



GREYSTONES
Educate Together
National School

Code of Behaviour

Greystones Educate Together

National School

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INTRODUCTION

Rationale

This policy was originally reviewed between June 2012 and May 2013, with the help of the Parent's Association. Another review commenced in October 2017 to ensure that it remains compliant with the National Education and Welfare Board publication "Developing a Code of Behaviour Guidelines for School 9 May 2008" and to ensure that it reflects the needs of our developing school.

Relationship to the School Ethos and mission statement

In Greystones Educate Together National School we strive to create a positive learning experience and to facilitate learning by providing a comfortable, safe and secure working environment for staff and students. We do this by taking a positive approach to discipline based on **our character code of respect**, which can be found in every child's homework journal. **We believe that as adults and professionals we have a greater capacity to develop good relationships with pupils and a greater responsibility for these relationships. As a school community we value and promote mutually respectful relationships which balance warmth and empathy with objectivity, professional detachment, fairness and consistency.**

Aims of the Code of Behaviour

- To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
- To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
- To develop pupils' self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of the child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.

When and Where Does the Code Apply?

Behaviour on the school premises during the course of the school day, including any school-linked activity e.g. a school tour, in the school bus used for transporting children, will be subject to this Code of Behaviour.

Attendance and Punctuality

Teachers in Greystones Educate Together (GET NS) recognise the importance of good school attendance for children's social and academic development. While recognising that children will be absent from school from time to time due to illness, urgent family reasons etc., we encourage parents to avoid unnecessary absences from school for their children. Absences and poor punctuality can have an unsettling effect on children and may affect their behaviour and parents should always make the school aware of the reason for absence or tardiness. Our school has developed an Attendance Strategy which parents can refer to for guidance on school attendance, and a Punctuality and Attendance policy.

Success Criteria

- Observation of positive behaviour in classrooms, playground and school environment
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.
- A whole school approach to Safe and Respectful behaviour is practised by students, staff and parents.
- A happy school.

Implementation

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour and Discipline. Rules will be kept to a minimum, will emphasise good behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age and to the individual difference of pupils. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Such behaviour will be modelled by school staff and by parents/ guardians. Students are more likely to behave positively if good relationships exist between all parties and if parents support the school by encouraging good learning behaviour.

Parents will be provided with a copy of the Code of Behaviour prior to registering their child at the New Junior Infants Parents Information Meeting normally held in May each year. Time will be allocated at the meeting for answering any queries that parents may have concerning the Code of Behaviour.

The code will be communicated to the school community in a variety of ways including:

- Through the school booklet and information pack for new parents
- On the school website
- At curriculum meetings for parents
- In the school newsletter
- At staff meetings
- Through the Parent Association
- Through the Student Council
- At the beginning of each school year through discussion between teacher and class

Strategies for promoting good behaviour

Teachers and other school staff also need a range of strategies for promoting and encouraging good behaviour at class and school level. These include:

1. Positive everyday interactions between teachers and students.
2. Good school and class routines.
3. Clear boundaries for students.
4. Involving students in preparing and reviewing classroom and school rules (and asking parents to sign these agreed contracts)and exploring with pupils their rights and responsibilities.

5. Focusing on and promoting specific themes within the Learn Together curriculum e.g. good manners, friendship, buddy systems, relationships and how pupils treat each other
6. Using reward systems both in a whole school and classroom setting (See below).
7. Setting standards for pupil behaviour that incorporate high expectations and ensuring that they are clear, consistent and widely understood.
8. Promoting positive relationships with parents to encourage effective learning and good behaviour.
9. Adults modeling the behaviour that is expected from pupils.
10. Helping pupils themselves to recognise and affirm good learning behaviour.
11. Involving pupils in the consultative process in the development of the Code of Behaviour.

