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An Gleann Dubh
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School Behaviour and Discipline Policy

The aim of primary education may be stated as:

- a. To enable the child to live a full life as a child.
- b. To equip him/her to avail himself/herself of further education so that he/she may go on to live a full and useful life as an adult in society.

The teachers are committed to the realisation of these aims. The Board of Management of the school is committed similarly. Parents of the children in this school have been strongly supportive of these aims for many years.

The ethos of our school is a major factor in establishing and maintaining high standards of behaviour and discipline. This means a strong sense of community in our school and a high level of co-operation among teaching staff and between staff, pupils, parents, the Board of Management and ancillary staff.

In formulating this code, consultations were held among the Board of Management members. All members of the staff have been involved in planning it and parents were also given the opportunity to make their views known at policy development meetings.

In devising this code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. The aim is to ensure the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruptive-free environment.

The code of discipline aims to achieve:

- a. The efficient operation of the school.
- b. The structuring of discipline, which promotes an efficient and stimulating environment.
- c. The maintenance of good order and safety throughout the school day, including break times, sport activities, all movements between classes and at all times representing the school.
- d. The development of self-discipline in all pupils and care and courtesy towards others.
- e. The development of respect for school buildings, all school property and the general school environment.

Principles of our Discipline Policy

- a. Our policy is based on the principles of caring, fairness, respect, tolerance, compassion, inclusion and courtesy. Staff shall consider themselves responsible at all times for the behaviour of children within sight or sound of them and shall respond promptly and firmly to any incident of unacceptable behaviour. Implementation of discipline in general shall be a team effort – every member of staff has the right to correct any child in school whether that child is a pupil in his/her class or not.
- b. If our school is to achieve a happy, secure environment where the child can develop and learn to the full potential, a positive, friendly, caring and encouraging atmosphere will provide a framework which constructs behaviour and discourages unacceptable behaviour that is dangerous to oneself, others or which may be disruptive or anti-social. Therefore, every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt

a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school. Teachers shall talk to children regularly, during class time about rules and the reasoning behind them.

- c. The school places greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions. The agreed code offers a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are utilised by the teachers.
- d. The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences.

General

1. Respect and courtesy

Pupils are expected to behave in a responsible manner, both to themselves and all others. They are expected to treat all other pupils, all members of staff and visitors with respect and courtesy at all times and whenever representing the school. The use of any vulgarity or offensive language is unacceptable.

2. Punctuality

Pupils must be on time for school every day and must return to class punctually after breaks. The official opening time of the school is 9.20 a.m. Class for infants ends at 2.00 p.m. and class for all others ends at 3.00 p.m. **No responsibility is accepted for children outside these times.** Those collecting children from school should always be punctual. Lateness causes anxiety, especially for younger children.

3. Safety when entering or leaving the school

Parents and children must enter and exit the school via the front gate, side gate or the stiles. Children must **walk**, using the footpaths when entering or leaving the school.

4. Cyclists

Cyclists must dismount and walk when entering or leaving the school.

5. Attendance and absences

Parents/Guardians must account for every absence of a child from school by forwarding a written note or email. If a child has to leave school early or be absent from school for a part of the day, a written note must be forwarded to the class teacher in school. This is to ensure, as far as possible, the safety of children throughout school hours. Where a child is removed from school during the school day, the "sign out book" must be completed and signed.

6. Illness

Any infectious illness, should be notified to the school immediately. Children should return to school only when fully recovered.

7. Personal property

Children must have their names on their coats and all personal property such as school books and copies etc.

8. School property

Pupils must respect all school property and treat all schoolbooks and equipment with care. Parents will be held accountable for the cleaning, repair or replacement of any school property or equipment wilfully damaged or vandalised by their children.

9. School environment

Pupils must keep the school environment clean and litter free. Pupils are expected to co – operate fully in any organised clean – up activities.

Behaviour in class

- a. Pupils must have all books, materials and equipment as required. A schoolbook rental scheme is available from junior infants (partially) to sixth presently.
- b. All pupils are expected to work to the best of their ability. Written work must be presented neatly.
- c. Respect and courtesy are basic to classroom behaviour. Disrespectful behaviour towards other pupils, towards a teacher or coach or BOM approved personnel or towards any member of staff or any visitor to the school is unacceptable.

