

Glasnevin Educate Together National School,  
Griffith Avenue, Glasnevin, Dublin 11



## Positive Behaviour Policy

This policy incorporates guidelines from the National Educational Welfare Board on Developing a Code of Behaviour (01/09/2010).

The original Positive Behaviour Policy Document was formulated having first consulted Parents/Guardians, Teachers, Senior Pupils and Members of the Board of Management. An Investigation was carried out in the school of the preferred disciplinary procedures of all of the major stakeholders.

In line with our ethos we aim to engage children with restorative practice as much as possible, where they can modify and adapt behaviour when required. This is yet to be fully reflected in the document.

Reviewed 4<sup>th</sup> February 2009

Further Review December 2010

Reviewed September 2014

Reviewed June 2018

Ratified by Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by Chairperson on \_\_\_\_\_

## **Introduction:**

This school seeks to foster the potential for growth and development in each child, so that he or she may live a full and happy life. We strive to provide the child with a balanced education, embracing the emotional, social, moral and intellectual development. There is a strong sense of community within the school and a very real sense of acceptance of the unique, individual worth of every child. Difference is celebrated, whether it is based on religion, race, social class, ability, disability or learning needs.

The Positive Behaviour Policy Document reflects the inclusive nature of Glasnevin Educate Together School. It acknowledges the individuality of each student and endeavors to ensure that each child will be dealt with in a manner that is meaningful to that child.

## **Aims:**

1. To help create a positive learning environment for the benefit of all.
2. To encourage pupils to become self-disciplined.
3. To encourage mutual respect between pupils and staff.
4. To encourage pupils to respect themselves and the rights of other pupils.
5. To instill in pupils a pride in their school and to respect school property.

## **At GETNS we believe that:**

- Pupils want to behave well
- Pupils can learn to improve their behaviour
- All behaviour is a form of communication
- All adults can learn strategies to support pupils to improve their behaviour

We adults can support our pupils by:

- The quality of our relationships with each other and them
- The quality of our teaching and caring
- Practical strategies

## **Practical Strategies Consist of:**

- Rights and responsibilities
- Rules
- Routines
- The language of choice
- Descriptive praise

## Expected Behaviour (See Appendix 4)

### In-Class Behaviour

Pupils are requested to:

- Contribute to creating the happy environment we have
- Have all necessary required materials.
- Co-operate with and follow instructions given by the teacher.
- Respect the right of others to a safe and secure learning environment.
- Work to the best of their ability and present written work neatly.

Disruptive behaviour e.g. talking out of turn and hindering other children is unacceptable.

### Out-of-Class Behaviour

- Pupils walk into and out of the school grounds when entering and exiting the school.
- At break times children are under the supervision of a designated teacher. Instructions given by this teacher are to be followed. Of paramount concern to all teachers will be that standards of safety are observed.
- During yard time, pupils must request permission from the teacher on the yard to go to the toilet.
- Children must respect the rights of all children in the yard.
- When children are on out-of-school activities they are expected to behave as ambassadors for the school and represent it in the best possible light. They must also follow the teachers' directions at all times.

Rough and dangerous play is not allowed.

Some children in the Assisted Learning Classes and mainstream may have individual behaviour programmes that are particularly suited to their needs. The teachers and Special Needs Assistants will be made aware of these programmes and will endeavor to be consistent in shaping or ignoring the targeted behaviours.

**Definition of Bullying:** Bullying is a repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical contact by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour which cannot be condoned, are not described as bullying. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing it is bullying.

This activity thrives on secrecy and is often surrounded by under-reporting, complacency, or even denial. The fear of reprisal, social pressures to cope and negative attitudes to "TELLING TALES" may induce the pupil to suffer in silence. Thus, there is a strong "telling"

atmosphere in the school. Children are encouraged to report incidents of bullying. The Stay Safe Programme teaches children to tell an adult until they are listened to and some action is taken.

As well as having a duty of care towards the targeted children of bullying, teachers are very aware of their similar duty towards the perpetrators of these incidents. Children who bully others are displaying behaviour which may indicate that they themselves are being bullied or have some underlying cause for their need to dominate their peers. The bully is very often in need of help.