GENERAL GUIDELINES ON POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

1. Parents entering the building must keep younger siblings by their side at all times, again out of respect for the teachers' preparation and, more importantly, as a safety precaution.
2. At home time, children will exit the building in an orderly way under the direction of their teacher. Children must not leave the line without the instruction of their teacher. Parents must respect this safety measure.
3. 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.
4. Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
5. Pupils are expected to keep a dignified and clean appearance (see Dress Code) and to have all books and required materials in the right place at the right time.
6. Pupils are expected to comply with the teacher's instruction and to present work neatly.
7. Pupils are expected to attend every day, absences should be noted in the student's journal and signed by a parent/ guardian.
8. There is no running in the building.
9. All school property must be treated with respect, so if any wilful damage is caused by a child e.g. cutting a book or writing on a wall their parent/guardian may be charged for the cost of repairs.
10. Insubordination and defiance of school rules will result in appropriate consequences.

Board of Management Responsibilities

- Provide a safe and comfortable environment for both parents and students – include ref to Circular40/97?

- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- Ensure that the school's policy and procedures with regard to the imposition of a suspension/ expulsion are in line with the National Education and Welfare guidelines.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of the school's policy.
- Appoint a Safety Officer.
- Ratify this policy and other relevant policies.
- Ensure the Child Safeguarding Policy is in place and that the assessment of safety is reviewed annually.

Principal's Responsibilities

- Promote a positive climate in the school, with the support of the Deputy Principal and the Assistant Principals.
- Ensure that this policy is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- In the case of behavioural issues in a class, gather information and help the teacher to understand the context and the factors that may be affecting behaviour.
- Generate ideas about possible solutions that take account of the reasons why it may be happening.
- Ensure the Complaints Procedure is respected in the light of any complaint about a child's behaviour.
- Initiate, in consultation with the Chairperson, the Suspension and Expulsion procedure, when deemed necessary.
- Arrange a review of the policy, as required, or at least every 2-3 years
- Ensure that substitute teachers are informed of the main safety guidelines and the steps for 'discouraging negative behaviour'.
- Ensure that volunteers and ancillary staff are informed of the main safety guidelines.
- Remind the staff that, from time to time, their Classroom Code should be evaluated.
- Ensure that children who have a lunchtime sanction are supervised at all times.
 - Encourage and facilitate staff professional development in good classroom discipline and behaviour e.g. by directing them towards the use of Restorative Practices and to the SESS website (Special Educational Support Service), where a Behaviour Resource Bank can be found.

Teacher's Responsibilities

- Support and implement the policy.
- Draw up their own Classroom Code, in consultation with their pupils.
- Implement the agreed Classroom Code consistently.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil, SNAs and support staff.
- Pass on any reports of safe/ unsafe behaviour (this includes yard time) to other relevant staff
- Recognise and affirm good work e.g. a good mark or sticker (not sweets!), a quiet word or gesture to show approval, a comment on the child's copy.
- Prepare work well, in order to address the ability of all pupils and have a quick subject transition in order to reduce opportunities for boredom and therefore disruptive behaviour.

- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences amongst pupils.
- Be courteous, fair and consistent.
- Use a firm, yet respectful, tone of voice, trying to achieve an eye to eye conference with the pupil when a reprimand is required, remaining calm.
- Keep a record of instances of misbehaviour which impacts seriously on other children or staff or if ongoing. This record can be brought to the Board by the Principal and discussed.
- Keep relationships positive.
- Provide support for colleagues e.g. through the mentoring scheme.
- Communicate with parents and with the Principal when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.
- Ensure the use of electronic devices is monitored and, where applicable, that the Mobile Phone Policy has been signed by students and parents.
- Review progress.
- Inform their class of the 'Pupil's Responsibilities' section of this Code (parents also share this responsibility).
- Implement the message 'Safe school, happy school' and discuss the appropriate sanction.

Parent's/Guardian's Responsibilities

- Encourage their children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
- Support and respect the school's requirements for timekeeping and punctuality.
- Be interested in, support and encourage children's work and ensure homework is completed, where required, listening to and checking children's learning of tables, poetry etc.
- Be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and support its implementation.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where the child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Communicate respectfully with the school (the Principal, teacher and office staff) in relation to any problems which may affect child's behaviour or progress.
- Notify the school of their child's absence from school
- Respect the arrangement around meetings with the teacher i.e.by appointment only, to be arranged through the office or by way of note to the teacher.
- Ensure that children respect the school's Acceptable User Policy and, if children are carrying mobile phones, that they comply with school policy by reading and signing the appropriate section of the Mobile Phone Policy.
- Inform their children of the 'Pupils' responsibilities' section of this Code (Teachers also share this responsibility, see above).
- Reinforce good manners and respectful attitudes in the home, so that children will be practised in courteous behaviour in school.