- d. Pupils must respect the right of other pupils to learn. Any behaviour that interferes with this right, e.g. regular disruption of class or persistent of others is unacceptable behaviour. Pupils are expected to co-operate fully with their teachers' instructions as given so that an effective education programme can be undertaken.
- e. **Uniforms.**
Pupils should wear the correct uniform each day and when representing the school.
- f. **Summary of classroom behaviour**
 - 1. Nobody is allowed outside the classroom before the bell is rung unless on message from class teacher.
 - 2. Stand back or open the door for teacher or adult or other children.
 - 3. Knock before entering another classroom and then enter.
 - 4. Children leave and return to the classroom in an orderly manner. Children must never run within the school building for their own safety and the safety of others.
 - 5. Tables must be tidied each evening.
 - 6. Writing on school property is strictly forbidden.
 - 7. All items of clothing especially coats, and jumpers must be clearly tagged with students' names.
 - 8. Parents must collect children from classroom when taking a child from school during school hours and sign "sign out book"

Behaviour out of class

Corridors, cloakrooms, toilets and yard areas.

- a. Pupils should treat others the way they wish to be treated. Seniors should watch out for the juniors. Pupils must behave in an orderly manner at all times. They must walk when going near corners, this is to ensure the safety of themselves and all others.
- b. Pupils must not behave in any way that endangers others or themselves. Members of staff will seek to ensure that standards of safety are observed and shall prohibit games or activities considered dangerous. Any directions given by a member of staff on these matters are to be followed implicitly.
- c. Pupils are required to play in their designated yard areas. Pupils who misbehave will be required to take time out from play, in a designated area of the playground at the discretion of the supervising yard teacher or SNA. Pupils may not go into neighbouring fields or onto the road without the permission of the supervising teacher.
- d. Each child at break must receive permission from the supervising teacher or SNA before they can re-enter the school building.
- e. All pupils are required to line up promptly and in an orderly manner at the end of breaks. There should be no playing or any horseplay when classes are in line.
- f. No playing with a ball or running allowed when in line.

Summary of playground behaviour

- a. No roughness, fighting, kicking, striking, punching, spitting, tripping, bullying, name calling or verbal abuse in the schoolyard.
- b. Children are not allowed to stay indoors during breaks except on wet days. A child who has been sick should have written permission from his/her parent(s) to stay indoors.
- c. Pupils are not allowed back into the classroom without permission from the SNA/teacher on duty.
- d. No cycling in the playground at any time.
- e. Pupils must never interfere with other pupil's bicycles.
- f. Pupils must walk to the gate after school.
- g. Pupils must not litter the yard.
- h. Pupils must not pet stray dogs.
- i. Pupils must not swing on the goal posts.

Homework

See homework policy

Accidents

There is always a teacher on duty. A child involved in an accident or hurt in any way must report to the teacher on duty. The teacher may decide to attend to the injury or to contact the parent(s) if necessary. In the event of the child needing urgent medical attention, the teacher on yard duty will inform the principal teacher and act accordingly. (All accidents must be recorded in the School Accident/Incident Book).

Acceptable/ Unacceptable Behaviour

1. Rewards for acceptable behaviour

The following are some ways of showing appreciation for acceptable good behaviour, which are in operation in the school:

Oral praise, written praise, pupils to be given jobs/responsibilities that they like, pupils to be given small prizes, merit lists or merit stars.

2. Minor unacceptable behaviour

Talking out of turn in class (if there is a repeated pattern, this will be considered serious), leaving their seat without permission (if due to inclement weather, pupils are in class for breaks, safety is paramount and this behaviour is considered serious), not wearing uniform regularly and being disorganised.

3. Serious unacceptable behaviour

Examples are as follows:

Making rude signs or annoying gestures, using bad language, copying work from others, not sharing with others, not completing school tasks, not completing homework without a valid reason, entering buildings or classrooms without permission, littering the building or school grounds and leaving designated play areas without permission.

