

Barnashrone NS



Code of Conduct

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A high standard of behaviour and discipline is demanded in the school. Children are expected to have respect for their teachers, for each other, for their school and to obey the rules of the school, which are there for their own benefit and safety. The cornerstone of the code of conduct is the recognition of the dignity of each individual pupil, irrespective of background, physical characteristics, family circumstances, religion, ability or personality. The basis of the code of conduct is that all pupils are equally entitled to benefit from their experience of school and to participate in school activities. No one disruptive child shall be allowed to prevent others from benefiting from their education or from being happy in school by his/her deliberate disregard for the school's code of conduct.

Children are expected to cooperate in class, to work hard, to be courteous at all times, to be considerate of others, to make visitors to the school welcome and when representing their school in public to do so with pride.

Learning respect for their environment is an important part of their education and this respect will be seen first of all in the care they take of their own school inside and out. Children are made conscious of the limited nature of the Earth's resources and the need for conservation and issues such as care for growing things. Concern for wildlife, kindness to animals, opportunities for recycling and the avoidance of waste are constantly addressed.

Dealing with matters of discipline

Whilst in school, matters of discipline will normally be dealt with by the class teacher. However, there are some behaviours which will lead to immediate referral to the Principal or Deputy Principal e.g. violent behaviour or use of bad or abusive language to a staff member. Constant, deliberate misbehaviour will warrant a calling-in of parents to obtain from them a commitment to addressing their child's problem. In all cases we would hope to contain such difficulties within the school and to give each child the benefit of being able to start anew if they have offended against the school code of conduct. In cases where issues cannot be resolved between parents and staff it must then be brought to the attention of the Board of Management, who will decide on sanctions to be imposed.

Affirming Positive Behaviour **"Mol an Óige agus Tiocfaidh sí"**

Part of the vision of Barnashrone N.S. is to help children achieve their personal best – academically, intellectually and socially and thus prepare them for further Education, life and work. Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives rather than on sanctions. For effectiveness, rewards must be meaningful, given for effort, linked in time to the desired behaviour, inclusive and consistent.

Reward systems which are based on academic merit or particular extrinsic goals continuously apply to only a limited number of children and undermine the individuality of children. All children deserve encouragement to attain their own best. Our reward systems seek to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. We recognise that there are many

different forms of intelligence and that similarly children use a variety of approaches to solving problems. Rates of praise/rewards for behaviour should be as high as for work. Praise/rewards are earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by all adults in Barnashrone N.S.

The following are examples of how praise will be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in child's copy / exercise book
- A visit to another teacher / Principal for commendation
- Words of praise in front of class / bualadh bos
- Words of praise at assembly
- Display of students' work
- Delegating some special responsibility of privilege
- A mention to Parents/Guardians, written/verbal communication

Rewards and Incentives for Positive Behaviour

Greater emphasis is placed on rewards than on sanctions.

This is not an exhaustive list. Rewards may include the following.

- Stamps / stickers / points / dojos / marbles
- Traffic lights more commonly used in Junior classes
- Homework passes
- Golden time
- Tootles (Opposite of tattles) – written/verbal praise from another pupil for positive PAX actions.
- 'Granny Wacky Prize'- Whole class prize of a short game or fun activity.
- Class / group of the week / points systems
- Assembly / class of the month
- Certificates / prizes / rewards
- Whole-school reward systems which foster continuity, target specific school behaviours and reward compliance with school rules: Reward system beginning on yard and added to by bonus points awarded incidentally for "catching class groups being good"

Unacceptable Behaviour

Unacceptable Behaviour

Three levels of Misbehaviour are recognised: **minor, serious and gross**. All everyday instances of **minor misbehaviours** will be dealt with by the class teacher or the supervising teacher at break-times.

Examples of minor misbehaviour:

- Breaking the agreed class rules
- Interrupting class work which prevents others from learning
- Refusing to carry out a specific instruction given by a teacher;
- Refusing to do assigned schoolwork;

- Arriving late for school regularly;
- Running in school building;
- Leaving seat without permission at lunch time;
- Being discourteous/unmannerly;
- Isolated acts of disrespect/unkindness to any staff member/pupil/parent/visitor
- Not completing homework without good reason.

