

**Code of Behaviour Approved by BOM on 12/12/18**

**Disciplinary Code**

The Code of Behaviour was revised in 2018/19 following an extensive consultation process involving the Board of Management, pupils, teachers, Special Needs Assistants and parents. It was approved by the Board of Management on 12/12/18 and published on the school's website.

**All Policies are aligned to the school's Child Safeguarding Statement.**

**Introduction**

In Ballygarvan NS our aim is to provide a safe learning environment that fosters happy, self-confident and caring children.

In our school we have a positive approach to teaching and learning. We have many ways of recognizing and rewarding good behaviours and effort, at an age appropriate level. The expectations for behaviour in and out of the class are explained by teachers at the beginning of the year and take the form of class rules. These rules are the same throughout the school, though the wording may differ so that it is age appropriate. The rules are discussed with pupils and parents and parents indicate their acceptance of these rules on their child's behalf. Pupils are motivated to meet the school's expectations in order that the school is a happy place for all.

*Consistent positive influences are the key to success in our school.*

**Pupil Registration and the Code of Behaviour**

It shall be a condition of the registration of a pupil in Ballygarvan N.S., from the date of formal ratification of this Code of Behaviour by the Board of Management, that all parents/guardians seeking to have a child attend Ballygarvan N.S. shall confirm in writing that the code of behavior so provided, 'is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child'. Failure to do so will result in refusal to enroll the child in Ballygarvan National School. As per Section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, (NEWB Guidelines pg.58)

**Implementation Date**

Implementation of this Code of Behaviour shall commence with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2018.

**Underlying Philosophy**

All pupils are in need of clear guidelines so that they are responsible in their work and conduct. Where teachers insist in a firm but fair manner, on honest effort and high standards of behaviour from pupils, there is a greater likelihood they will obtain them. It is the role of parents to take responsibility with regards to standards of behaviour in their children seriously. We expect the full support of all parents in order to meet legitimate expectations with regard to good behaviour and discipline. Although we accept that there

is a need for sanction to register disapproval of misconduct, we hope to lay the emphasis on rewards for good behaviour whenever possible.

Where sanctions are needed they will be used following the Code of Behaviour procedure. Each classroom is an entity in itself under the direction of the class teacher. We believe the sanctions outlined in the code are firm, clear and fair to all concerned and when used will help all of our school community to enjoy school life to its fullest.

## **School Ethos**

Ballygarvan N.S. is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Bishop of Cork and Ross and promotes a Catholic ethos. We provide a welcoming and safe environment where all pupils are equally respected and valued. We extend a welcome to pupils from other faiths and none, and treat them in an inclusive and respectful manner. Friendship and co-operation are at the heart of our school. We cultivate a positive atmosphere where children are inspired to achieve their full potential.

This Code of Behaviour is rooted in our ethos because we understand that if children are to achieve their potential, they need to work in an orderly environment where they feel safe and secure. In devising the Code, we are seeking to maintain such an environment.

## **Aims:**

- To ensure that the children can access a high standard of education, which is their right.
- To provide a safe and happy environment throughout the school.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To respect the right of pupils to be educated in a disruption-free environment.
- To create an orderly environment in which all pupils can, through developing self-discipline, feel secure and make progress in all aspects of their development.
- To ensure that the whole school community adopts a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school.
- To cultivate a sense of respect for all in the school and those in authority so that the child can develop as a social being through interacting and cooperating with others.
- To develop a sense of respect for school property, environment and the property of others.
- To assist staff, 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 consequences are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

This Policy should read in conjunction with the following policies:

- ***Anti-Bullying Policy***
- ***Homework Policy***
- ***Child and Safeguarding Policy***
- ***Attendance Policy***

## Content of Policy

1. Whole school approach to managing behaviour
  - Expectations and responsibilities of the school community  
Page 4
  
2. School rules Page 7
  
3. Whole School Strategies for to promote positive behaviour and manage misbehaviour. Page 7
  
4. Misbehaviour Page 10
  
5. Suspension / Expulsion/Appeals Page 13
  
6. Keeping records Page 22
  
7. Evaluation, Ratification and Review Page 23
  
8. Appendices Page 24

# Whole School Approach to Managing Behaviour

## Expectations & Responsibilities

Managing behaviour requires the support and co-operation of the whole school community, particularly staff, pupils and parents.

The Board of Management has the overall responsibility for ensuring

- that the Code of Behaviour is drawn up
- that it is in line with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
- that it is in line with the ethos of the school
- that it respects the needs and rights of pupils, staff and parents
- that it is upheld by pupils, staff and parents
- that it is consistent with other relevant school policies

The day to day implementation of the Code of Behaviour rests with the pupils, staff and parents and each of these groups has rights and responsibilities in the management of good behaviour.