Pupils' Responsibilities

- Listen to the teacher and act on instruction / advice.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Be courteous and mannerly in their communications at school.
- Respect all school property and the property of the school community.

- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling, or anything that could be labelled as 'Bullying'.
- Report bullying of themselves or of 'witnessed' or 'reported' bullying of another child.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials / books to school.
- Assist their teacher in drawing up their Classroom Code and ask parents to sign.
- Follow the agreed Classroom Code and this Code of Behaviour.
- Act as an Ambassador for GETNS in the wider community

CLASSROOM CODE

Each individual teacher will determine the Classroom Code (the teacher may use the term **expectations** or other suitable term) appropriate for the age group in the class. In Educate Together Schools these rules are normally devised with the co-operation of the children. Any disregard for the agreed code will result in sanctions.

Example of agreed Classroom Code or Golden Rules

We are gentle
We don't hurt others

We are kind and helpful
We don't hurt anybody's feelings

We listen
We don't interrupt

We are honest
We don't cover up the truth

We work hard
We don't waste our own or others' time

We look after property
We don't waste or damage things

Reference: Quality Circle Time in the primary classroom, Volume 1, Jenny Mosley, LDA, 1996

Playground rules

Play to be inclusive and fair.

Playground rules – senior yard

Each class has a designated day with the yard equipment. Children from other classes cannot use the equipment on these days, unless directed to do so by the teacher. The rules for use of playground equipment are on display in that area.

On occasion we may have to place a child within in the “stop and think” area in the yard for health and safety reasons.

Individual students who may endanger others may be suspended (on a case by case basis) and may be individually monitored by supervision staff.

When the bell goes the children are to freeze and await instruction

At the end of yard time the children are to line up quietly in a straight line in their class groups as directed by the teacher on duty.

Rewards Systems for good behaviour

Whole School

- Praise
- Encouragement

Class

- Praise
- Encouragement
- Golden Time (Activity session which takes place in all classes usually on Friday afternoon)
- Reward stickers, stars and stamps
- Best Table/ group
- Visual attainment system e.g. marble jar

DISCOURAGING MISBEHAVIOUR

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. While reviewing this policy, staff members agreed that **consistency of application** and **fairness** were considered key elements in the successful implementation of our Code of Behaviour.

Strategies for Dealing with Misbehaviour

Teachers, where possible, will endeavour to employ a **Restorative Practice** approach to dealing with behavioural issues. This approach is used to encourage positive behaviour and to encourage children to take accountability. It teaches the restorative skills of compassionate listening and reflective practice, and the focus is on behaviour as a bad choice not as a bad person. This leads to a greater understanding for pupils as to how their actions affect others. Instead of punishment, students are encouraged to reflect on and take responsibility for their actions and come up with plans to repair harm. This process involves the use of the following kind of non-accusative questions:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking?

- How were you feeling?
- Who else has been affected by this?
- What could you have done differently?

For children from second class upwards a Reflection Sheet is available, where children can reflect and write their responses to such questions.

MISDEMEANOURS

A sample list of minor, serious and gross misdemeanours has been compiled by school staff. Some examples are:

Minor Misdemeanours

- pushing in the line, verbal disruptions
- breaking the agreed class rules including during lunchtime
- interrupting class work which prevents others from learning leaving seat without permission at lunch time
- running in school building
- having chewing gum
- not responding to the school bell in a timely manner
- failing to line up correctly when requested to do so
- being discourteous and unmannerly/ use of unsavory language
- not completing homework without good reason
- isolated acts of disrespect/unkindness to any staff member/pupil/parent/visitor

Minor Misdemeanours: Steps and Sanctions		
STEP 1	Verbal reprimand	
STEP 2	If behaviour persists after the verbal reprimand, an immediate consequence is put in place e.g. removal from the activity for a period of time, time out during yard, etc.	
STEP 3	Removal to alternate class (see opt out option for parents on Pupil Registration Form)	
*Homework:	Incomplete homework is completed during supervised break times.	

