a positive and safe classroom environment for teachers. |
| Promoting safety and freedom from threat | The code promotes the conditions for learning and teaching, dignity and freedom from threat of violence for both staff and students. |

STANDARDS

Students are more likely to benefit from their education and to be happy in a structured, caring environment where high standards of behaviour are expected and adhered to.

The school's standards of behaviour express the kinds of behaviour and relationships that will create a positive environment for teaching and learning. They describe the behaviour expected of all members of the school community. Standards are the means by which the school will:

- provide clarity for students about the school's high expectations for their behaviour
- set goals for students that will guide them in moving towards mature and appropriate behaviour
- serve as a practical tool for teaching and learning.

THE CONTENT AND FOCUS OF STANDARDS

Standards signal positive values

Our standards of behaviour reflect our values which stem from our mission statement.

- Appreciation
- Respect for self and others
- Kindness and willingness to help others
- Courtesy and good manners
- Fairness
- Respect
- Tolerance
- Friendship
- Loyalty

The standards describe the commitment that the school expects from students to their own learning and to that of their peers. The commitment includes:

- Attending school regularly and punctually
- Doing one's best in class
- Taking responsibility for one's work
- Keeping the rules
- Helping to create a safe, positive environment
- Respecting staff
- Respecting other students and their learning
- Participating in school activities and having a positive approach to school activities.

STANDARDS SIGNAL UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Standards are also a way of signalling to members of the school community the kinds of behaviours that are not acceptable in the school, for example:

- 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 property
- Theft.

SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM RULES

The school and classroom rules translate standards into practical guidance about the behaviour expected of students. Rules provide clear boundaries. They describe in simple terms how to behave in order to learn well and to develop into mature and responsible individuals.

PASTORAL FRAMEWORK

School rules and the code of behaviour are the framework which allows effective teaching learning and positive social development to take place. Rules inevitably imply sanctions and these are clearly stated. It is equally important that we emphasise the balance of sanctions with our Pastoral Care philosophy of caring for the overall welfare of students which permeates all interactions between staff and students.

Class Teachers

Class teachers advise students how to behave properly in order to maximise teaching and learning in the classroom.

Tutors

Each class group has a Tutor who takes a pastoral interest in their students and is aware of academic progress and attendance.

Year Heads

The Year Head encourages good student behaviour, and attendance and liaises with class teachers, tutor, counsellor, parents and senior management.

Academic Monitor

Monitors academic progress and discusses individual academic difficulties with students, parents and teachers with a view to furthering the students learning and educational opportunities.

Guidance Counsellor & Chaplain

The Guidance Counsellor Ms. Aisling Garvey & Chaplain Ms. Ann Marie Madden have a supportive role for all students who may be experiencing personal or school related difficulties and career opportunities.

Peer Support and Education - Mentoring

Fifth Year students help and support First Year students through the mentoring system. During S.P.H.E. and Religion classes students receive an educational programme in anti-bullying and drugs education. The Student Council provide a forum through which student issues are be addressed.

REWARDS

- Praise by Teacher, Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal, Principal
- Positive note in diary/positive letter home/positive behaviour sheets
- Support/Report card
- Certificates
- Subject related games
- Trips, outings, films, videos.
- Class prizes
- Wall displays
- Work exhibited/published
- Recognition of achievement at Awards ceremony
 - Trophies, Medals, Plaques
 - Certificates
 - Vouchers/cheques
- Selection as prefects, school representatives or assistants on public occasions
- Responsibilities given

Uniform

Our uniform is part of our identity which should be worn with pride. It identifies us as part of a team which is a vital preparation for our role in society and reduces competition for rapidly changing trends. .

- ◆ For boys the uniform is a grey jumper, navy blue trousers and a light blue shirt. For girls the uniform is a claret coloured jumper and navy blue skirt or trousers and a white shirt. Both jumpers have a navy blue stripe in the neckline. If students wear a T-shirt that is visible, it should be all white only. Students may be asked to remove a T-shirt of any other colour. The material in trousers and skirts should be trevira type.
- ◆ Jeans, cords, track-suit bottoms or combats are not allowed.
- ◆ Uniforms should be kept in good condition.
- ◆ No head gear such as caps or hoods or facial covering are allowed on school grounds or outings.
- ◆ All students must wear the prescribed school uniform during the school day and on school outings.
- ◆ If a student comes to school without the full uniform then a letter signed by a parent, is to be given to the Uniform Monitor. Failure to produce a letter will result in detention at lunchtime that day. Students should not attend school if even part of the uniform is missing for a second day in a row. If students attend for a second day in a row without a full uniform they will have further detention. Parents will be contacted.
- ◆ Girls are allowed to wear one finger ring and one piece per ear. No neck jewellery is allowed.
- ◆ No facial tongue or visible body piercing or studs are permissible. Students will be asked to remove all of the above or absent themselves from school until they are removed. Students having piercing carried out do so in the full knowledge that they will not be allowed attend school until studs or other such jewellery is removed.
- ◆ Body piercings and large ear rings are a health and safety issue