### **Pupil expectations**

- To be educated in a disruption free classroom
- To be treated consistently in a fair and respectful manner
- To have their individual differences recognised and provision to be made for these differences where possible.
- To be listened to and to be afforded the opportunity to ask questions.
- To have their positive behaviour affirmed and their misbehaviour addressed appropriately

### **Pupil responsibilities**

- To attend school regularly and punctually
- To stay on school grounds unless "signed out" by an adult
- To work quietly and safely, to the best of their ability
- To participate in all school curricular areas, activities and assigned homework, unless they are specifically exempted from doing so by the Principal.
- To listen to their teachers and to act on instructions and advice
- To respect the teachers' role in rewarding and sanctioning pupils
- To wear their school uniform (See Appendix 3)
- To listen to other pupils and to wait their turn to speak
- To show respect for all members of the school community
- To respect the rights of other pupils to learn
- To treat their fellow pupils fairly, equally and respectfully
- To include all children
- To care for their own property and to respect all school property and property of other pupils
- To avoid fighting, swearing or name-calling
- To avoid behaving in a way, which would endanger themselves or others

- To contribute to good order in the school, by moving quietly around the school, (keeping to the left), and by keeping the school clean and tidy
- To bring the correct materials and books to school
- To follow school and class rules and procedures
- To do their homework to the best of their ability

### **Teacher expectations**

- To be treated with respect and dignity by pupils, parents, colleagues and all members of the school community, in what is their place of work.
- To be able to teach in a safe, well-maintained environment, free from disruption and aggression.
- To have the support and co-operation of all staff, colleagues, parents and Board of Management, in order to achieve the aims and objectives of the school.
- To work in an atmosphere which encourages professional development.
- To consult with pupils and parents informally and formally, when their professional judgement deems it necessary.

### **Teacher responsibilities**

- To support and implement the school's code of behaviour consistently and for the duration of the academic year
- To create a warm, safe, welcoming environment for each pupil
- To develop and nurture a sense of self-esteem in each pupil
- To facilitate each pupil to reach their full academic potential, by recognising and providing the individual talents and differences among the pupils
- To teach a varied and stimulating curriculum which will engage children's interest. The curriculum will include Social and Personal Health Education which will teach children communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving and conflict resolution skills thus supporting the school's Code of Behaviour
- To use classroom management techniques that ensure a variety of activities and methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation
- To be courteous, consistent and fair, while keeping opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum and addressing misbehaviour appropriately
- To use their professional judgement, to decide when it is necessary to communicate with parents and to provide reports on matters of mutual concern
- To make a professional judgement in cases of reported misbehaviour
- To keep appropriate records on pupil progress
- To keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated misbehaviour  
(Continuum of Support, Guidelines for Teachers, NEPS)

### **Parent/ guardian expectations**

- To be treated with respect
- To have a safe and welcoming environment provided for their child
- To expect that there will be a recognition of the individual differences among pupils

- To expect that there will be fairness and consistency in the way the pupils are treated
- To communicate with teachers/principal by appointment on matters of mutual interest or concern
- To expect contact at an early stage to discuss difficulties and/or problems
- To receive regular progress reports and information on the school's policies and procedures
- To be made aware of the school's code of behaviour and parental complaints procedures and to appeal decisions in accordance with agreed procedures

### **Parent/ guardian responsibilities**

- To encourage pupils to have a sense of respect for themselves and others, for their property and that of others
- To ensure their children attend school regularly while the school is open. (Holidays should not be taken during term time).
- To ensure children attend school punctually and for the entirety of the school day
- To inform the school in writing or by telephone as to the nature of any absence on the day of the absence itself.
- To show interest in their child's education by ensuring their child has the correct books and materials and by signing homework notebooks and reading records every night
- To encourage children to have a sense of respect and acceptance for themselves and others
- To support the school in the implementation of the school's Code of Behaviour. It is a condition of enrolment in the school that parents agree to comply with the school's Code of Behaviour (Education Welfare Act 2000 section 23, 4)
- To co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others
- To communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect their child's progress/ behaviour. All relevant reports from other professionals should be supplied to school personnel.
- To communicate with the school/principal in relation to any personal/family issues which may affect a child's progress, behaviour or mood.
- All communication should be in a spirit of courtesy and cooperation with the teacher/principal and all school staff

## Ballygarvan N.S School Rules

1. Follow directions
2. Respect others and property
3. Work and play safely

Each class teacher is responsible for setting and displaying their own classroom rules, rewards and sanctions. Each class teacher will explain their rules at the beginning of each term.

