



## A Code of Behaviour for Glebe National School

In devising the code of behaviour for the Glebe National School consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated, while acknowledging the right of each child to an education in a relatively disruption free environment.

Our code is being reviewed in light of the NEWB publication [Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools](#). Representatives of the school staff, Board of Management and the P.T.A, will review this code. The code of behaviour is subject to regular review and updating as a result of changing circumstances.

Our policy on behaviour is in line with our Anti-Bullying Policy.

### **Rationale:**

- To review and amend the existing policy in light of the publication of the NEWB document
- To ensure an orderly climate for learning in the school
- It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) which refers to the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in section 23 (2) that the code of behaviour shall specify:
  - A. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
  - B. The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
  - C. The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from school;
  - D. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and
  - E. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

### **Vision Statement**

Glebe National School has a vision of all children leaving our school with a well-rounded basic education and strong moral values, enabling them to function in society and to benefit from further education. We want our children to have a high level of self-confidence and self-esteem, and to be happy and content with a positive attitude to school.

### **Our Ethos**

The Glebe National School is a Church of Ireland School committed to an inclusive ethos, where all children are equally valued and respected in a supportive school climate. Varied cultural backgrounds are nurtured and valued. It is the belief of the school that its ethos is a critical factor in establishing and maintaining strong moral values and high standards of behaviour. There are strong links with the local parish church and through the school, moral values, consistent with the Christian faith are promoted and nurtured.

### **Aims:**

- To protect the constitutional rights of all children to an education.
- To encourage a reformed attitude towards discipline in the disruptive pupil.
- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement.
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way 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 ensure the safety and well being 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 throughout the school.
- Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school. The code offers a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are utilised by teachers.
- Pupils are expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and 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 and to be in the right place at the right time.
- 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, stating the reason for absence.

We recognise that there are times and factors in a child's life that may influence their behaviour. These will, of course, be taken into consideration and the child and their behaviour accommodated as a result.

In compliance with Section 23 (4) of the Education Act, prior to registering a pupil, the parents of a child are issued with a copy of the school's code of behaviour and that on application, parents are asked to confirm that they accept the school's policy '*and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code.*'

The ethos of our school will be a major factor in establishing and maintaining high standards of behaviour and discipline. It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, pupils and parents. Parents are expected to support their children in school and to take an active interest in their progress. If there is any matter that parents wish to discuss they should contact the teacher concerned or the Principal to make an appointment. Likewise, parents should make themselves available to discuss their child's progress, if requested to do so by the school.

The school staff will treat all children with respect and dignity. There is a strong sense of community and co-operation among staff, pupils and parents and all are agreed that their focus is primarily on the promotion and recognition of positive behaviour.

## **Teachers/Staff**

The role of the staff is

- To instil the basic principles of appropriate behaviour
- To assist children to maintain/ improve their behaviour
- To attempt to prevent difficulties arising by monitoring patterns of behaviour
- To encourage and reward good behaviour
- To communicate with child and parents in the event of concerns re behaviour
- To ensure that the rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair, consistent manner

The following table (NEWB: Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for schools) is used as a checklist when thinking about how best school can have a positive impact on all its pupils and subsequently, on their behaviour.

<b>Aspects of School Life that may impact on behaviour.</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approaches to addressing educational disadvantage</li><li>• Making adjustments for, and valuing, diversity; and preventing any form of discrimination.</li><li>• Relationships among teachers and students</li><li>• Students' sense of belonging to the school community</li><li>• School and classroom environment</li><li>• Relevance of curriculum to students' lives</li><li>• Classroom Management.</li><li>• Ability grouping</li><li>• Timetables</li><li>• Break-time management</li><li>• Student Participation</li><li>• Parental Involvement.</li></ul>

The school's SPHE curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship.

- We follow the Department of Education and Science's SPHE curriculum and each teacher would ensure that the correct amount of time as advised by the DES is adhered to.
- The SPHE plan also forms part of our school plan and therefore, each member of the teaching staff would be issued a copy.
- Circle Time, debates and discussion forums are frequently used as teaching methods. These strategies are used to boost the self-esteem and confidence of the pupils and in doing so promote independence. Serving of the Student Council and Green Schools Committee have also been found to have similar desired effects.

## **Board of Management**

The Board of Management has a role to play in the maintenance of desirable standards of behaviour in a school. It should be supportive of the Principal Teacher in the application of a fair code of behaviour and discipline within the school' (Circular 20/90).