Attendance

- ◆ Students are expected to attend school every day.
- ◆ Before the first class on the day of return from an absence **a letter from a parent with the dates and reason is to be given to the Deputy Principal or Principal.** This letter will be kept on file. **If a student misses twenty school days in one year the Educational Welfare Officer will be informed.**
- ◆ If a student has to leave school at some stage during the day or arrives in school late **a letter from the parent is to be given in advance to the Principal or Deputy Principal.** Students are also obliged to sign in and out in the office before leaving the school, on return and on the occasional late arrival, which may occur. Where no note has been received the school will require contact with a parent/guardian in person or by phone before allowing a student to leave the school grounds. This will delay the student's departure and inconvenience both the parent/guardian and the school. This is in keeping with the 'duty of care' acknowledged by the school and to ensure the safety of students leaving our care.

Text Messages will not be accepted.

- ◆ All students are expected to sit Christmas, Pre-Certificate, and Summer examinations. Students who miss examinations may have to sit another examination. During the Christmas examinations all Third Years and Sixth Years who are not doing house exams are expected to attend class.

Rationale: Happiness and progress are proportional to attendance. The school is legally obliged to keep records of all absences and the reasons for such absences to comply with our duty of care.

Conduct: - in Class

- ◆ A high standard of behaviour is expected from all students. Disruptive behaviour is not acceptable. Each student is expected to follow the instructions of the teacher.
- ◆ Tippex and Chewing Gum are not allowed.
- ◆ Students are expected to move promptly and efficiently between classes. The class teacher shall be the arbitrar of 'promptly and efficiently'
- ◆ If a student does not have homework done, a note of explanation is to be provided by the parent for the teacher. This may be written in the journal. Failure to consistently present homework will result in Homework Sheets being generated by the teacher/s. This may result in the student being placed on *Homework Report*, whereby the student's work is monitored by all teachers for a period of time and copies are forwarded weekly to parents.
- ◆ Consumption of food or drink is not allowed in class time.

Conduct: - on the Grounds

- ◆ Students are to follow the directions given by staff who are supervising the grounds and to return to their classes in time.
- ◆ Smoking, having lighted material or having visible 'electronic cigarettes' are prohibited in the school buildings and on the grounds. The first offence outside the building merits a warning; the second a letter is sent home and the third, a two-day suspension is given. Smoking in the building will result in a two days suspension.
- ◆ Possession of fireworks will result in immediate suspension.
- ◆ Students who come to school under the influence of non-prescription drugs or alcohol or have them in their possession will be liable to suspension or expulsion.
- ◆ Roofs – Students are not permitted to climb onto roofs and will be subject to full discipline proceedings up to and including suspension. This is an insurance and health and safety issue and will be considered a serious offence
- ◆ Students having in their possession dangerous or offensive weapons will be liable to suspension or expulsion. .

Conduct on School Outings

- ◆ Only students who have written consent and are in full school uniform will be allowed to go on school outings: games, competitions or educational visits. (Unless a specific exemption is given by the Principal)
- ◆ No student has an absolute right to attend extracurricular activities. Past behaviour will be taken into account.
- ◆ Students whose behaviour indicates that they have difficulty in following the instructions of teachers will not be allowed to go on school tours. Specific guidelines and rules for tours may be issued when the tour is being organized.

Rationale: Every student has a right to effective learning. This can only occur in an orderly environment where teachers can do their job without hindrance or interruption.

- The behaviour of a minority should not dictate the futures of the majority.
- The school community has a right to have its good name and reputation upheld.
- In our actions we need to consider the feelings and the property of other people in the wider community.
- A positive public perception is a vital component of the schools identity.
- Public behaviour by its members is a clear statement of the values of a community.