## **Incentives/Rewards**

Part of our *vision* is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and similarly that children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Our reward system seeks to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication
- 'Bualadh Bos' in class or special mention at assembly.
- Weekly classroom rewards e.g. Golden Time
- Whole school Monthly reward RARA and RAKA

## **Sanctions**

The School's Positive Behaviour Policy seeks to actively encourage desirable behaviour. The vast majority of pupils are happy to comply with the school rules and recognise what misbehaviour is and have quite strong views on how it should be dealt with. However, at times, it will be necessary to apply sanctions for certain pupil misbehaviours.

### **These are the preferred sanctions of the major stakeholders**

1. The pupil is made aware of the fact that his or her behaviour is unacceptable.
2. The teacher may discuss the misbehaviour with the pupil (immediately or later); always

explaining that it is the behaviour that is rejected not the child.

3. The child may receive a verbal/visual cue to moderate behaviour.
4. The seating arrangement in the class may be altered.
5. The child may be given an opportunity to cool down/reflect in a quiet space. This may include a written reflection and/ Restorative questioning.
6. A comment may be written into the child's homework journal, to be signed by the parent(s).
7. A letter of apology may be signed by the pupil and his/her Parents/Guardians also (See Appendix 1).
8. Parents/Guardians may be called in to discuss the child's behaviour with the Teacher.
9. Referral to the Principal. Recorded in Behaviour file.

## Yard Behaviour

1. For rough play, bad language, disrespectful attitude, the pupil will be given an opportunity to cool down and reflect on their behaviour. This may be for 1- 12 mins depending on severity and age of child. On agreement that they will modify their behaviour, they are given a chance to return to yard. The class teacher will be informed. If there is a recurring situation the teacher may keep a record of incidents.
2. Aggressive, physical misbehaviour, which is likely to endanger the safety of others, is not allowed on yard.

**Sanction:** In this (highly unlikely) event, those involved will be sent to the Principal immediately. Pupils will not be allowed to play at yard time for up to 5 full days. The Principal will inform Parents/Guardians. The Principal will keep a record in Accident/Incident book and Behaviour file.

In the very rare and unlikely event of this misbehaviour recurs persistently, with a particular pupil or a particular group of pupils, there will be liaison with the Board of Management to address this issue (See Appendix 2 and Appendix 3).

When necessary, the Principal will seek the help of other professionals in dealing with seriously disruptive pupils. The Parents/Guardians help and co-operation will be enlisted in this approach. The school has to balance the rights of the majority of pupils against the rights of the child who has unresolved problems.

## Parent/Teacher Meetings

Parent/Teacher meetings are held annually. Parents/Guardians are welcome in the school and are encouraged to keep in regular informal contact with the teacher. By this method they can keep themselves informed about their child's progress and air concerns they may have.

## Appendix 1

Glasnevin Educate Together National School,  
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# LETTER OF APOLOGY

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

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

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Signed: (Pupil) \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: (Parent/s) \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please return this form to your classroom teacher.

## **Appendix 2                      Suspension**

### **Procedures in Respect of Suspension**

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school should observe the following procedures:

- ▶ Inform the student and their Parents/Guardians about the complaint.
- ▶ Give Parents/Guardians and student an opportunity to respond.
- ▶ The Board of Management of GETNS has delegated the authority to suspend a pupil for 3 days to the Principal.

### **Inform the Student and Parents/Guardians**

Let the student and their Parents/Guardians know about the complaint, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension. Parents/Guardians may be informed by phone or in writing. It is important that Parents/Guardians are clear about what their son or daughter is alleged to have done, underlining to Parents/Guardians the seriousness with which the school views the alleged misbehaviour.

### **Give an opportunity to respond**

Parents/Guardians and student should be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed. This may be done by phone or meeting. A meeting with the student and their Parents/Guardians provides an opportunity for them to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts. It may also be an opportunity for Parents/Guardians to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with Parents/Guardians how best to address the student's behaviour. If a student and their Parents/Guardians fail to attend a meeting, the Principal should 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 negative behaviour.

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

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others, a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. The formal investigation should immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. All of the conditions for suspension apply to

immediate suspension. No suspension, including an immediate suspension, should be open-ended. In the case of an immediate suspension, Parents/Guardians must be notified, and arrangement made with them for the student to be collected. The school must have regard to its duty of care for the student. In no circumstances should a student be sent home from school without first notifying Parents/Guardians.

