

GLASNEVIN NATIONAL SCHOOL

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

This Code was developed following a review of the existing Code, in consultation with teachers, parents, children and Board of Management and with reference to the National Educational Welfare Board Guidelines for schools on developing a Code of Behaviour.

The school is under Church of Ireland Patronage – it is to be expected that this ethos will permeate all activities within the school. In keeping with this ethos we aim to nurture each child, to develop his / her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are valued.

The purpose of this Code is to promote positive behaviour and to allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious fashion and to enhance a learning environment where children can make progress in all aspects of their development. This can only be achieved where there is a high level of respect and co-operation between staff, parents and pupils.

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives rather than sanctions. In keeping with the characteristic spirit of the school, pupils are expected :

- To treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable.
- To show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own belongings
- To do his / her best both in school and for homework
- To attend school every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case it is the responsibility of parents / guardians to inform the school in writing, stating the reason for absence.

Bullying is repeated verbal, psychological or physical aggression by an individual or group against others. The most common forms of bullying are aggressive physical contact, name calling, intimidation, extortion, isolation and taunting. Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to co-operate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy. Each class group will be actively involved in drawing up agreed classroom and yard rules and sanctions. Rules and sanctions will be appropriate to the age and stage of development of pupils.

Systems for acknowledging good behaviour, progress and effect will include:

- Verbal affirmation or gesture to show approval
- A comment on a child's exercise book
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation
- Praise in front of class group
- Individual merit awards or points awards

- Delegating some special responsibility
- Written or verbal communication with parents / guardians

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and to discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development. Sanctions may include:

- Reasoning with pupil
- Reprimand including advice on how to improve
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
- Loss of privileges
- Detention during break or after school hours
- Prescribing additional work
- Referral to Principal Teacher
- Communication with parents / guardians
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Where there is concern about an incident of misbehaviour or ongoing misbehaviour the class teacher will meet the parents / guardians by appointment. It is hoped that most issues concerning misbehaviour can be resolved informally at this stage.

Parents are welcome to initiate such meetings by appointment if they have concerns.

If the situation is not resolved following a meeting with the class teacher, parents may request a meeting, or may be requested to meet with, the Principal to discuss the matter. Where the support of an outside agency may be required the school will make every effort to provide the necessary information and help.

Where it is proposed to detain a pupil after school hours, the parents / guardians will be notified and a suitable date agreed.

SUSPENSION

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a pupil and this authority is delegated to the principal.

The decision to suspend a pupil may be based on ongoing misbehaviour or a single incident of serious misconduct. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms misbehaviour that could warrant suspension:

- The parents / guardians will be notified about the complaint, how it will be / has been investigated, and that it could result in suspension
- Parents / guardians and pupil will be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before a period of suspension is imposed, except where immediate suspension is deemed necessary. A period of suspension is normally not more than three days except in exceptional circumstances.

When a decision is made to suspend, the Principal will notify the parents / guardians in writing. The letter will confirm:

- The period of suspension
- The reasons for suspension
- The arrangements for returning to school
- The provision for an appeal. Where the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents/ guardians may appeal the suspension to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science, under section 29 of the Education act 1998, as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007.

Where parents / guardians do not agree to meet with the Principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.

Expulsion

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved to the Board of Management. A proposal to expel a pupil requires serious grounds such as that:

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

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a pupil should be expelled for a first offence. Expulsion for a first offence will be considered only in the case of a gross misdemeanour.

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include;

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

A parent/guardian may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 section 29).

The Code of Behaviour applies during the school day and to activities such as school tours, sports, extracurricular activities and attendance at events organized by the school. Where a student is alleged to have engaged in serious misbehaviour outside school, when not under the care or responsibility of school, a judgement will be made as to whether there is a clear connection with the school and a demonstrable impact on its work, before the Code of Behaviour applies.

This Code will be reviewed annually by the Board of Management.

Ratified by Board of Management on _____
Date

Signed _____
Chairperson, Board of Management