Punctuality

- ◆ A warning bell will sound five minutes before first class in the morning and five minutes before the start of classes after breaks. All students should be in school and in class on time. Students who breach this without a parental note or phone call will receive a warning on the first occasion and second occasions called 'red cards', a letter home on the third, and on the fourth offence a suspension of one day will be given. For various reasons the bell may not sound. The same requirements, responsibilities and penalties exist regardless of this.
- ◆ Students late for class will be expected to make up for this time plus a penalty time by reporting for detention.
- ◆ Students going to lockers outside of break times will also receive red cards which will result in the same sanctions as 'lates'.
- ◆ Deliberate refusal to attend class or house exams will result in suspension.

Rationale: Since school is training for life and a prerequisite for every prospective employee is punctuality. Students coming to class late are also a disruption to the learning of others.

Mobile Phones

- ◆ If mobile phones are turned on or used for any purpose on the school grounds, they will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the school day. Refusal to hand up any mobile phone including battery and SIM card may result in suspension.
- ◆ MP3 players are not allowed during class time.
- ◆ Picture phones will be confiscated and handed back only to a parent. The student must delete any photographs or recordings that were taken in school time

Rationale: Phones while having obvious uses are a distraction from the task of learning. Having the phone switched off only means that a message is at most delayed from morning until lunch time and any urgent messages can be conveyed through any staff member or office phone.

Journal

The official school journal must be purchased in the school at the beginning of the school academic year. The student must bring their journal to school each day and have it in their possession for all classes therein. Ballinamore Community School recognise the importance of the journal as a medium of communication throughout the school year. Its functions include

- Recording all student homework
- Communication between Teacher and Year Head
- Communication between Parent and Teacher

The journal contains a number of detachable absence and late notes for convenience. It also contains a copy of the Code of Discipline, Anti- Bullying policy among others. The journal must be kept in good condition by the student. The student will be held responsible for any defacement, graffiti and vulgar comment contained in or on the journal. They may be requested to replace the journal at their own expense where the Year Head deems it unacceptable. Comments may be subject to further disciplinary measures.

The journals will be subject to regular inspection by the Year Head, Teachers, Principal, Deputy Principal.

The journal must be signed by the parent each week and it is incumbent on the student to do this and also to ensure all additional notes are signed on request. Failure to do so will result in lunchtime detention.

Parents should bring journals to the Parent/Teacher meeting.

Respect

- ◆ A high standard of respect for staff is expected. Disrespectful conduct includes the following whether within or outside school hours - failure to carry out the instructions of staff; verbal abuse of staff by making any personal remarks about that person or their family; written abusive comments; public defiance; calling a staff member names directly or within earshot. Throwing objects at or towards a staff member. Such behaviour is very serious and may result in suspension.
- ◆ The school authorities are anxious to eliminate any form of bullying. Once bullying is detected the appropriate action will be taken which may include suspension or expulsion. See: Anti-bullying policy.
- ◆ Students who fight in public, in the school or outside the school, are liable to be suspended.
- ◆ Students may not interfere with, damage or remove, without permission, the property of the school or of others. Where accidental damage occurs it is expected that the person involved will report the incident and that the cost of repairs be met.
- ◆ Harassment: any student involved in the sexual harassment of other students or staff will be liable for suspension or expulsion. (see Sexual Harassment Policy)

Rationale: Our school ethos is grounded in Christian values of human dignity. Disrespect and bullying are contrary to this with every person having a right to live and work in an environment free from threat or intimidation.

Disciplinary Structures

- ◆ Individual **Subject Teachers** will deal with minor misdemeanors in class.
- ◆ The **Class Tutor** advises the student on school related matters and assists the students with any problems. His / her role is primarily pastoral and advisory.
- ◆ The **Year Head** is in charge of disciplinary matters in a Year Group. The Year Head will meet with any pupil referred to him/her.
- ◆ **Guidance Counsellor/Chaplain:** Students who appear to have consistent difficulties following instructions and the schools code of discipline will be

referred to the schools Guidance Counsellor Ms. Garvey or to the school Chaplain Ms. Ann Marie Madden.

- ◆ The **Deputy Principal** will meet a student who has failed to follow the directions of the Year Head.
- ◆ The **Principal** may suspend the student for a definite period of time. Parents will be contacted before the suspension takes place.

Disciplinary Measures

1. Advice from the teacher
2. Warning from the teacher
3. Withdrawal of privileges including participation in extracurricular activities
4. Behaviour Sheets
5. Community service in the school
6. Extra written work, workpacks
7. Referral to the Class Tutor, Year Head and Guidance Counsellor
8. Detention at morning break or lunch time.
9. Year Head Detention at lunch time.