### **The Period of Suspension**

A student should not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed in order to achieve a particular objective. If a suspension longer than three days is being proposed by the Principal, the matter should be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes.

However, a Board of Management may wish to authorise the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance concerning such suspensions.

The Board should formally review any proposal to suspend a student, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*.

These provisions enable school authorities to give the student a reasonable time to reflect on their behaviour while avoiding undue loss of teaching time and loss of contact with the positive influences of school. They recognise the serious nature of the sanction of suspension and ensure that this seriousness is reflected in school procedures. The provisions mean that the Board of Management takes ultimate responsibility for sanctions of significant length, especially where such suspensions might reach twenty days in one school year and therefore might lead to an appeal.

### **Appeals**

The Board of Management should offer an opportunity to appeal a Principal's decision to suspend a student. In the case of decisions to suspend made by the Board of Management, an appeals process may be provided by the Patron. Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the Parents/Guardians, may appeal the



suspension under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*, as amended by the *Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007*.

## **Implementing the Suspension**

### **Written notification**

The Principal may notify the Parents/Guardians and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The parents are informed of:

- ▶ the period 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 student and the Parents/Guardians (e.g. Parents/Guardians 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 (*Education Act 1998*, section 29).

### **Engaging with student and Parents/Guardians**

Where a decision to suspend has been made, it can maximise the impact and value of suspension if the Principal or another staff member delegated by the Principal meets with the Parents/Guardians to emphasise their responsibility in helping the student to behave well when the student returns to school and to offer help and guidance in this. Where Parents/Guardians do not agree to meet with 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*.

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

Successful re-integration goes beyond academic work. A suspended student may feel angry or resentful about their suspension, and these feelings can trigger problems with re-integration which, in turn, may lead to further problem

behaviour. Where possible, the school should arrange for a member of staff to provide support to the student during the re-integration process.

### **Clean slate**

When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a student should 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 should expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students

### **Records of investigation and decision-making**

Formal written records should be kept of:

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

### **Report to the Board of Management**

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

### **Report to NEWB**

The Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines (*Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, section 21 (4) (a)*).

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

The Board of Management should 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.

## **Appendix 3                      Expulsion**

Continuously disruptive pupils, or a pupil guilty of a serious breach of discipline, may be excluded from the school. In such a situation, Parents/Guardians will be required to meet with the Chairperson of the Board of Management and the Principal to consider the case.

### **Procedures specifically regarding Expulsion**

The authority to expel is reserved to the Board of Management and may not be delegated. The school will make every effort to avoid the use of expulsion.

### **The grounds for expulsion**

The grounds for expulsion are similar to the grounds for suspension. However, in addition to factors such as, the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference is that where expulsion is considered, the school will have tried a series of other interventions, and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the pupils behaviour. However, a single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for expulsion.

Before a decision is taken to expel, the Board of Management will make a full review of the facts that have led to the consideration of expulsion. These will include the nature and seriousness of the behaviour, the context and the impact of the behaviour, the interventions tried to date, whether expulsion is a proportionate response and the impact on the child.