Serious Misdemeanours

Verbal, physical or emotional abuse, defiance/cheek, continuous breach of minor misdemeanours, not complying with teacher instructions/insubordination or continual non-completion of homework, constantly disturbing the peace of others and their ability to concentrate on class work.

- regular acts of disrespect/unkindness to any member of the school community
- regular instances of speaking out of turn, interrupting others and being inattentive
- regularly preventing others from learning
- deliberately refusing to co-operate with instructions
- using a mobile phone during school hours
- vandalism of school property

- repeated answering back to any staff member/pupil/parent/visitor
- consistently not completing homework without good reason (age appropriate)
- constantly disruptive in class
- persistent minor misbehaviours
- stealing
- deliberately endangering self or fellow pupils during all school activities
- willful damage to the property of another child/children
- frequenting school premises after school hours without appropriate permission
- leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission
- using ‘targeting’ language
- verbal abuse or discriminatory remarks
- bringing weapons to school or using objects as weapons in school e.g. knives
- inappropriate touching and displaying of body parts (age appropriate)

Serious Misdemeanours: Steps and Sanctions		
STEP 1	Behaviour discussed with pupils involved. ABC chart filled out and parents informed. The child will lose a privilege e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Golden Time, • Playground Time The child will complete a ‘Reflection Sheet’ during this time.	
STEP 2	Incident referred to Principal.	
STEP 3	Parents invited in for meeting.	

Gross Misdemeanours

Gross insubordination (i.e. a wilful and deliberate failure of a student to obey a school staff member’s order/ direction during an aggressive incident) towards a staff member will be treated as a Gross Misdemeanour.

- Committing acts of violence to others, being overly abusive to others in a verbal sense.
- aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards any staff member/pupil/parent/visitor
- any act of assault against any staff member/pupil/parent/visitor e.g. spitting, hair-pulling
- willful damage to property
- Deliberate continued defiance.
- Any physical abuse of anyone; persistent fighting
- Repeated incidents of deliberate, verbal or non-verbal abuse, sexist or racist remarks.
- Deliberate damage to property, whether personal or school.
- Swearing; spitting; biting.
- Using or carrying prohibited drugs.
- Smoking; consuming alcohol.
- Gross unacceptable behaviour (e.g. theft, vandalism)
- Repeated targeting behaviour(see Anti-Bullying policy)

Procedure for Gross Misdemeanours	
Removal from area for Health and Safety reasons.	
Referral to Principal/Deputy Principal who will complete ABC with relevant staff.	
Parents notified of gross misdemeanour and are invited in to discuss sanction with Principal.	
All Gross Misdemeanours are grounds for implementing a suspension.	

SANCTIONS (as above)

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

- 1.** helping pupils to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others providing pupils the opportunity for reflection on their behaviour and its consequences
- 2.** helping pupils (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- 3.** helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

Sanctions should be proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the behaviour and to the level of understanding of the pupil involved, with due regard to the age and emotional development of the child, also. They should be purposeful and relate to the frequency of the misbehaviour. They will preserve the dignity of all the parties involved. They will defuse and not escalate the situation. For misbehaviour in the yard at lunchtimes, they may include the following:

Yard
Step 1: Verbal reprimand or warning
Step 2: Time out and possible behaviour mark in Yard book
Step 3: A total of 3 behaviour marks will result in detention from yard. Child fills out reflection sheet which is sent home for parents/guardians signature. Child must return this form to school for filing.
Step 4: Infant classes will be monitored by an assigned SNA/ volunteer supervisor. First to sixth class: Child is excluded from the yard for a period of time.
Any assault in the yard (Second to sixth class only) : Child is automatically suspended for 1 school day with work assigned by class teacher. Parents/ guardians are asked to attend a meeting with the class teacher and Principal.
If the child's behaviour continues to be unsafe, Principal meets with parents to discuss exclusion from the yard.