- The principal is the day to day manager of the school and ongoing implementation of the code will be the responsibility of the principal and the teaching staff of the school, the Board of Management will be informed if severe steps such as suspension and expulsion have had to be taken.
- The Board of Management provide a supportive role to the principal and the teaching staff in the positive implementation of the school Code of Behaviour. The chairperson and the principal meet on a regular basis and, if necessary, discuss behavioural concerns. In addition, the board would promote the staff being pro active and to this end would fund opportunities for staff development in the area of behaviour understanding and its management.
- The Board are aware of their position and role in the suspension and expulsion of a pupil or pupils from the school.

## **Parents**

‘Evidence seems to indicate that schools which succeed in achieving and maintaining high standards of behaviour and discipline tend to be those with the best relationships with parents.’

It is vital, for the benefit of all, that parents help us to help their children. We would therefore request that:

- Children are punctual
- Attendance is regular. (We are legally obliged to notify the Department should a child be absent for more than 20 school days annually. Extenuating circumstances notwithstanding)
- A written explanation be given, prior to, a pre-arranged absence or following a child’s absence
- You give supportive co-operation to benefit your child/ren
- You take advantage of our open door policy by communicating any issue which troubles yourself or your child/ren at an early stage
- Children come to school in full uniform (school tracksuit for P.E. days).
- Children come well slept, well nourished, alert and clean so they can learn!
- You attend group and individual parent teacher meetings as set out by the school in addition to extra meetings arranged out of concern by teacher, parent or principal.

## **Pupils**

In the Glebe National School pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour and are openly encouraged to take an active role in the running of the school.

- Drafting rules for the classroom.
- Taking part in assemblies.
- Introduction of a Student Council.
- Buddy system
- Green School Committee etc.

The school rules are being kept to:

- Be on time and be prepared.
- Know when to walk. Know when to run. Know when to talk. Know when to listen. Know when to sit. Know when to stand.
- Make your best effort always.
- Keep unhelpful hands and comments to yourself.
- Be a buddy not a bully.
- No name calling.

All efforts will be made to match the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and interests of each pupil. This should help reduce boredom, lack of interest or lack of progress.

## **Rewards and acknowledgements of good behaviour.**

Each class will have its own reward system i.e. star of the week, homework vouchers etc.

- Anytime there is an entry into or winner of a competition outside school, this is acknowledged in assembly.
- Pupils on various committees are encouraged to address the school in assembly.
- If pupils have won something outside school they tell their news at assembly.
- All good news is announced at assembly.
- Etiquette/Highest Marks-awarded at the end of sixth class.

## **Sanctions**

The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises. A pupil will be referred to the Principal for serious breaches of discipline and for repeated incidents of minor misbehaviour.

Before any sanctions behaviour will be defined with the class

## **School Rules**

1. Be on time and be prepared.  
Be in the line on time.  
Take homework, diary ,pencils etc out when needed.
2. Know when to walk, run, talk, listen ,sit and stand.  
Walk – in the school corridor and classroom.  
Run – in the school playground and at PE  
Talk – during group work, discussion times.  
Listen – to instructions, stories etc. to pupils talking  
Sit – at assembly, while working in class.

3. Make your best effort always.  
To do your work for the teacher.  
To help others – children, teachers, SNA etc  
To behave and to do as teacher asks  
To sit quietly and listen to teacher.
4. Keep unhelpful hands and comments to yourself.  
Don't stop other children working in class.  
Shouting out , making noises etc.
5. Be a buddy and not a bully.  
Sharing , helping others , taking turns , waiting quietly.  
Listening to each other.  
Play kindly in the playground.

### **Unacceptable behaviours.**

Making a mess in the classroom.  
Running around the classroom.  
Hitting people.  
Sliding on the floor.  
Not listening to teacher and SNA.  
Making noises and interrupting class.

Minor irritations should be ignored . If behaviours become disruptive for the class or teacher then the child should get a warning using the “Traffic light system”.

The following is the order in which sanctions may be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour:

- Non verbal communication
- Rule reminder
- Reasoning – showing them their choice
- Separation / Timeout (age appropriate)
- Note home- informal- communication with Principal
- Loss of privilege- more formal record
- Call in parent to meet teacher
- Call in parent to see Principal and teacher
- Board of Management made aware by Principal
- Suspension- under guidelines (Education Act- Welfare Act).
- Expulsion.

The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross, will be judged by the teachers and/ or principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/ frequency of such misdemeanours and on the individual child, their needs and their history and the safety and well being of that child and others.

Parents should be kept fully informed from the outset of instances of serious misbehaviour on the part of their children. It is better to involve parents at an early stage than as a last resort (Circular 20/90).

Time– out

Warning- say the rule the child is breaking and to stop- Yellow Card.

Stop immediately or you will go to time-out – Red Card.

Go to time-out area for five minutes and then rejoin the class. Time-out begins when the child is sitting quietly writing out the rule.

