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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 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 4th February 2009

Review December 2010

Reviewed September 2014

Reviewed June 2018

Reviewed January 2020; March 2023

Ratified by Board of Management on 22/03/2023

Signed by Chairperson Catherine Clune Mulvaney

Signed by Principal R London

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 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.

All members of the school community have rights and responsibilities, and it is expected that all adults act as supportive role-models in their conduct. Please see Dignity at Work policy.

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 pride in their school and to respect school property.

At Glasnevin ETNS 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
- Responsibilities

Current thinking dictates that rights exist independently of responsibilities. Rights are inalienable and should not be contingent on behaving in ways considered appropriate by a dominant group.

- Rules
- Routines
- Descriptive praise
- The language of choice

Expected in-Class Behaviour / Pupil Responsibilities

Pupils are requested to:

- Show respect for yourself and others.
- All pupils have a right to feel safe and secure in the classroom; Respect the right of others to a safe, secure, and productive learning environment.
- All pupils have a *responsibility to contribute* to a safe, calm, and enjoyable learning environment (conducive to teaching and learning; be aware of teachers' right to get on with teaching and pupils' right to get on with learning)
- Co-operate with and follow instructions given by the teacher, *consistently*.
- Take responsibility for contributing to creating the happy, friendly environment we have, e.g., always speaking to staff & others in a respectful manner.
- Work to the best of your ability, respect routines and present written work neatly.
- Have all necessary required materials; and if mobile phone/communication device is in school, it must be off during the school day; only once left school gate.
- Always respect school property, e.g., leave bathrooms clean and tidy.

Expected out-of-Class Behaviour/ Pupil Responsibilities

- Children walk bicycles and scooters in and out of the school grounds.
- When walking in, out and around the school, quietly on the left is the rule.
- At break times children are under the supervision of designated school staff. Of paramount concern to all staff is maintaining high standards of

safety. Instructions given by staff are to be followed. Respectful behavior and language (e.g., choice of words and tone) is expected from all pupils, always.

- During yard time, pupils must request permission from an adult in the yard to go to the toilet.
- Children stay within the designated boundaries of their play space.
- Children respect the rights of all children and adults in the yard to a calm yard space.
- 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 staff directions, always.

Rough play is not safe, therefore is stopped immediately to prevent harm.

Inclusion: Equality sometimes means treating individuals differently according to their needs. 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 relevant strategies and will endeavor to be consistent in shaping or ignoring the targeted behaviours.

Definition of Bullying: Bullying is 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, staff are very aware of their similar duty towards the perpetrators of these incidents. Children who are displaying bullying behaviour *may* themselves have experienced bullying or have some underlying cause for their need to dominate their peers. The child who displays bullying behaviour is supported.

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.

Intrinsic reward is the priority. We believe where children feel respected and listened to, positive relationships develop, and that reward is derived from internal satisfaction and motivation.

However, class systems to incentivise expected behaviour may vary at each teacher's discretion. The following list includes some examples; *it is not an exhaustive list*:

- A quiet word praising specific effort/gesture to acknowledge/show appreciation.
- A positive comment e.g. descriptive praise in a pupil's copy.
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the principal for commendation
- Positive feedback in front of a group or class&/opportunity to present work.
- Delegated some special responsibility or privilege.
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.
- 'Bualadh Bos' in class or special mention at assembly
- Whole class systems may be used to motivate and reward good efforts/behavior, at teachers' discretion.
- At times, the whole school reward. For example, following a month of working on improving a targeted behavior e.g., polite greetings, walking quietly on the left-hand side, a whole class may be selected by the whole staff to receive a reward e.g., funky sock day, games hour.

How we respond to unacceptable behaviour

The School's Positive Behaviour Policy seeks to actively encourage desirable behaviour. Most pupils are happy to comply with the school rules. However, at times, it will be necessary to follow up on certain behaviours, always with a view to learning from developing a greater sense of responsibility, deeper empathy, and awareness of fairness for all.

These are the preferred responses where behaviour is unacceptable *in class or on yard*. This is not an exhaustive list and the order in which responses occur may vary, depending on the situation and needs. Generally speaking, where pupils are not upholding the expected behaviours, parents are informed at an early stage and updated on progress.

1. The pupil is made aware of the fact that their behaviour is not in line with the expected behaviour in this policy and our Mission Statement
2. The pupil may receive a verbal/visual cue to moderate behaviour.
3. Pupil is given an opportunity for reflection on behaviour
4. Staff members will discuss behaviour with pupil (reprimand, including advice on how to improve behaviour). Restorative Practice conversation *may* be included.
5. The pupil may have seating position changed next to a different peer within the classroom/ or access to yard spaces altered temporarily.
6. Where there is an on-going problem and/ or a more serious incident arises, a Restorative Practice conversation with the principal or relevant support staff member will occur. At times, reiteration of expected behaviour will suffice.
7. Where there is still an on-going challenge with maintaining expected behaviour, or a more serious incident, parents are involved, with home and school working together to address targeted improvement. We value positive relationships and cooperation between school and home. Parents support the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school expectations. Staff welcome the opportunity to discuss, with parents, behavioural problems that may arise from time to time. With mutual respect, trust and goodwill these occasional problems are readily solved. The successful implementation of our positive behaviour policy depends on pupils, parents and staff working together.
8. In the very rare and unlikely event of this misbehavior 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 1 and Appendix 2).

NB: Where an Individual Behaviour Plan is in place, responses may vary.

When necessary, the Principal will seek the help of other professionals in dealing with seriously disruptive behaviours. The Parents/Guardians help and co-operation will be enlisted in this approach. The school must balance the rights of the majority of pupils against the rights of the child displaying behaviours which impact seriously on others.

Procedures to be followed relating to notification of a child's absence from school

Parents/guardians are expected to fill in a note on Aladdin explaining the child's absence.

A record a pupil's absence, category of absence and reason – if any – are recorded on the school's on-line Administration software Aladdin. The Roll is called in all classes between 9.00 and 10.00am daily. Any pupils who arrive after Roll Call are marked absent but number of minutes that they are late is recorded. Pupils who arrive late but before roll call are recorded as late.

Parents/guardians must also provide a note/explanation if a child departs early during the school day. Late arrivals and early departures are also recorded in the early leaving records book at reception. Parents/Guardians who pick up their children during the school day, request early leave through Aladdin notice board.

Appendix 1

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 child 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 students 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 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 may 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 where multiple days of school have been lost due to suspensions
- ▶ the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science where 20 or more days of school have been lost due to suspensions

(*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.

| Procedure | Offence | Consequence |
|--|---|---|
| Level 1 | | |
| Child is removed from class and supervised elsewhere in the school | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Threatening behaviour• Damage• Non compliance e.g. verbal aggression, uncooperative behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Immediate removal from class• Parents/Guardians informed re incident• Record of incident maintained |
| Level 2 | | |
| Suspension for 1 day | Moderately Serious <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Threatening behaviour• Damage | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Immediate removal from class• Phone Parents/Guardians immediately• Meet with Parents/Guardians, teacher and principal re incident |

| Procedure | Offence | Consequence |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-compliance eg. Vandalism, graffiti, aggressive behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension procedures follow • Work is sent home with child • Child reintegrated to class on return |
| Level 3 | | |
| Suspension for 3 Days | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious/repetitive Threatening behaviour • Damage • Non-compliance e..g vandalism, graffiti, aggressive behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 |

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 pupil's 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 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.