

# **Boyle Parochial School**

## **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

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

The purpose of a Code of Behaviour is the creation of a positive learning environment, in which all children may enter fully into the life of the school and where the potential of each child is nurtured through the promotion of a harmonious environment and a co-operative approach between staff, parents and pupils. There is a need in all schools for rules and regulations and it is an accepted fact that no structure can hope to succeed without some Code of Behaviour.

### **Aims of the Code of Behaviour**

- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community whilst at school.
- To ensure that in a class situation, the teacher should not have to interrupt either the teaching process or the pupil's learning process, in order to deal with disruptive behaviour. An educational environment must be fostered at all times.
- To encourage and foster positive behaviour in our pupils. This is central to our code. Our code provides a framework within which the teachers use positive motivation, reward and encouragement whilst taking cognisance of the difference between children.
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the Code of Behaviour
- When engaged in school related activities outside the school, i.e. Sports Day, school tour, church services, etc. each child is representing the school. The good name of the school depends on the positive image created by all partaking, so high standards of behaviour are expected.

### **General Guidelines for Behaviour**

- Each child is expected to be well-behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and feel safe is unacceptable.
- Each pupil is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own belongings.
- Each pupil is 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.
- Each pupil is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual.
- Each pupil is expected to do his/her best in school and for homework.

## **Whole School Approach**

### **Staff:**

At a staff meeting, a review took place and the framework for this code was discussed and amendments were noted for the revised draft. The importance of the SPHE curriculum and methodologies was acknowledged as an ongoing support. The Principal has responsibility for the in-school management of behaviour.

### **Board of Management:**

The Board has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. The Board perused the draft policy and made any changes it deemed necessary. With regards to serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour, the Board is aware of its responsibilities and obligations including procedures around suspension and expulsion.

### **Pupils:**

Pupils are involved in the drawing up of class/yard rules of the school. They are aware of rewards and sanctions. Senior pupils are aware of the exemplary behaviour they must model to younger children.

**Parents:** Parents can support the Code of Behaviour by:

- Ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually.
- Encouraging their children to their best and to take responsibility for their work.
- Being aware of and co-operating with the school's rules and system of rewards and sanctions.
- Attend meetings at the school when requested.
- Supporting their children with homework and ensure that it is completed.
- Ensuring their children have the necessary books and materials for school.

## **Strategies used to promote positive behaviour**

### **Classroom:**

- "Ground rules"/ behavioural expectations in each class which set a positive atmosphere for the learning are agreed between teachers and students
- Teachers ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave and their involvement in the process.
- A system of acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour in an unexpected, spontaneous fashion operates in both classrooms.

### **Playground:**

- A concise set of playground rules, which emphasise positive behaviour, is displayed.
- A supervision rota is in place for playground duty.
- On wet days, children will remain in classrooms with suitable games.

### **Other areas in the school:**

- Children are encouraged to walk in corridors and to move with care between rooms.
- Children are regularly reminded of appropriate comportment.

### **Rewards and Sanctions**

#### **Affirming Positive Behaviour:**

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

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment or stamp in the pupil's exercise book
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in the presence of a group/class
- Individual class merit awards
- Written or verbal communication to parent on occasion.

#### **Sanctions:**

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote good behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied in accordance with the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development.

These may include:

- Reasoning with pupils.
- Immediate reprimand with possible follow-up discussion with the child
- Temporary separation from peers and/or loss of privileges - Time out
- Referral to Principal
- Communication with parents
- Suspension/expulsion (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular 7/88).

#### **Procedures:**

The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross; will be judged by the teacher and/or Principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours as follows:

#### **Examples of Minor Misdemeanours:**

Interrupting class work /running in school building/ talking in class/ leaving litter around school/ not wearing correct uniform/ being discourteous/ unmannerly/ regularly failing to complete homework / endangering fellow pupils in the classroom or on the school yard at break time.

#### **Steps to be taken by teachers when dealing with minor misdemeanours:**

- Verbal warning
- Move place for rest of week
- Write (a) "Sorry" letter to person who has been offended, (b) copy of school rules or (c) page of dictionary

- Report to Principal to caution pupil (if deemed necessary)
- Invite parent by word/ text/ phone to set up a brief meeting at school
- Case Conference to include Parent/Guardian, Principal, teacher and child
- Letter to the Board of Management
- Suspension by the Board of Management

#### **Examples of Serious misdemeanours:**

Constantly disruptive in class/ telling lies/ stealing/ damaging other pupil's property/ bullying / back answering teacher/ leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission/ not working to full potential/ regular use of unacceptable language/ bringing dangerous objects to school/ deliberately injuring a fellow pupil.

#### **Example of Gross Misdemeanours:**

Smoking/ drinking alcohol/ aggressive threatening, violent language behaviour towards a teacher or pupil.