The majority of pupils who are consistently well behaved will be explicitly acknowledged and rewarded at a class and school level.

### **The 3 C's of classroom and school rules:**

**Be clear:** the children should have a clear understanding of what behaviour is expected and focus on the positive. The positive rewards and negative consequences at work in the class should be very clear also.

**Be consistent:** be consistent in the application of the rules, rewards and consequences over time and across contexts. Make sure classroom rules are consistent with the school behaviour policy and overall school rules. Rules must be implemented consistently throughout the school.

**Be caring:** Rules to be presented as a way for children to get on well together, to make sure everyone is treated with respect, and to ensure that each child can learn in a safe, supportive environment.

## Whole school strategies to promote positive behaviour

### **1. Explicit Teaching of rules:**

- S.P.H.E. classes for the month of September will be spent teaching and discussing the school rules, rewards and consequences.
- Class rules will also be decided upon. These will be displayed clearly in each classroom. Some classes may also decide upon a class contract that each pupil in the class signs to say they will follow the class rules. A copy of these rules will be sent home to parents.

- Classes will discuss the meanings of the word 'Respect' and 'Respect Words' will be displayed in prominent places.
- The school's Social and Personal Health Education 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.

## **2. Whole School systems for promoting and affirming positive behaviour:**

Supervision is a key element in ensuring our school is a safe and secure environment for teaching and learning. Our supervision policy outlines our expectations and systems with regard to supervision before, during and when leaving school. Other whole school systems that will be used to promote and affirm positive behaviour may include the following:

- Modelling of good and desired behaviours
- Children will be reminded of the school rules and policies at regular assemblies. A child may receive a 'Bualadh Bos' / applause or special mention at assembly. Pupil may receive Pupil of the Week or Principals Award.
- Walk on left in single file quietly.
- School rules will be displayed in prominent places in the school
- Discussion with class regarding the need for appropriate behaviour
- Discussing expectations, school rules and class rules with all classes at least at the beginning of each new term
- Collaborative development of a set of classroom rules
- All classrooms will contain signs/ posters displaying the class rules/ rewards & consequences
- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication/ phonecall/ 'You're a star' / 'Caught you being good' notes
- Pupils whose behaviour shows consistent improvement will be affirmed and rewarded.
- A school buddy system at lunchtime. The 'Yard Buddy's' actively care for and look out for other children, encouraging them to participate in a variety of traditional and modern playtime games and activities
- School trips, swimming and annual school tours will be reserved for those who have consistently strived to behave well.
- Attendance awards: Unbroken attendance for the year.

## **3. Managing and preventing misbehaviour**

A fundamental part of the management of behaviour in each class is that children are taught the curriculum in a stimulating manner using a variety of methodologies and



differentiated, where appropriate, to meet their needs. Children are kept engaged and busy as far as possible. From the beginning of the year, teachers ensure that children understand the class rules and the expectations that the teacher has around these rules.

Teachers may use the following strategies to manage any misbehaviour that may occur in the school **before** using consequences outlined later on in this policy.

- Ignore the behaviour
- Remove the cause of the behaviour if possible
- Non-verbal signs such as a warning look, a change in tone of voice or stopping speaking and waiting for attention
- Moving to stand in the vicinity of the pupil
- Overlooking/ ignoring behaviour while praising the pupil demonstrating the appropriate behaviour
- Moving the pupil to a quiet spot to work
- Regular reminders and class discussions about the class rules
- Establishment of clear class and school routines to minimise opportunities for misbehaviour

### **Managing Homework Issues**

**It is the responsibility of children from first class upwards to write down their homework in their diary each day. Parents should make teachers aware if this is not being done.**

1. Note/Verbal from teacher outlining incomplete work and tell pupil to catch up.
2. If homework is not complete on a subsequent day, note from teacher in homework notebook to be signed by parent.
3. If the problem persists, pupil will be asked to complete homework during school at a time of teacher's choosing.
4. Parents will be informed at all points and may be called to a meeting if non-completion of homework continues or recurs.

### **Managing aggressive or violent misbehaviour**

- Parents of children who are experiencing emotional difficulties will be asked to refer children for a psychological assessment.
- Appropriate support is sought from services available
- Professional development is available to staff.
- A pupil may have to be physically restrained, for their own protection or the protection of others. In that event, the teachers and SNA's will do so with the same degree of force as that of a reasonable responsible parent and the child's parent will be informed immediately. A report will be compiled on the incident and reported to the Board of Management.
- Parents will always be informed/consulted about the above.
- Failure by parents to engage with appropriate support services may place their child's continued enrolment in jeopardy

The school has a protocol for managing aggressive/violent/threatening incidents which has been approved by the Board of Management.