Very disruptive behaviours , that may cause injury to him/herself or others will result in the child going straight to the senior room or the Principal’s office.

Once the child has rejoined the class , teacher should look for the first “good” behaviour and praise them.

Time-out Refusal.

If the child refuses to go to time out or will not comply , the SNA will bring him/her to the senior room, where he will write out the rule.

The teacher will keep a record of the time outs-noting what triggered the behaviour and did the child return to productive work.

Playground – If the child cannot play appropriately he/she will walk around for 3 circuits with the teacher on duty and then return to play.

## **Managing aggressive or violent misbehaviour**

- Children who are emotionally disturbed or show signs of violent behaviour are immediately referred for psychological/ clinical assessment.
- Through the Special Educational Needs Organiser, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Service Executive, NEPS, ...
- Within our supplementary team of teachers, there is expertise and experience in dealing with children with difficult behaviours. This expertise and experience is sought when devising I.E.P.'s for these specific children. Class teachers would also be briefed on their needs and the necessary support agencies that would be of benefit.
- In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil him/ herself or the safety of other pupils or staff the parents of the child in question are contacted and asked to remove the child immediately.
- Where the child in question has not been assessed, there will be temporary exclusion while consultation takes place with the SENO re appropriate resourcing, alternative placement etc.
- In both of these cases the child leaves the school with an adequate amount of schoolwork in order that they do not fall behind with their academics.

### **Crisis Management Plan:**

Roles of Responsibility: Phil – alert the staff to the event (In the Yard), Ms. Bryan and/or Mrs. O'Donoghue will intervene.

In the event of an Emotional Eruption from a child the following steps are advised.

Step 1: Teacher/Supervisor shouts "Stop".

Step 2: Teacher/Supervisor signals for help by blowing their whistle.

Step 3: Evacuation and Supervision;

- In the yard - Ms. Bryan will ring the bell. Each teacher will evacuate their class out of the situation. The teacher involved will evacuate the other child involved in the incident out of the situation.
- Within the classroom – Teacher will ask a child to alert another teacher that she needs help. The class is evacuated.

Step 4: Response to the individual student having the Emotional Eruption;

- (I) Containment – The child is kept outside/within the classroom, with teacher/S.N.A. to calm down.
- (II) Calming- The child is debriefed in the Resource Room 1/Principal's Office.
- (III) Restraint – The child is restrained as a last resort and then contained/calmed.

Step 5: Notification of Parents and relevant professionals – Parents are informed and the child is sent home. If an agency is involved, they are informed e.g. Lucena Services.

Step 6: Debriefing and Review – Ms. Bryan and/or Mrs. O'Donoghue debrief the child/children involved and their parents. Ms. Bryan decides on appropriate sanctions, actions and strategies needed.

Step 7: Recording and Documenting – the teacher involved records the incident in the "Accident and Incident" book.

Step 8: Behaviour Management Plan – Mrs. O'Donoghue will draw up, with consultation from the child, parents and relevant staff, a "Behaviour Management Plan" and if the challenging behaviour continues it will be implemented.

### **Suspension/ Expulsion Procedures**

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, stipulates that a code of behaviour shall specify... 'the procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned' and 'the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student.' (Sections 23(2) c, d)

### **Suspension**

The principal shall inform the education welfare officer, by notice in writing, when *a student is suspended from a recognised school for a period of not less than 6 days.*  
(Sections 21(4) a)

Circular 20/90 states that '*Parents should be informed of their right to come to the school and be invited to do so in order to discuss the misbehaviour with the Principal Teacher and/ or the class teacher. This should always be done when the suspension of a pupil is being contemplated*'.

The procedure followed prior to and during a period of suspension should be seen to be reasonable and scrupulously fair: A record will be kept in the school of all instances of serious misbehaviour by pupils; Parents will be invited to meet the class teacher, the Principal and/ or the Chairperson to discuss serious incidents of misbehaviour. Parents will be involved at an early stage, rather than as a last resort;

Before suspending a pupil, the following will be taken into consideration. This checklist, it is hoped, will ensure fairness and an unbiased attitude and, where possible, protect all concerned:

## **The Nature and Seriousness of the Behaviour**

- What is the precise description of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been?
- Has the problem behaviour escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

## **The Context of the Behaviour**

- What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. in class, in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in a group)?
- What factors may have triggered incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)?
- What is the age, stage of development and cognitive ability of the student?
- Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (e.g. particular home circumstances, special educational needs)?

## **The Impact of the Behaviour**

- How are other students and staff affected by the student's behaviour?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?
- Does the behaviour have a particular or greater impact on some students or teachers?
- Does the student understand the impact of their behaviour on others?