Classroom Management of Negative Behaviour

1. Try to ignore.
2. Non-verbal re-direct.
3. Verbal re-direct.
4. Warning.
5. Reflection table.
6. Communicate with the parent if there is a pattern of repeated incidents
7. Visuals aids such as a coloured card system will be used with infants to explain and practise all of the above.

For pupils who manifest **persistently serious misbehaviour**, it may be necessary to involve outside agencies e.g. parents may be advised to ask their Family Doctor to make a referral to the Lucena Clinic, or the HSE may be contacted.

Some pupils need more active intervention to help them to manage their behaviour. A small minority of pupils may show particularly challenging behaviour. They may have great difficulty in learning new behaviour and may not respond to low-level interventions. These pupils will need a sustained and systematic response involving the important adults in their lives, in school and at home. The Principal and staff will, in so far as it is possible, build good links with any local support services that may be able to assist in responding to the needs of a pupil with behavioural difficulties. Without additional help, they may be at risk of failing behaviourally, socially and educationally. Additional inputs or interventions might include:

- referral to another teacher or adult who can work with the pupil
- the involvement of the Pastoral Care team (Senior members of staff)
- setting targets for behaviour and monitoring them with the pupil in a supportive way
- agreeing behaviour contracts.

MANAGEMENT OF AGGRESSIVE OR VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR

- Children who present with indicators of an Emotional Behavioural Disorder are referred for psychological assessment/multi-disciplinary assessment. Parental support is required before any assessment can be pursued.
- Following assessment, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Service Executive, National Education Psychological Service (NEPS), and Lucina Clinic Resource teaching hours are applied for through the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO). Where care needs are involved, S.N.A. support is also applied for through the National Council of Special Education (NCSE).
- Additional Needs teachers may input into the development of an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or SSF (Student Support File)

An incident report will be created by the Principal or a record of incidents and these may be presented to the Board of Management by the Principal

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

The procedures for Suspension and Expulsion derive from the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) publication “Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools” and are guided by the principles of natural justice, i.e. the right to be heard and the right to impartiality.

In the event of gross misdemeanours, such as serious or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil himself/herself or the safety of other pupils or staff, these behaviours must be referred to the Board of Management and temporary exclusion may be considered. In the case of a pattern of such misdemeanours, consultation with the Special Educational Needs Officer (SENO) and/or EWO (Education and Welfare Officer) takes place regarding appropriate resourcing and/or alternative placement, which may include alternative educational options.

SUSPENSION: Suspension is defined as “requiring the pupil to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days “. From the day that parents are notified of a potential suspension the Principal will put the suspension in place within a period of five days. During the period of a suspension, the pupil retains their place in the school.

1. Authority to Suspend

The Board of Management of GET NS has delegated authority to the Principal to reach a decision on suspension, and the Principal is accountable to the Board in respect of the factors leading to this decision. The reason for the suspension will always be notified to the Board. If a suspension of over three days is being proposed by the Principal, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, in advance of the suspension.

2. Grounds for Suspension

Suspension of a student will be considered under one or more of the following circumstances:

- a. The student’s behaviour has a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- b. The student’s continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to safety to other students or any member of staff.
- c. There has been serious damage to property at the hands of the student.
- d. A single incident of gross misdemeanour

When a decision has been made to impose Suspension, due regard will be given to the following factors:

- The nature, context and seriousness of the behaviour.
- The impact of the behaviour on others or on property.
- The interventions already implemented
- The potential impact of the suspension

3. Procedures for Suspension

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

- The pupil and their parents will be informed about the complaint, that it will be investigated and that it may result in suspension.
- The parents and pupil will be given an opportunity to meet with the Principal to discuss the incident and respond before any sanction is imposed
- If a pupil and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will inform them in writing advising them 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
- Any decision to suspend will be given in writing to the parents

4. Immediate Suspension

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff of the school, or any other person. Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the pupil, other pupils, staff or others, a preliminary investigation will be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. The formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. All of the conditions for suspension apply to immediate suspension. In the case of an immediate suspension, parents will be notified, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected. The school will have regard to its duty of care for the pupil. In no circumstances will a pupil be sent home from school without first notifying parents.