## **Misbehaviour**

The misbehaviour of pupils is divided into three categories:

1. Minor Misbehaviour
2. Serious Misbehaviour
3. Gross Misconduct

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

### **Minor Incidents:**

- Regularly refusing to line up
- Interrupting class work
- Arriving late for school (See section on Punctuality)
- Inappropriate use of school laptops
- Running in school building
- Talking in class line
- Littering
- Not wearing correct uniform
- Being discourteous/unmannerly
- Not completing homework without written reason
- Not having homework signed by a parent
- Not completing classwork in a timely manner
- Delaying lining up
- Mocking or goading another pupil
- Not following instructions given by a staff member, being insolent to a staff member, eating chewing gum etc. This list is not exhaustive.

Persistent, regular or repeated minor misbehaviour or one-off serious/ extreme incidents of behaviours listed above will be dealt with under 'Serious Misbehaviour'

### **Steps to be taken when dealing with minor misbehaviour:**

- Step 1: Verbal reprimand with reminder of rules and consequences to whole class.
- Step 2: Verbal reprimand at close proximity to individual child.
- Step 3: Note taken of misbehaviour and consequences.
- Step 4: A repeat of the behaviour or a defiant attitude on reprimand involves a note being taken of the incident(s) and verbal or written communication with parents by the teacher dealing with the incident.(e.g. a note in the school journal)

to be signed by parent) and temporarily separate child from peers eg withdrawn to work station at back of class..

- Step 5: Repeated misbehaviour or a more extreme incident will ensure child is sent to adjoining class. **At this step the principal will be informed.**
- Step 6: Pupil is referred to principal.

Consequence that can be utilised when dealing with **regular occurrences of minor misbehaviour:**

- Child will complete **Pupil Reflection Form** (see **Appendix 1**). This will be signed by the child's parent/guardian. Teacher may temporarily separate child from peers in class.
- Teacher may keep child off yard.
- Teacher may temporarily send the pupil to another teacher for a time-out period.
- Teacher may temporarily deny child participation in some class activity with due regard to rights of pupils to access all areas of curriculum. (It should be noted that a whole class would not normally be denied an activity due to the behaviour of an individual/ small group.)
- Class teacher meets one/both parents. A behaviour contract may be written up. (In certain cases, the class teacher may seek advice from the Learning Support/ Resource teacher) The Principal is informed of interventions being put in place.
- If there is no improvement in the behaviour. The Principal meets with the pupil.
- The Principal may meet with one or both parents with a view to helping the child to change his/her behaviour.
- B.O.M. is informed of the persistent misbehaviour and will decide how to proceed.

## **SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOUR**

### **Examples of serious misbehaviour**

**(Incidents of bullying/cyberbullying will also be dealt with under the Anti-Bullying/Cyberbullying Policy)**

- Directing insolent or abusive language at any members of the school community.
- Making remarks of a racist / homophobic nature.
- Climbing the yard rails
- Constantly disruptive in class
- Telling lies
- Accessing inappropriate websites
- Stealing /Damaging other pupil's/school property
- Frequenting school premises after school hours without appropriate permission
- Leaving school premises/yard/ school activities/tours during school day without appropriate permission.
- Bringing mobile phones or any smart devices, (including watches), to school.
- Bringing dangerous objects to school
- Spitting at another pupil or adult/ spitting on another's belongings.

- Inappropriate gestures including lewd comments/behaviour.
- Failure to follow school rules while representing the school in sporting or other activities, on school tours/ outings (e.g. supporters at a match)
- Throwing stones/objects on yard or in class

### **Consequences to be utilised when dealing with incident deemed to be serious misbehaviour:**

In cases where a once-off incident is deemed 'Serious', the following steps will be followed:

- The Principal will request a meeting with one or both parents or speak to them over the phone, informing them of the behavior, procedure and consequences that will immediately take effect.
- The Principal speaks to the child about the incident. The child will write their report of what happened. This will be signed by a parent/ guardian and returned to the school.
- The child will be removed from the yard and given written work as a consequence of the misbehaviour. In the case of serious/ repeated misbehaviour, s/he may be excluded from attending the school tour and/or other field trips.
- The Chairperson of Board of Management may be informed and may request parents to meet with both Chairperson and Principal.
- Class teacher may be involved at any or all stages
- A report may have to be made to the BOM under the school's Anti-Bullying Policy if appropriate.