Class teachers will keep a **running record of minor misbehaviours**. If a pattern of minor misbehaviours appears, the class teacher may inform Parents/Guardians and/or Principal/Vice Principal.

Examples of serious misbehaviour:

- Repeated minor breaches of discipline may be considered to be a serious breach of discipline;
- Regularly being disruptive in class;
- Stealing;
- Damaging another pupil's property;
- Telling lies (Age appropriate);
- Endangering self or fellow pupils in the school environment;
- Using unacceptable/inappropriate/insulting language;
- Any action that is physically or verbally injurious to another member of the school community including the dissemination of any material that could be offensive to a member of the school community.

Single instances of serious misbehaviour will be dealt with by the class teacher in conjunction with the Deputy Principal / Principal. Any single incident may be brought to the Parent/Guardian's attention at the discretion of the Deputy Principal / Principal.

In cases of **repeated serious misbehaviours** Parents/Guardians will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the class teacher and Deputy Principal / Principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of gross misbehaviour:

- Repeated occurrence of serious breaches of discipline will be considered to be gross breaches of discipline;
- Wilfully causing serious damage to school property or buildings;
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher/pupil or any member of the school community;
- Leaving the school premises during school day without permission of the Teacher, Deputy Principal or Principal;
- Bullying; see Anti-Bullying Policy
- Any behaviour that is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.

Parents / Guardians will be informed immediately by the Principal if there is **one incident of gross misbehaviour**.

(It should be noted that these lists consist of examples only. Other actions not listed above may be classed as minor/serious/gross misdemeanours.)

Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour

Where there has been a breach of discipline, the degree of severity will be assessed by the teacher in the first instance and will be dealt with at class level. When appropriate, the Principal or Deputy Principal will be informed and will assist in dealing with the incident. The assessment of the seriousness of the misdemeanour i.e. minor, serious or gross and appropriate sanction, will be judged by the teachers and/or Principal or Deputy Principal based on a common-sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours, the circumstances of the incident and the context.

Sanctions for Unacceptable Behaviour

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by helping children to:

- learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- see that their behaviour affects others
- understand that they have choices about their behaviour
- understand that their choices have consequences
- learn to take responsibility for their choices / behaviours
- discuss and devise strategies to prevent the behaviour occurring again

Sanctions should:

- reinforce the Code of Behaviour
- signal to other children that their wellbeing is being protected
- prevent serious disruption of Teaching and Learning
- be clear so that the child understands why the sanction is being applied
- make it clear that changes in behaviour are needed to avoid further sanctions
- make a clear distinction between minor, serious and gross offences
- relate as closely as possible to the behaviour e.g. a child, who refuses to do his work in class or has not completed his homework, may be detained at break time to finish the work.
- relate to an individual and not a group
- focus on the child's behaviour not on the child himself/herself

The following sanctions may be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. They are listed in order of severity from sanctions for minor to serious and gross misbehaviour. **This list is not exhaustive**. Individual teachers may put alternative measures in place depending on the circumstances involved and the age of the child.

Sanctions:

- Verbal reprimand, in private where practicable, to include reasoning and advising how to improve.