The year head will send home a letter, to be signed by the parent/guardian, informing them of the detention and reasons for it.

NB Lunchtime detention is for the duration of the break and will necessitate the bringing of a packed lunch.

10. Referral to the Deputy Principal, Principal and Guidance Counsellor
11. Parents informed by telephone or Letter
12. On report, with Support Card and the comments communicated to parents
13. Year Head Detention after school

The School will inform the parent/guardian of the date, time and reason for the after-school detention. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure their son/daughter is on time and that dropping off and collection will be solely their responsibility. Note that afterschool detention may be on Saturday.

14. Parents/Guardians asked to come to the school to discuss those issues concerning their child
15. Suspension for a given number of days
16. Expulsion

It is the policy of this school that students will be asked to provide a written account of either, their own or somebody else's actions.

Summary of Disciplinary Procedures

Ballinamore Community School will endeavour to ensure that, in applying any sanction, the duty of care to the student is maintained. Discipline is necessary to ensure that the school rules are adhered to, thereby creating a safe, positive environment for both teaching and learning. Positive behaviour is actively encouraged and sanctions will be used to support this learning process. Sanctions will be appropriate to the age, developmental stage and with regard to their cultural background of the student. The significance of communication is recognised as is the importance of parental support for maintaining positive student behaviour.

Serious breaches of discipline may bypass some or all of these steps.

Step 1

- Behaviour sheets are issued by class teachers or an electronic entry generated on the ePortal system for breach of school rules .

Step 2

- When a student continues to receive Behaviour Sheets or ePortal entries the Year Head will speak with the student
- Parent/Guardian will be informed
- The student will be put on Year Head Detention at Lunchtime where they will be issued with extra work or a workpack.

Step 3

- If there is still no improvement Year Head contacts parents/guardians informing them of the situation.
- If student continues to receive Behaviour Reports he/she is put on Report. A Support Card is issued every day for comment after each class. This must be returned to Deputy Principal/Principal after last class and collected each morning by the student. This support step is for a minimum of two weeks.
- Student meets with Guidance Counsellor/Chaplain.

Step 4

If the student receives poor reports on their Support Card and/or accumulates more Behaviour Reports they may be put on after-school detention, where they will be issued appropriate work to complete. They will not be allowed complete homework or study during the period of this detention.

It is responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure their child's attendance, punctuality and also to ensure that their son/daughter is dropped off and picked up at the set times.

Failure to attend after-school detention will result in an automatic one day suspension

Step 5

- If student has to be put back on report or continues to collect Behaviour Reports there will be a meeting arranged with some or all of the following: Principal(s), Deputy Principal(s), Year Head and a Parent/Guardian. The school may request the attendance of both parents/guardians. A student Behaviour/Support plan will be mutually agreed by all parties.
- Each subject teacher will complete a full report on the student. This will be discussed at the meeting
- A possible outcome of this meeting may be the suspension of the student.

Step 6

- If poor behaviour continues suspension and or expulsion will follow

Serious breaches, as outlined in the Code of Behaviour, will result in suspension and or expulsion and by pass the above procedures.

Suspension Policy

The Principal of the school has the right to suspend students. Some breaches of discipline may result in suspension or in more serious cases expulsion. These include, cheek to staff, bullying, sexual harassment, smoking or having lighted material in a school building, persistent bad behaviour after several warnings, stealing, being in possession of or under the influence of illegal drugs or of alcohol at school or on school outings, possession or use of fireworks or offensive dangerous weapons. All serious breaches of discipline will be recorded in writing. Parents will be contacted before any suspension. If it is necessary to remove a student from the school immediately, because of a serious breach or threat to the safety of the student or others, then the parents will be contacted and met as soon as possible thereafter. In line with NEWB guidelines students who are suspended may be given a study programme/pack to be completed while they are at home.

Appeals

Parents / guardians have the right to appeal a suspension to the Board of Management. If they wish to do so they should inform the Principal as soon as possible. The Board will meet as soon as is practicable. Parents can then appeal to the Board. The Board will decide on the suspension. If the suspension has already been imposed then the Board may decide to remove it from the school record of the student. Parents and the student, if 18, may appeal a suspension that is 20 days or more or any suspension that results in an accumulation of 20 days in one school year, to the Department of Education and Science.

Expulsion

The Board of Management has the right to expel a student from the school. This is carried out only for serious breaches of discipline, when, in the opinion of the Board it would be better for the student and for the school that he/she be excluded permanently from the school. The student, if 18, or his/her parents may appeal this decision to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science.