### **Gross Misconduct:**

**Repeated instances of serious misbehaviours will be viewed as Gross Misconduct.**  
**Examples of Gross Misconduct**

- Gross Insubordination - refusing to follow instructions given by a staff member in a moment of aggression and violence
- Persistent insolent or abusive language at any members of the school community.
- Aggressive, violent, threatening behaviour towards a member of staff/ pupil
- Sexually aggressive behaviour towards a member of staff or pupil
- Repeatedly leaving the school premises without permission.
- Persistent Theft
- Serious, deliberate vandalism of school building or property.
- Recording any member of the school community during school hours.
- Setting fire to school property / fire hose turned on/ interfering with fire protection apparatus
- Bringing in/use of cigarettes, alcohol, drugs or other dangerous substances

**Examples of sanctions to be used when dealing with gross misconduct:**

- Internal suspension. ie Pupil is placed in another classroom for a defined period of time with classwork to be completed and no contact allowed with classmates.
- Chairperson/Principal to sanction immediate suspension when the continued presence of the pupil at the time represents a serious threat to the safety of the students or staff or a serious impediment to the education of the students. See section on Suspension.

Expulsion will be considered if deemed necessary by the Board of Management having complied with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act 2000. See section on Expulsion.

#### **Note**

**In all cases above – misbehavior, steps and sanctions – the lists should not be seen as exclusive. The School retains the right to include other behaviours which may not be listed but which may, nonetheless, be contrary to the behaviour expected in the school. Equally other sanctions, not listed here, may be used.**

**The Board of Management will have the authority to investigate any incident which occurs inside or outside the school, during school hours or not, which brings the school into disrepute.**

## **Suspensions/Expulsions and Appeals**

### **SUSPENSION**

Access to education shapes the life chances of children in a fundamental way. For this reason, the Board of Management of Ballygarvan N.S. regard a proposal to exclude a student, through suspension, as a serious step warranted only by very serious misbehaviour. We accept that decisions to suspend a student are open to appeal and may be subject to judicial review by the High Court.

#### **Definition**

Suspension is defined as requiring the pupil to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days. During this period the pupil retains their place in the school.

#### **Grounds for suspension**

Suspension in Ballygarvan N.S. will be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing the concern. Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these did not work.

The decision to suspend a pupil requires serious grounds such as that:

- The pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils through loss of teaching time and disturbance of class.

- The pupil's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety of both pupils and staff.
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property
- A single incident of serious or gross misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

### **Fair Procedures**

Fair procedures based on the principles of natural justice will be applied when proposing to suspend or expel a student.

Students and their parents/guardians have:

- The right to be heard
- The right to impartiality

Fair procedures will apply to the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour that may lead to suspension or expulsion as follows:

- Unless an immediate suspension is applied, (see below), the student and their parents will be fully informed about the complaint, how it will be investigated and that it could result in a suspension. Parents will be informed by phone and in writing.
- The parents and student will then be given an opportunity to respond, within five school days, before a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed. This will be done at a meeting attended by the parents and student, who will then be given an opportunity to give their side of the story.
- If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a rescheduled meeting within another 5 school days and, failure to attend re-scheduled meeting means it will be the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour.

The school will record the invitations made to the parents and their response(s) and keep these on file in the principal's office, in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

### **Immediate/Automatic suspension**

An immediate suspension will apply where the Principal considers it necessary as the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time represents a serious threat to the safety of the students or staff of the school, or any other person. Fair procedures will still apply.

### **Procedures in relation to an immediate suspension**

An immediate suspension will only be warranted for reasons of safety, of the students, staff or others.

In this case a preliminary investigation will be conducted by the Principal to establish the case for an immediate suspension. Parents will be notified, and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected. The formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension.

## **Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions**

In cases other than those of Immediate Suspension the following procedures will apply:

Where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management will initiate a formal investigation of the matter. The following procedures will be observed:

A written letter or Email containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s) containing:

- Details of the alleged misbehaviour
- Details of the impending investigation process
- Notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
- An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter or email, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.
- Consequences and sanctions

We acknowledge the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given:

- No person with a vested interest or personal, (rather than professional), involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Where a decision to suspend has been made the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision. The letter will confirm:

- The duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- The reasons for the suspension
- Any study programme to be followed
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

### **The decision making process in relation to all suspensions.**

In the interests of fairness the Principal and class teacher conduct the investigation, (unless they recuse themselves for personal reasons). They will present a full written report on the facts of the case and any other relevant information. The Principal will make a decision about whether the student did engage in the behaviour and about the sanction, based on the report of the investigation. In circumstances of particular complexity the Board of Management may need to seek legal advice to support the decision making.