## **The Interventions tried to date**

- What interventions have been tried? Over what period?
- How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?
- What has been the result of those interventions?
- Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?
- Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought, where appropriate?
- Are any other interventions such as peer mediation, restorative justice approaches or family conferencing available?
- Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?
- Has any other agency been asked for assistance (e.g. child guidance Clinic, Child and Adolescent services)?

## **Whether Suspension is a proportionate response?**

- Does the student's behaviour warrant suspension?
- Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour, the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other child?

## **The Possible Impact of Suspension**

- Will suspension allow additional or alternative interventions to be made?
- Will suspension help the student to change the inappropriate behaviour?
- How will suspension help teachers or other students affected by the behaviour?
- Will suspension exacerbate any educational vulnerability of the student?

## **Immediate Suspension**

In exceptional circumstances, the principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person including themselves.

## **Suspending a Pupil**

- The principal will notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend.
- The letter will confirm:
  - (i) The period of suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
  - (ii) The reasons for suspension.
  - (iii) Any programme of study to be followed.
  - (iv) The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and/ or the parents.
  - (v) The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

## **Periods of suspension**

- General length of suspension is no more than three days
- In exceptional circumstances the principal, under the guidance of the Board of Management, can increase the period having given her case to the Board of Management.
- There is a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension.

- If a period of suspension brings the days of school missed by a child to over twenty, it is subject to appeal under section 29 of the Education Act.
- Where a student has been suspended for a cumulative total of six or more days, the National Educational Welfare Board is notified.

## **Returning to School**

- Before the student returns to school a meeting is held with student, principal and parents to ensure a positive re-integration.
- Although a record of the reason for suspension will exist, the school adopts a clean slate approach to the returned pupil and expects the same behaviour as it does from all other students.

## **Expulsion (permanent exclusion):**

The authority to expel a child from a school lies with the Board of Management of the school. This is a serious step and is one that is taken only in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. Before arriving at the decision to expel, the school, principal and Board of Management will have done all in their power to avoid such a measure. Expulsion is considered when other interventions have been exhausted:

- Meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour.
- Making sure the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist.
- Ensuring that all other options have been tried.
- Seeking the assistance of support agencies.

## **The Decision to Expel:**

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

## **Procedures in respect of expulsion:**

- (i) A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal
- (ii) A recommendation to the Board of Management by the principal
- (iii) Consideration by the Board of Management of the principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing
- (iv) Board of management deliberations and actions following the hearing
- (v) Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer
- (vi) Confirmation of the decision to expel

## **Expulsion for a first offence:**

There are exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management would expel a student for a first offence, including:

- A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Supplying illegal drugs to other students in school
- Sexual assault

## **Appeals:**

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the General Secretary of the Department of Education and Science and/ or to the National Educational Welfare Board.

## **Record Keeping:**

Information such as school reports, standardised and diagnostic test results, formal assessments, behaviour logs and I.E.P.'s form part of a pupil profile. These pupil profiles are passed on from teacher to teacher and are added to each year. They are archived when the child leaves the school and are kept, as per school policy, until the child is 21, where upon they are shredded.

## **Pupil Absences from School**

Through our attendance policy we actively encourage our pupils to attend school. On enrolment and on an annual basis parents are reminded of the educational Twenty Day Ruling. Attendance records are kept in each classroom and when a child misses more than 20 days a report is sent to the N.E.W.B.

## **Conclusion**

In the belief that most effective schools tend to be those with the best relationship with parents, every effort will be made by the Principal and staff to ensure that parents are kept well informed, that the school provides a welcoming atmosphere towards parents and that parents are not only told when their children are in trouble but when they have behaved particularly well.

This code should be read in conjunction with:

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- School Attendance Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- Attendance Policy

### **Reference Section:**

- Education (Welfare) Ac, 2000 Section 23 (1-5), 24 (1-5)
- Education Act, 1998 Section 15 (2(d))
- Circular 20/90 on Discipline (DES web site [www.irlgov.ie/educ](http://www.irlgov.ie/educ). Also in CPSMA Handbook
- Circular 22/02 Appeals Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998. (DES website). Deals with appeals under the following headings:
  - (1) Permanent exclusion from a school
  - (2) Suspension
  - (3) Refusal to enrol
- Guidelines for Developing School Codes of Behaviour (National Education Welfare Board) *Draft edition published for consultation in 2007*
- Department of Education and Science Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post Primary Schools (1993) available on DES website
- Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes
- Friends for Life Programme
- Management Board Members' Handbook. Revised 2007. CPSMA: A suggested Code of Behaviour & Discipline for National Schools
- The Education Act 1998. The Education Welfare Act 2000. Questions and Answers, INTO

Ratified March 2017.

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