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

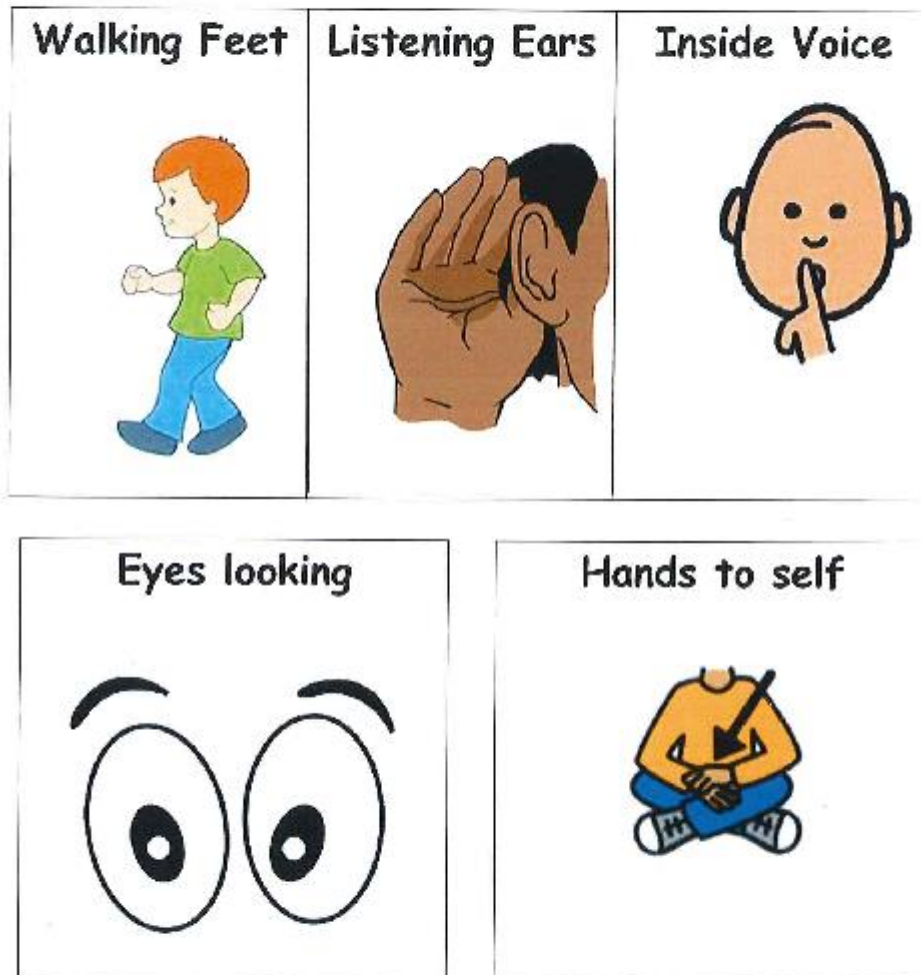
The following procedural steps will be followed:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
2. A recommendation to the BOM by the Principal
3. The Principal writes to the Parents/Guardians inviting them to the BOM hearing to decide the matter and copies them with a copy of the recommendation to the BOM and any documentation/evidence forwarded to the BOM and relied upon by the Principal.
4. Consideration by the BOM of the recommendation and the holding of a hearing, in which the Principal and the Parents/Guardians put their case to the Board in each other's presence.

5. BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing. The BOM decides whether or not to proceed with the expulsion. The Board will notify the NEWB in writing of the decision. Parents/Guardians will also be notified in writing about the Boards' decision and the next steps in the process will be outlined to them.
6. Consultations with Parents/Guardians, Principal and Board will be arranged by the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) from the NEWB.
7. Confirm the decision to expel. When a 20 day period of notification of the possible expulsion to the EWO has elapsed and every reasonable effort has been made to hold consultations between the school, the EWO and Parents/Guardians, the school may formally confirm the decision to expel. Parents/Guardians will be notified immediately and in writing and will be told about the right to appeal under Section 20 of the Education Act. The standard form of appeal will be supplied to Parents/Guardians.

Procedure	Offence	Consequence
<b>Level 1</b>		
Child is removed from class and supervised elsewhere in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threatening behaviour</li> <li>• Damage</li> <li>• Non compliance e.g. verbal aggression, uncooperative behaviour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate removal from class</li> <li>• Note in journal to be signed</li> <li>• If note not signed, Parents/Guardians will be phoned re incident</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2</b>		
Suspension for 1 day	<b>Moderately Serious</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threatening behaviour</li> <li>• Damage</li> <li>• Non-compliance eg. Vandalism, graffiti, aggressive behaviour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate removal from class</li> <li>• Phone Parents/Guardians immediately</li> <li>• Meet with Parents/Guardians, teacher and principal re incident</li> <li>• Suspension procedures follow</li> <li>• Work is sent home with child</li> <li>• Child reintegrated to class on return</li> </ul>
<b>Level 3</b>		
Suspension for 3 Days	Serious/repetitive Threatening behaviour Damage Non-compliance e..g vandalism, graffiti, aggressive behaviour	Immediate removal from class Phone Parents/Guardians immediately Meet with Parents/Guardians, teacher and principal re incident Suspension procedures follow Work is sent home with child Child reintegrated to class on return

## Give me 5



LEARN TO LISTEN  
AND LISTEN  
TO LEARN!!!







Whatever the  
weather  
play gently  
together