Where allegations of criminal behaviour are made about a student, these will usually be referred to the Gardaí who have responsibility for investigating criminal matters.

Suspension in Ballygarvan N.S. is part of an agreed plan to address the student's behaviour.

The suspension will:

1. enable the school to set behaviour goals with the student and their parents
2. give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions
3. impress on a student and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour
4. ensure the safety and well-being of all classmates and the school body as a whole.
5. ensure that the other pupils' right to learn is not impeded.

### **The period of suspension**

The Board of Management has delegated authority to the principal to suspend for up to three days, which can be extended to five days with the Chairperson's approval. The Board of Management will normally place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. (Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare)

Where a pupil has been suspended for 20 days or more in any school year, the Board of Management will formally review any further proposal to suspend.

### **Appeals**

The Board of Management of Ballygarvan N.S. will offer an opportunity to appeal a Principal's decision to suspend.

In the case of decisions to suspend by the Board of Management an appeals process may be provided by the Patron.

#### ***Section 29 Appeal***

Where the total number of days for which any student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days, the parents may appeal the Suspension under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

At the time when parents are being formally notified of such a Suspension, they will be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education.

### **Implementing the Suspension**

The Principal will notify the parents in writing of the decision to suspend.

The letter will confirm;



- The period of the suspension. The beginning and end date of the suspension will be included.
- The reasons for the suspension
- Any study programme to be followed
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitment to be entered into by the pupil and the parent e.g. parent might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the Code of Behaviour
- 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.

To maximise the impact and value of the suspension the Principal or another staff member delegated by the Principal may meet with the parents to emphasise their responsibility in helping the student behave well when the student returns to school and to offer help and guidance in this.

Where parents do not agree to meet the principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.

### **Grounds for removing a Suspension.**

A suspension may be removed if the Board of Management decides to remove the Suspension for any reason or if the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science directs that it be removed following an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998

### **After the Suspension ends.**

A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents.

### **Re-integrating the student**

The school will have a plan to help the student to take responsibility for catching up on work missed.

Re-admission to school may sometimes involve conditions, for example, earlier finishing times or individual management plans.

The Principal will arrange for an S.E.T. to provide support to the student during the re-integration process.

Should a pupil arrive for school even though he/she has been suspended, the parents will be contacted and asked to collect the child. The pupil will not be admitted to class but will remain in another room where supervision will be arranged. The pupil will be given school work to do while they wait to be collected.

### **Clean Slate**

When a suspension is completed the student will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed the school will expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

### **Records and Reports.**

Formal written records will be kept in the Principal's office. These will include:

- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- The decision making process
- The decision and the rationale for the decision
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for the duration of each suspension.

The Principal will report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines.

### **Review of the use of suspension**

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school and to ensure that use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

## **EXPULSION**

A pupil is expelled from a school when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him/her from the school, having complied with the provisions of Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

### **Grounds for Expulsion**

Expulsion is a very serious step, and one that will only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate;

- Meeting with the parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour.
- Make sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist.
- Ensure that all other possible options have been tried.
- Seeking the advice of support agencies(e.g. NEPS, HSE Community services, the National Behaviour Support Service, CAMHS, NCSE)

### **A proposal to expel a pupil requires serious 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 property
- A single incident of a gross misdemeanour may be grounds for expulsion

Expulsion on a first offence will happen only in exceptional circumstances 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 the school
- Sexual assault

A detailed review of a range of factors will be undertaken prior to the use of expulsion as a sanction in Ballygarvan N.S. including:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour.
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date
- Whether expulsion is an appropriate response
- The possible impact of expulsion.

### **Procedures in respect of expulsion.**

**Please Note: If the Board considers that the presence of the student will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other students or staff, the BOM may suspend a student, or apply an internal suspension with a loss of privileges, while these procedures are being followed.**

- A detail investigation carried out by the Deputy Principal, under the direction of the Principal
- A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal
- Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing
- Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing
- Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

### **Step 1: A detailed investigation carried out by the Deputy Principal.**

In investigating an allegation, in line with fair procedures, the Deputy Principal will:

- Inform the student and their parents, in writing, about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- A meeting with the parents and student giving them every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.
- If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Deputy Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a

decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour. The school will record the invitation issued to the parents and their response.