5. Internal suspension

In some cases, the Principal and staff may decide that the student's behaviour warrants an 'internal suspension' i.e. the parents are informed of the misdemeanor and advised that the student will be suspended from all regular classroom activities for one to three days, and that they will work quietly in the presence of a Support Team teacher for a period of time.

6. Letter to Parent / Guardian Advising of Suspension

The following information will be included in the letter:

- The proposed period of suspension.
- The reasons for the suspension.
- The study programme to be followed by the student during the suspension period.
- The arrangements for returning to school and suggested strategies for ensuring the student is re-integrated into the class (these would have been agreed by all parties involved; parents/guardians and class teacher). A commitment may need to be entered into by the student and parents/guardians (during the course of these arrangements) that upon return to school this policy will be adhered to.
- The right to appeal to the Board of management if the decision is made by the Principal or to the Department of Education and Skills (DES) in the case of the number of suspension days in one school year reaching twenty (Section 29 appeal).

7. Appealing a Suspension

The Board of Management has placed a ceiling of three days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. The Board will 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

Where the total number of days for which the pupil is suspended reaches twenty days in the current school year, the parents may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007. At the time when the parents are being formally notified of such a suspension, they should be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science and should be given information about how to appeal. See [Circular letter M48/01 Appeal Procedures Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998](#) at the Department of Education and Science website at www.education.ie for full details.

8. Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parents/guardians may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. They must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school Code of Behaviour 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. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

EXPULSION

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

1 Authority to Expel

The authority to expel a student is reserved to the Board of Management.

2. Grounds for Expulsion

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the local Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act. *Rule 130 Rules for National Schools.*

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

THE BOARD WILL CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING

- a. The track record of the pupil and the effect of that behavior on the school
- b. The track record of the pupil up to the point of the precipitating issue
- c. The attempts of the school at diverting, correcting, or checking the behavior
- d. The merits of whatever mitigation is offered for the behaviour (contrition, response of the pupil to the school's efforts)
- e. The demerits of mitigation (lack of contrition, spite or unwillingness to accept).

Where expulsion is considered, the school authorities will generally have tried a series of other interventions and believe that they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour. These will include:

- a. Meeting with parents and the pupil to try to find ways of helping the pupil to change their behaviour;

- b. Ensuring that the pupil understands the possible consequences of their behaviour should they persist;
- c. Ensure that other possibilities have been tried;
- d. Seeking the assistance of support agencies such as NEPS, CAMHS, NCSE and the National Behaviour Support Service.

Expulsion for a First Offence

The Board notes that the NEWB (TUSLA) lists the following for possible inclusion in a list of single breaches of discipline that may lead to expulsion:

- a. A serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff;
- b. Actual violence or physical assault;
- c. Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school;
- d. Sexual assault.

Factors to be Considered Before Proposing to Expel a Pupil

(Listed NEWB (TUSLA) Guidelines for Schools p 82 under the following headings)

- a. The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- b. The context of the behaviour
- c. The impact of the behaviour
- d. The interventions to date
- e. Whether expulsion is a proportional response
- f. The possible impact of expulsion

Procedures in Respect of Expulsion

(as listed by the (NEWB Guidelines for Schools chapter 12 and summarised here.)

Step 1: A detailed investigation is carried out under the direction of the Principal.

The Principal will:

1. Inform the parents and the pupil in writing about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
2. Give parents and the pupil every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.
3. Where expulsion may result from an investigation, the parents will be afforded the opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made about the veracity of the allegation.

Step 2: A recommendation to the Board is made

Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that will only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. 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 Board of Management will have tried a series of other interventions, and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

Procedures for expulsion

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms gross 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 Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

These procedures assume that the Board of Management is the decision-making body in relation to expulsions.