- Withdrawal of privileges for example, golden time, football at yard time, extra yard time reward. (Parents may be informed depending on the seriousness of the sanction. A pupil will not be deprived of access to a curricular area as a sanction. However, if a pupil is misbehaving during a particular lesson they may be given a cooling off period in which they are removed from the lesson.)
- Pupil apologises sincerely (in writing where appropriate).
- Note in Class Behaviour Record Book: Teacher will note instances of serious classroom misbehaviour in class behaviour record book.
- Time Out: Temporary separation from peers. The pupil is reprimanded and /or given 'Time Out' by being separated from peers in the classroom, either changing places with another pupil or moving to an isolated desk. During this time, they will still partake in class work.
- Misbehaviours at break time may result in 'Time Out' in the yard.
- The pupil may be removed to a separate place for a "cool down" period outside of the classroom. The pupil may be given class work during this time and/or be encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and or write about it. (In the case of serious incidents a pupil may be removed from their class for a longer period.)
- Note Home: Note from class teacher/supervising teacher home explaining misbehaviour to be signed by parent/guardian and returned to school.
- Reflection Sheet and/or extra work to be completed at home, signed by parent/guardian and kept on file.
- Pupils may be sent to the Principal for continually occurring or serious misbehaviours and/or a 'Discipline Note' will be issued.
- Personal contact may be made with parents by the teacher or the Principal in the form of a letter/email/phone call.
- Parents may be requested to meet with the teacher and/or the Principal.
- Daily report to be signed by parent/guardian.
- Detention at break/lunch times may be used for serious misbehaviours in consultation with the Principal. The pupil will be given time to eat their lunch, go to the toilet and will be supervised at all times. Parents will be informed of detention, with a 'Detention Note'
- Reduced Timetable: A reduced timetable (meaning a shorter day) is an exceptional intervention and most likely to be used in the event of a child exhibiting social and emotional difficulties which are causing repeated disruption to a class, where the child seems unable to cope with school or where the child's behaviour poses a threat to others. In this event, the principal will contact both the chairperson of the BOM for approval and the child's parents for consent. It is quite likely the NEPS psychologist and or SENO would also be consulted. A reduced timetable may be put in place temporarily to help support a child to get to a point where they are settled and calm in school and in a better position for learning to occur. A reduced timetable in this instance means the child's day will be built up gradually – e.g. in increments of half an hour –with the intention being the child would return to a full day at school. A reduced timetable may also be used as an alternative to expulsion, where a child's behaviour is also posing a disruption or danger to others but where suspension has proved ineffective yet full expulsion would not benefit the child. In this instance – perhaps a child at the end of 6th class – the aim is to maximize the child's learning during this shorter day – resource teachers may change timetables to facilitate, etc.
- In-school Suspension. On occasion, if it is felt beneficial, a child, at the discretion of the Deputy or Principal, may be put on an 'in-school suspension' for up to 3 days. This involves the pupil being sent to another class for the duration of his/her

suspension with work. The pupil goes straight to the appropriate class when they arrive at school the next day. A folder of work that they can do with little/no help, along with pencils etc should be sent to the class by the class teacher who will be ready for their arrival. They should remain with that class and have no contact with their own class for the remainder of the day(s). The pupil should be sitting at a table on his/her own. He/she will be treated by the class teacher in the same manner as a child on a sanction i.e. given very little attention. Upon returning from an in-school suspension the child will be placed on a daily/weekly report card.

- Referral made by the Principal to the Chairperson of the Board of Management to arrange a meeting between them and the parents.
- Referral to the Board of Management.
- The Principal and/or Chairperson may impose a Suspension, in accordance with the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, from school for up to 3 days in any one suspension period.
- The Board of Management may consider and sanction Expulsion, in accordance with the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Procedures to be followed when dealing with serious/gross breaches of discipline:

1. Teacher observes misconduct or receives a report of alleged serious /gross misconduct.
2. Teacher carries out a preliminary investigation of a report of serious/gross misconduct – speaking with the pupil concerned and other children and/or staff, as appropriate.
3. An Incident Report will be completed by the pupil’s teacher or supervising teacher and recorded in the Class Incidents Book.
4. Where the offence is considered to be of a sufficiently serious nature, the pupil(s) will be sent to the Principal or Deputy Principal for further investigation.
5. In school, fair procedures apply to the investigation of alleged misbehaviour that may lead to suspension or expulsion and the process of decision making as to whether the pupil did engage in the misbehaviour and in what sanction to impose. The principle of impartiality in decision making means that it is preferable that, where possible, the Principal arranges for another member or members of staff to conduct the investigation and to present a full report on the facts of the case and any other relevant information to the Principal.
6. It is incumbent on the Principal to ensure that the investigation has been fully and fairly conducted. The Principal is then free to take a view whether the child did engage in the behaviour and about the sanction, based on the report of the investigation.
7. Pupil may be put on time-out in another class and be asked to reflect on their behaviour using a restorative practice sheet.
8. The child will be expected to apologise to the class teacher and any other member of the school community who has been offended by the pupil’s actions.
9. The child will be asked to commit to not engage in any similar behaviour in the future that may cause offence or injury to another member of the school community. In cases of bullying, the pupil will be asked to apologise to the ‘victim’ and to refrain from the activity that has caused upset.
10. The pupil may be asked to sign a ‘Pupil’s Behaviour Promise’ which acts in the spirit of a contract. A breach of the promise will be seen as a serious offence.