### **Step 2: A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.**

Where the Deputy Principal forms the independent view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, he/she will advise that the Principal make a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider the expulsion. The Principal will:

- Inform the parents and the student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- Ensure the parents have records of the allegations against the student; the investigation; and written notice on the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider the expulsion
- Provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to Parents
- Notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing
- Advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- Ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them 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 must satisfy itself that fair procedure has been applied in the investigation and decision making process through a review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It should ensure that no party who has an involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations (e.g. a member of the Board who may have made an allegation about that student)

The Board of Management will hold a hearing. At the hearing, the Principal and the Parents put their case to the Board in each other's presence. Each party will be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. This meeting may also be used by the parents to make their case for lessening the sanction. In the conduct of the hearing, the Board must take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be impartial. Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board will facilitate this.

After both sides have been heard, the Board will deliberate. The Principal and Parents are not present for these deliberations.

### **Step 4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing**

Having heard from all parties, it is the responsibility of the Board to decide whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.

Where the Board considers the student should be expelled the Board will:

- Notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion. The student cannot

be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO receives the written notification.

- Inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process, including that the Board of Management is now informing the Educational Welfare Officer.

### **Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer**

Within 20 days of such a notification the Educational Welfare Officer will:

- Hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents and the student and anyone else who may be of assistance.
- Convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend to plan for the student's future education.
- If the Board considers that the presence of the student will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other students or staff, the BOM may suspend a student during this time.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel where the 20 day period following the notification of the EWO has elapsed, and where the BOM remains of the view that the student should be expelled the BOM should formally confirm the decision to expel. Parents will be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents will be told of their right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record will be made of the decision to expel the student.

### **Appeals**

A parent may appeal the decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science. An appeal may also be brought by the NEWB on behalf of the student.

### **Review of use of expulsion**

The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion in the school every 3 years to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, the patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school, and to ensure that expulsion is used appropriately.

## Record-keeping

When teachers feel that a child is moving from regular minor misdemeanours to regular serious misdemeanours, records of relevant incidents will be kept. Such records will contain:

- Incidents of misbehaviour
- interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
- Evidence of improved behaviour
- Any sanctions imposed, and the reasons they were imposed
- Pupils and parents will be told when a record is being made about behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained.

Teachers may also keep records on children to monitor behaviour. When a child is sent to the Principal for a serious misdemeanour she will record any accounts of the misdemeanour, from the pupil and from others who may be involved.

All records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003

### **Communication with Parents**

When it comes to behaviour, parents/guardians will be involved at an early stage, rather than as a last resort. Communication will be verbal or written, depending on the circumstances. The staff is willing to meet parents at any mutually agreeable time to discuss any concerns. *Notice of such meetings must be agreed in advance.* One aim of the code of behaviour is to provide a clear, consistent method of communication between home and school to inform the parents about their children's behaviour in school.

In situations where there is evidence of serious ongoing emotional and behavioural difficulties, teachers will work with parents/guardians to have their student referred for assessment by the relevant service

## Evaluation, Ratification and Review

### Evaluation

The success of this Code of Behaviour Policy will be measured through:

- Maintaining or improving the current good behaviour levels in the school
- Fostering happy, confident, well-adjusted children
- Positive feedback from teachers and parents and others involved with the pupils in the school

### Ratification & Communication

The Board of Management officially ratified this Code of Behaviour at its meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 2018.

Section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 requires the school to provide parents with a copy of the code of behaviour before registration of the parents' child as a student of the school (pg. 58 NEWB Guidelines)

The Code will be circulated to all school personnel once ratified. It will be published on the school website. A copy of the Code of Behaviour will be given to the Chairperson of the Ballygarvan NS Parents' Association.

Signed by Liam O'Donovan, Chairperson and Mairéad Coakley, Principal

### Timetable for Review

It is the intention of the Board of Management to review the Code of Behaviour at the end of the school year 2019-2020.

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### Ratification of policy for Ballygarvan National School

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**Chairperson**

**Date**

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**Principal**

**Date**

**References:** Developing Codes of Behaviour – Guidelines for Schools (NEWB)

**Appendix 1**

**PUPIL REFLECTION FORM**

The school rule(s) I chose not to follow:

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What happened:

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My reasons for behaving in this way:

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What I could have done differently / will do differently in a similar

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



## APPENDIX 2

### **Breaktimes/Yard and Before and after school supervision**

#### **The Ballygarvan NS rules for yard are as follows:**

- Pupils are expected to comply with the instructions of **all** school staff on yard duty during break times
  - Only games which ensure the safety of all are permitted.
  - Pupils do not engage in rough or dangerous play.
  - Physical contact that can injure another pupil is forbidden
  - All children are to be included in games if they wish
  - Skipping ropes are allowed in the designated area only
  
  - Pupils are only permitted to re-enter the school premises during lunchbreak with the permission of the teacher on duty
  
  - Children walk in an orderly, quiet manner to and from the playground
  - Respectful language is to be used at all times
  - Pupils are forbidden to climb walls, fences or gates.
  - Children must stay in the designated play area
1. When the school bell goes, all pupils freeze where they are standing.
  2. On the second bell, children walk and line up promptly on the instruction of the teacher on duty.
  3. On the third sound, complete silence is expected in the yard until class teachers collect classes from yard.