#### **Steps to be taken when dealing with serious/gross misdemeanours:**

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communications with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances. For repeated instances of serious misdemeanours suspension may be considered. Parents will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case.

Where children have serious emotional, behavioural or other special needs the teaching staff including learning support personnel will endeavour to work with parents and access support from relevant bodies/ agencies e.g. HSE, NEPs. A Support Plan and a specific behavioural plan may need to be put in place. Each child's needs will be examined on an individual basis.

#### **Suspension and Expulsion:**

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as:

- The student's behaviour has had a serious detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension. (NEWB Guidelines: 71)

A proposal to expel a student requires grounds such as:

- 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 school property.

Where expulsion is considered, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour. (NEWB Guidelines: 81)

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised.

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 and the Principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. 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 misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with Rules for National Schools and 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 on discussion of the matter with the parents.**

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the board shall notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act. With regard to suspension the principal shall inform the Education Welfare Officer by writing, when a student is suspended from a recognised school for a period of not less than 6 days (section 21(4)a).

### **Appeals**

Under section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills against some decisions of the Board of Management, including: 1. Permanent exclusion from a school and 2. Suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in one school year.

All schools in Ireland must abide by the procedures for suspension and expulsions as laid down in the National Education Welfare Guidelines and in accordance with the Education Welfare Act.

### **Keeping Records:**

A general accident/incident book is kept in the school, which may highlight issues or incidents of misbehaviour.

Where monitoring of individual children is necessary (emotional or behavioural) individual teacher records are maintained and the Principal is aware of all records kept. All records are factual accounts.

## **Procedures for notification of pupil absences**

As laid down by the Education Welfare, parents must notify the school of a student's absence and the reason for the absence. Written notification is required for absences. This may be done through the homework journal slip or school's absentee form.

If a child has been absent for 20 days or more, the school notifies the parents that this information will be passed on to the National Education Welfare Board. The school has legal obligations (Education Welfare Act 2000) to inform NEWB in writing, using a standard form. (Can be downloaded from [newb.ie](http://newb.ie))

## **Reference to other policies:**

SPHE  
Anti-bullying  
Enrolment  
Health and Safety  
Record keeping  
Special Education needs/Support Plan

## **Success Criteria**

- We look for positive behaviour in class rooms and on the playground.
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy are being consistently implemented by teachers.
- We aspire to gain positive feedback from teachers, pupils and the wider community.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Board of Management 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 the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Arrange for review of the Code as required.

### **Teacher's 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 any instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instance of misbehaviour in Teacher's Record and Incident Book.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

#### **Pupil's 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.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow the class rules

#### **Parents/ Guardians' Responsibilities:**

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
- Ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
- Be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and support its implementation
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect the child's progress/behaviour.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on March 15th, 2018

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Chairperson**  
**Board of Management**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Principal**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Management reserves the right to add to, or otherwise amend, this Code of Behaviour, as is deemed necessary or advisable.

#### **Appendix: General School Rules:**

1. A neat appearance and appreciation of personal hygiene are an important part of all pupils' personal development.
2. Pupils should not be on school premises before 9.10am or after 3.00pm. The Board of Management or teaching staff will not be responsible for any mishap or accident, which may occur if parents leave children on the school premises outside the stipulated times. There will be no supervision outside these times. Parents who persistently infringe the stated times will be required formally and in writing to abide by the stated times.
3. Pupils must be punctual at all times, and when this is not possible a note explaining his/her late arrival is required.
4. When a pupil is absent from school or leaving school early for an appointment, a note from the parent/guardian explaining his/her absence is required.
5. Homework should be prepared and produced as requested. Parents are strongly advised to take an active interest in their child's homework.
6. A child's progress in school is related to good behaviour in class. Every child should remember indiscipline in class affects not only his/her own progress but also that of his fellow pupils. Idleness, talking or any such behaviour that disrupts class is not acceptable.
7. At break-times, all children are encouraged to enjoy their games and play in the yard. Rough, dangerous play, bullying, harassment and fighting among pupil will not be tolerated.
8. Climbing on walls, oil tank or gates is forbidden.
9. Bad language is not permitted either in the classroom or the playground.
10. Respect for teachers and fellow pupils is essential for a better school atmosphere.
11. It is expected that every child will create a good impression by respecting adults who are associated with the working of the school or those who are visitors of the school.
12. Vandalism, stealing and defamation of the property of the school and fellow pupils are regarded as a serious indiscipline.
13. Pupils are to dispose of their own litter and clean up after themselves at lunchtime.
14. Prolonged bullying - physical, verbal or emotional will not be tolerated.
15. Toys games or literature which may promote aggressive attitudes are not allowed in the school.