11. Where serious breaches of behaviour have occurred and continue to occur, the school may devise an 'Individual Behaviour Plan' that includes steps to be adhered to in order to prevent the recurrence of the misdemeanours.
12. If no improvements are made parents are invited into school and report cards are shown to parents to discuss escalating episodes of misbehaviour. Interventions and possible consequences such as in school or full suspension will be discussed.
13. The Principal will report to the Board at each Board meeting any serious/gross breaches of discipline that have occurred since the last meeting. The identity of the children involved will be protected as far as possible.
14. Where necessary, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed of the incident and parents will be requested to meet with the Chairperson and Principal to discuss the behaviour and how to ensure good behaviour in the future.

Communicating with Parents and Guardians

Communicating with Parents/Guardians is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents/guardians will be informed as soon as it is perceived that difficulties are developing with regard to their child's behaviour. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy, where possible, which can be implemented at home and at school. A high level of co-operation and open communication is an important factor which encourages positive behaviour in the school.

A parental visit to the school is vitally important as it allows the child to see that all parties care about the child's behaviour and that they are willing to give time to help the child to solve the problem. It also gives a valid opportunity to the parent to discuss the Behaviour Policy with the child outside of the school setting in their role as the primary educators of their children.

Barnashrone N.S. encourages Parents to talk in confidence to teachers and/or Principal about any significant development in their child's life which may affect their child's behaviour.

The following methods of Communication are used:

- Informal / formal Parent / Teacher Meetings
- Notes in Homework Journals/Folder
- Letters / notes to and from school
- Barnashrone N.S. website
- Email / text messaging

The Parents and Guardians of any new children starting in Barnashrone N.S. will be provided with a copy of our Code of Conduct.

Suspension

Suspension

Before suspending a pupil, the school will fully consider the circumstances which led to the behaviour and whether any effective alternative approach to suspension is possible and apply the minimal period of suspension that is appropriate in the circumstances which led to the behaviour. Factors to be taken into account include the age of the pupil, the degree of severity of the behaviour and the context.

Prior to suspension a letter will be sent to the parents, which will include the reasons for the suspension, the period of suspension and a request to the parents to contact the school immediately in order to arrange a meeting with the Principal to discuss the pupil's misbehaviour. In exceptional circumstances, a Principal may suspend a pupil immediately.

All pupils enrolled into the school will receive a copy of the Code of Conduct. By enrolling their child into the school parents will acknowledge that they accept and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct.

Automatic Suspension:

A Board of management may decide, as part of the school's policy on sanctions, and following the consultation process with the Principal, parents, teachers and pupils, that particular behaviours incur suspension as a sanction. (NEWB Guidelines for Schools p 73).

The following breaches of discipline will merit an automatic suspension:

- Bullying, where repeated offending has occurred, and a programme of interventions has failed to arrest the behaviour;
- Leaving the school premises or the group when out on school trips during the school day without the permission of the Teacher, Deputy Principal or Principal
- Endangering self or fellow pupils in the school environs
- Bringing weapons, drugs or alcohol to school
- Any action that is physically injurious to another member of the school community including the dissemination of any explicit or defamatory material that could be grossly offensive to a member of the school community
- Serious damage to children's/staff/school property
- Continuous defiance/ refusal to follow staff instruction
- Theft of a serious nature
- A single incident of serious misbehaviour may be grounds for suspension.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the Parents / Guardians may apply to have their child reinstated to Barnashrone N.S. The Principal must be satisfied that the child's reinstatement will hold no safety risks to other children or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of an Individual Behaviour Plan for the child in conjunction with the Class Teacher and Resource Teacher if required. The Principal will formally re-admit the child to his/her class.

Prior to the child's return, the parents will be invited to meet with the principal and/or class teacher to support ongoing efforts made by the child to behave in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

The parent/s must

give a satisfactory undertaking in writing that a suspended pupil will endeavour to 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.

make themselves available to remove the child should the child become aggressive or unmanageable.

engage with the relevant professional services when it is advised that the behavioural difficulties lie outside of a teachers' professional remit.

As with any sanctions, when completed a student has a fresh start. However, a record is kept of the behaviour and the sanction imposed. Once the sanction is completed, the school will expect the same behaviour of this pupil as of all the other pupils

See also: Barnashrone NS **Anti-Bullying Policy**

Adopted and ratified by the Board of Management