It is a matter for the Board of Management to decide which of the tasks involved in these procedural steps requires separate meetings and which tasks can be accomplished together in a single meeting, consistent with giving parents due notice of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for a Board hearing. Steps 1 to 6 as outlined above and detailed in "Developing a Code of Behaviour – Guidelines for Schools", issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) Pages 83 – 86 will be followed. In the event of an appeal the appeals process under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will be followed.

Appeals Process

A decision to expel may be overturned if directed by the Department of Education and Skills (following a Section 29 Appeal).

RECORD KEEPING

Teachers or SNAs will record minor misdemeanours. This record will be discussed at parent/teacher meetings and sometimes reference to this record may be made in the End of Year School Report.

In cases of more serious behavioural patterns, 'Behavioural Management' strategies are drawn up in co-operation with the parents, teachers and children.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR AND PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

While all pupils in the school are subject to the school's code of behaviour, some pupils come to school with special educational needs. Staff at GET.N.S. have an appreciation and awareness of these complex and individual needs. These needs are taken into account during the implementation of the school's Code of Behaviour.

In GET NS we have implemented the Inclusive Educational Framework (NCSE, 2011) to develop our code in relation to pupils with special educational needs. The main points for consideration are as follows:

- Pupils with special educational needs feel welcome and discipline is based on mutual respect. Rules exist to support the creation of a safe, secure and positive learning environment for all members of the school community. Positive behaviour is regularly and publicly celebrated in the school.

- Classroom Codes reflect the school's code of behaviour and are communicated clearly and regularly to pupils with special educational needs. Group-specific rules are negotiated and reviewed to reflect current pupil interests and needs.
- School rules are few and are presented in accessible forms for pupils with special educational needs. Reasonable accommodations are made to take account of the individual needs of those pupils who may require an individualised response.
- Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to self-regulate, to take ownership of their behaviour and learning and to demonstrate understanding of where a rule has been broken.
- Pupils with special educational needs understand the consequences of breaking rules and the importance of the rule is communicated to pupils. Disciplinary procedures are based on proportionate responses to (mis)behaviour.
- Where a pupil with special needs is in breach of the school's Code of Behaviour the teachers will use their professional judgment in relation to regularity and level of sanctions. While teachers must be seen to be fair in the eyes of other pupils who may have exhibited the same type of misdemeanors, they may also show leniency in relation to pupils with specific learning/behavioural difficulties. Parents of these pupils will be kept informed of their child's behaviour on a regular basis and may be requested to work with the school in devising effective strategies to help the pupil to improve his/her behaviour. The devising of such strategies may also entail contacting and meeting with relevant out of school agencies

(National Council for Special Education (NCSE) (2011). *Inclusive Education Framework: A Guide for schools on the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs*, Dublin: NCSE)

We are also cognisant of our obligations under the *Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004* with regard to making reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities (NEWB, Guidelines on developing a Code of Behaviour).

We are cognisant of DES Circular 40/97 and that children with special educational needs are not exempt as there is a duty of care to all children and staff but all circumstances will be taken into account.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES

Other school policies that have a bearing on our Code of Behaviour:

- SPHE plan.
- Anti-bullying policy.
- Record keeping policy.
- Health & Safety policy.
- Special Educational Needs policy.
- Attendance and Punctuality policy.
- Statement of Strategy for school attendance
- Dignity at Work policy.
- Additional Needs Policy

REVIEW STRATEGY

The Board of Management will initiate a review of this Code of Behaviour two years after its implementation date. However, it may be revisited before that date if any aspect of the policy needs to be addressed before that time. Any changes ratified by the Board of Management will be made in the best interests of all members of the school community. Any changes are implicit in a Parent/Guardian initial acceptance of the Code of Behaviour and Discipline.

Implementation Date: April 2018

Timetable for Review: May 2020

Appendice 1: Recording Disruptive behaviour (ABC recording sheet)

Ratified by the Board of Management: Date.....

Signed.....

Chairperson, GETNS Board of Management.

Posted on the school website and a text sent to inform parents of this