4. Very serious unacceptable behaviour

Examples are as follows:

Bullying or threatening others, making abusive, insulting, offensive or insolent remarks, laughing or jeering at others mistakes or disabilities, wilful damage to school buildings, furniture, books, equipment or the property of others, fighting, showing disrespect to school staff, disrupting lessons by cause of distraction, shouting and not working to ones ability, being lazy in starting work or deliberately wasting time, being generally rowdy, aggressive, rough, spitting, disturbing other children at work and being disobedient or defiant.

5. Positive encouragement and reinforcement is regarded as primary, in helping pupils to develop responsibility, a positive attitude and self-discipline. However, where a pupil wilfully disregards school rules and infringes on the rights of others to participate in an ordered and structured learning environment sanctions may be needed. The overall responsibility for discipline within the school lies with the principal. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for the good order within the school. A pupil will be referred to the principal for serious breaches of discipline and for repeated incidents of minor misbehaviour.

6. **Teachers shall keep a written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour** as well as a record of improvements in behaviour of disruptive pupils. Before resorting to serious sanctions (supervision), the normal channels of communication between school and parent(s) will be utilised. Parent(s) will be involved at an early stage rather than a last resort.

7. Communication with parents(s) will be face to face, by phone or by letter, depending on the circumstances. The parent(s) concerned will be invited to the school to discuss their child's case. For gross misbehaviour or repeated incidents of serious misbehaviour, suspension will be considered. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour, depending on circumstances.

8. Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested to attend the school to meet the principal and the chairperson. If the parent(s) do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the pupil may have to be suspended for a temporary period. Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130 (5) of the Rules for National Schools.

9. In the case of gross misbehaviour, the Board of Management will be convened. It may sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the parent(s).

10. Expulsion is an option in extreme cases, in accordance with Rule 130(6).

11. Summary of sanctions for unacceptable behaviour

The following strategies may be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour:

- a. Teacher/pupil chat
- b. Reprimand (advise on how to improve)
- c. Prescribing additional work (weekend homework, especially relating to their behaviour)
- d. Detention (supervised)
- e. Name of pupil and description of misbehaviour to be recorded in teacher's notebook
- f. Comment for parent(s) in homework notebook or in copy (only in lack of effort, constant disruption or unacceptable behaviour)
- g. Principal/pupil chat
- h. Teacher notifies parent(s) by telephone or by letter
- i. Teacher calls in parent(s) and reports outcome to the principal
- j. Principal discusses matter with parent(s)
- k. Principal refers matter to Board of Management where the principal and the chairperson discuss the matter with the parent(s)
- l. Temporary removal to another classroom
- m. Suspension
- n. Expulsion

12. Every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed child referred for psychological assessment without delay. Help will be sought also from services within the wider community i.e. Community Care Services provided by the Health Services Executive.

Suspension

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. 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 concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case.

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, teacher and the principal. If the parents (and the pupil) 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 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 health and safety of pupils and teachers, the Board has deferred responsibility to the Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Further suspensions will require Board of Management approval. This approval may be obtained at a regular meeting of the Board or at an emergency meeting at which the Chairperson and Principal have outlined for the Board the reasons why they feel it is necessary to impose a further suspension. In line with the requirements of the Education Welfare Act (2000), the Board of Management will inform the Education Welfare Board when any pupil's period of suspension equals or exceeds six school days.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following, or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school.

The parent/s (and pupil) must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the 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 and will not have a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils. 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.

Communication

1. Home/school/ Board of Management

Parents are always welcome at school. An open evening is held each spring for parents of children due to start school in September. Parents of children transferring from other schools are welcome to these meetings.

2. Parent/teacher meetings

Formal meetings are arranged on specific days each year when parents are assigned a specific time to discuss their child's progress with the teacher.

Parents are always welcome by appointment at any other time.

3. Absences

When a child is absent from school, a note should be sent in to the teacher (by the parent or guardian) on the day the child returns to school (it is not necessary to notify the principal by telephone on the day the child is absent).

This policy was devised by the policy development group, principal, staff and the Board of Management. It was reviewed in February 2021. It will be reviewed in the year 2023/2024 as per the school's three year review plan.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Chairperson BOM