



Code of Positive Behaviour

Guardian Angels' NS

Summary objectives: Anti-bullying strategy, health and safety issues

1. The school places a great emphasis on the importance of children receiving encouragement to develop good patterns of behaviour.
2. To function properly and to create a pleasant learning environment, a school community needs clearly stated rules and regulations, wisely and consistently applied.
3. The Board of Management, the principal and staff must apply suitable sanctions to ensure that good order is promoted and maintained.
4. The Code of Positive Behaviour policy encourages co-operation, respect and tolerance through an emphasis on self-discipline. The Stay Safe Programme is presented throughout the school.
5. The Code of Positive Behaviour is designed to ensure the safety of our pupils and our staff, individually and collectively. The Board of Management has a statutory obligation to provide a safe place of work.

The reward system

To encourage and reinforce good behaviour teaching staff use several methods:

1. The first is acknowledging and praising the pupil. Each pupil, in our care, is special with individual strengths and interests.
Individual or collective praise encourages and motivates the child. A written note to a parent or a phone call to highlight the excellent work or behaviour is often the result.
'Mol an Óige' sums up our philosophy.
2. A prize from the principal or a mention at general assembly in the halla provides another occasion to thank and reinforce the effort.
3. Individual privileges, class privileges, treats etc. are often employed to reward consistency and application, suitable for the age and maturity of the pupil/class.
4. Certificates for behaviour and application to schoolwork are awarded to individual class members. These are presented at a ceremony in the Halla.
5. Suitable positions of responsibility are awarded as privileges to our senior pupils. These include: going on important messages, assisting at cake sales, table quizzes, drama productions, choir work, concerts etc.
6. Teacher comments in a journal and weekly test scores are other systems of encouragement.
7. No uniform days, Green School activity rewards etc.
8. Parent Teacher Association treats for individual classes.
9. Special toys days for the infant classes.

10. Special pet days for some classes where pupils bring in their pet for a morning.

Misdemeanours

- Rudeness
- Regularly late for school
- Homework concerns
- Misbehaviour at assembly, on the stairs, in the lift, yard or toilet
- Persistently not wearing correct full uniform
- Entering or leaving the school before the official starting or finishing time

Major misdemeanours

- Fighting
- Stealing, dishonesty
- Damage to personal, school or pupil property
- Blatant disobedience, disrespect to members of staff or visitors
- Bullying of any kind, including that by internet or social media
- Leaving the school without permission
- Misbehaviour on school trips
- Continual breaches of discipline
- Inappropriate mobile phone, internet or social media usage
- Inappropriate laptop, PC, digital camera or interactive whiteboard usage

Mobile phone policy

1. Where a pupil brings a mobile phone to school, the phone must be switched off and kept out of sight during the school day. The phone may not be used for any purpose on the school premises or grounds. If parents need to contact their children urgently during the school day, they should ring the office at 283 3961.
Phones must be switched off on school trips. In some instances, pupils may be forbidden to bring their phones on school tours.
2. A pupil found in breach of the above rules will have their phone confiscated. The phone will be returned to the pupil at the end of the school day. If a pupil's phone is confiscated a second time, appropriate sanctions as outlined in the Code of Behaviour may be applied.
3. The use of cameras on phones is strictly prohibited. No photographs, recordings, video or audio made with mobile phones, can be taken. Using phones in such a way can seriously infringe a person's rights and appropriate sanctions as outlined in the Code of Behaviour may be applied.
Where a pupil is suspected of using the phone inappropriately it will be confiscated and will be returned to their parents only when any inappropriate material has been deleted.
4. Incidents where pupils use mobile phones to bully other pupils or send offensive messages or calls will be investigated under the Anti-bullying Policy.
5. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones. The safety and security of mobile phones is a matter for pupils and their parents. Pupils should have their names written on their mobile phones. Pupils should also have a code to access their phones, so they cannot be misused by others.

Strategies used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour

1. Reasoning with the pupil
2. Reprimand (advice)
3. Temporary separation from peers

4. Loss of privileges
5. Extra work
6. Communication with parents
7. Referral to Behaviour Support Team (class teacher, assistant, deputy principal, principal)
8. Card system: White = consult parent
9. Card system: Red = inform chairman of the board

Correction system and Anti-bullying Policy process

This aspect of the system relies heavily on the understanding and co-operation of parents and is designed to establish good home/school communication.

It is based on a two-card system to inform parents of misbehaviour etc.

White Card	For 3 misdemeanours 3 white cards will result in a red card
Red Card	For 1 major misdemeanour

On receipt of a White Card it must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned the following day. A phone call to the office to acknowledge receipt of the card is requested.

The incident is recorded by the class teacher.

On receipt of a Red Card for a major offence, parents are invited to meet the school principal. The school Board of Management is informed and consulted.

The pupil fills out a daily Self-assessment Sheet for the following week, or for longer if necessary.

Parents are consulted at every stage.

Discipline is everyone's responsibility. Everyone succeeds.

We strive to create an environment where all our pupils feel confident, happy and secure. While positive encouragement is regarded as a fundamental principle of the school policy, repeated disregard for the school's Code of Behaviour cannot be ignored.

School policy on suspension

Suspension is defined as requiring the pupil to absent him/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days. During the period of suspension, the pupil retains his/her place in the school.

Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension. However, a single incident of serious misbehaviour may be grounds for suspension.

Examples of serious misbehaviour are to be found in the list of major misdemeanours. NB – this list is not exhaustive.

The grounds for suspension

The following are circumstances in which suspension will be considered:

- The pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils
- The pupil's continued presence in the school at this time, constitutes a threat to safety
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property
- The pupil's behaviour has a negative impact on the work of the school

Fair procedures

- The pupil and parents will be informed about the complaint
- The pupil and parents will have an opportunity to respond

The period of suspension

- The principal has the right to suspend a pupil for a period of up to three days.
- The principal, with the approval of the chairperson of the Board of Management, has the right to suspend a pupil for a period of up to five days.
- The Board of Management has the right to suspend a pupil for a period longer than five days. Normally there will be a ceiling of 10 days on any one period of suspension.
- The Board of Management will review any proposal to suspend a pupil, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to 20 days or more.

Immediate suspension

In exceptional circumstances the principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the pupil's own safety, the safety of pupils or staff of the school, or any other person.

In such a case the parents will be notified, and arrangements made to collect the pupil from school.

Implementation

The principal will write to the parents to confirm:

- The period of the suspension and dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
- The reason/s for the suspension.
- Any study programme to be followed during the suspension.
- The arrangement for returning to school and any commitment to be entered into by the pupil and the parents.
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.
- The right to appeal to the secretary general of the Department of Education and Science (section 29 of the Education Act 1998) where the total number of days on which the pupil has been suspended in the current year reaches 20.

National Educational Welfare Board

The principal is required to report suspensions to the National Educational Welfare Board if the pupil is suspended for six school days or more.

Records and reports

A written record of the investigation and decision-making vis-à-vis the pupil concerned, as well as any relevant reports, will be kept by the school.

Review of the use of suspension

The Board of Management will review suspension procedure in the school at regular intervals.

School policy on expulsion

1. Authority to expel

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil.

2. Expulsion

Expulsion of a pupil is a very serious step and is taken by the Board of Management only in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. Prior to that the school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour to avoid expelling the pupil. Such steps include:

- Meeting the parents and pupil to try to help the pupil change the misbehaviour, to avoid expelling the pupil.
- Making sure the pupil and parents understand the consequences of that behaviour.
- Exhausting all other possible options.
- Seeking the help of support agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS), Health Service Executive (HSE), National Council for Special Education (NCSE), National Behaviour Support Service (NBSS).

3. Grounds for expulsion

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

4. Expulsion for a first offence

In exceptional circumstances the Board of Management may decide that a pupil should be expelled for a first offence. These circumstances include:

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

5. Procedures in respect of expulsion

Step 1: A detailed investigation is carried out under the direction of the principal

- The principal informs the pupil and their parents in writing about the details of the alleged misbehaviour and how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- The pupil and parents have every opportunity to respond to the complaint before the principal makes a decision.

Step 2: A recommendation to the Board of Management by the principal

The principal:

- Informs the pupil and parents that Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.

- Ensures the parents have records of the allegations against the pupil, the investigation, and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- Provides the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records which are given to the parents.
- Notifies the parents of the date of the hearing and invites them to attend.
- Advises the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management.
- Ensures that the parents have enough time to prepare for the hearing.

Step 3: Consideration by the Board of Management of the principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing

The Board of Management reviews the initial investigation to satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. The Board of Management also reviews all the documentation and the circumstances of the case.

Where the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a pupil, it must hold a hearing.

- At the hearing the principal and the parents put their case to the Board of Management in each other's presence.
- Each party is allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly.
- The meeting may also be an opportunity for parent to make their case for lessening the sanction.
- Parents may wish to be accompanied at the hearing and the Board of Management should facilitate this, in line with good practice and Board of Management procedures.

After both sides have been heard, the Board of Management should ensure that neither the principal nor the parents are present for the Board's deliberations.

Step 4: Board of Management's deliberations and actions following the hearing

Having heard from all parties, it is the responsibility of the Board of Management to decide whether the allegation has been substantiated and if so, whether expulsion is the appropriate sanction.

Where the Board of Management decides that the pupil should be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion and the reasons for it.

The pupil cannot be expelled before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer received this written notification.

The Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a pupil during this time.

The Board of Management will inform the parents in writing of its conclusions and the next steps in the process.

Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

Within 20 days of receipt of a notification from the Board of Management of its opinion that a pupil should be expelled, the Educational Welfare Officer must:

- Make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the principal, the parents and the pupil, and anyone else who may be of assistance.
- Convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend.

The purpose of these consultations and the meeting is to ensure that arrangements are made for the pupil to continue in education.

Where the possibility of continuing in the school is not an option, the consultation should focus on alternative educational possibilities.

Step 6: Confirmation of the decision to expel

When the 20 day period following notifications to the Education Welfare Officer has expired and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the pupil should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel. (This task may be delegated to the chairperson and the principal). Parents will be notified without delay that the expulsion will now proceed and that the pupil is now excluded from the school with immediate effect.

Parents will be told about their right to appeal to the Department of Education and Science and will be supplied with the standard form with which to lodge an appeal.

6. Review of the use of expulsion

The Board of Management will review at regular intervals the use of expulsion in the school to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies and to ensure that expulsion is used appropriately.

This policy was reviewed and adopted by the Board of Management on 15th September 2020.