#### **Yard consequences when rules are broken:**

1. Verbal warning
2. Pupils may be sent to the sin bin for no more than 4 minutes, this is recorded in the yardbook (See **Appendix 3**). Junior and Senior Yard will have a yard book to be collected before yard by S.N.A. on duty.
3. At the end of the week a member of the code of behaviour committee will check the yardbook for the number of offences.
4. When the pupil reaches 3 entries in the book in a 6 week period, that pupil will be kept off yard. Class teacher will notify the parents in writing the day before this happens, outlining the yard rules that were broken. Junior Infants will not be part of this system until January of the school year.
5. If a pupil reaches a second detention they will miss both breaks in the day.
6. Detentions will take place on Wednesdays.
7. In instances where the misdemeanour is considered serious or in the case of a pupil repeatedly refusing to follow the yard rules, it may be necessary to omit the first steps and immediately remove the child from yard and also for the following day.

The procedures for exclusion of the pupil through suspension/ expulsion may be considered in very serious circumstances.

8. During detention 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils write a reflection on their behaviour (**Appendix 1**). Parents may be asked to sign the reflection.  
Junior and Senior Infants will complete the 4 step apology (Appendix 4).
9. Each pupil begins each half-term with a clean slate.

**Note: The “Yard Book” may also be used for before and after school supervision ie from 9.10-9.20am and from 3.00-3.10pm where similar rules and sanctions will apply.**

## Appendix 3 Yard Book

### Steps to be taken in the event of a misdemeanour

1. Verbal warning
2. Pupils may be sent to the sin bin for no more than 4 minutes, this is recorded in the yardbook as follows:

Date	Name of the Pupil	Misdemeanour	Initial of Teacher
18/06	Johnny Murphy	Pushing and elbowing	J.Z.

Junior and Senior Yard will have a yard book to be collected before yard by S.N.A. on duty.

3. At the end of the week a member of the code of behaviour committee will check book for the number of offences.
4. When the pupil reaches 3 entries in the book in a 6 week period, that pupil will be kept off yard. The serious incident of serious or gross misbehaviour will also mean the pupil is kept off yard. Class teacher will notify the parents in writing the day before this happens, outlining the yard rules that were broken. Junior Infants will not be part of this system until January of the school year.
5. If a pupil reaches a second detention they will miss both breaks in the day.
6. Detentions will take place at big lunch on Wednesdays.
7. In instances where the misdemeanour is considered serious or in the case of a pupil repeatedly refusing to follow the yard rules, it may be necessary to omit the first steps and immediately remove the child from yard and also for the following day.

The procedures for exclusion of the pupil through suspension/ expulsion may be considered in very serious circumstances.

8. During detention 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils write a reflection on their behaviour (Appendix 1). Junior and Senior Infants will complete an age appropriate reflection.
9. **Each pupil begins each half-term with a clean slate.**

## Appendix 4

### 4 Step Apology

## 4 Step Apology

1. I'm sorry for \_\_\_\_\_.
2. This was wrong because \_\_\_\_\_.
3. In the future, I will \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Do you forgive me?



## **Appendix 5**

### **Ballygarvan National School, School Uniform**

Pupils are expected to wear the school uniform. This is important in helping to foster a pride in school and making the child feel part of it. Please label all articles of clothing. Come in and in the "Lost and Found" box in the lobby if the clothes are mislaid.

Our uniform comprises of :

Girls: dark green skirt or pinafore , or grey trousers ,  
cream shirt, dark green jumper or cardigan, dark green tie and dark green  
socks or tights.

Boys: grey trousers, cream shirt, dark green jumper and dark  
green tie. Boys and Girls must wear flat, dark-coloured shoes.

The crested jumper/cardigan is compulsory, (and is available from Cahills of  
Carrigaline, Tel. 4375110), or an iron-on school crest may be purchased from the school  
office.

The school tracksuit is available from McCarthy's Sportsworld (Tel. 4866134). A red  
polo shirt is worn with the school tracksuit. School tracksuits may only be worn on  
specified days.

Pupils are expected to have a neat and tidy appearance. If hair is worn long, it should be  
tied back off the pupil's face. Dyed hair or shaved hair is not permitted. Pupils are not  
allowed to wear make-up. For Health and Safety reasons pupils are only allowed to  
wear a single stud earring.