

Code of Behaviour and Discipline

The aims of primary education may be briefly stated as follows:

- To enable the child to live a full life as a child.
- To equip him/her to avail himself/herself of further education so that he/she may go on to live a full and useful life as an adult in society.

Discipline in schools is an essential element in the socialisation of children, in the formation of their characters and in the process of education. This requires the use of certain controls which while not threatening children's independence, self-esteem and self-confidence, will enable them to appraise their behaviour rationally in terms of what is right and wrong or appropriate and inappropriate.

Aims of Ballintubber National School

The general aims of the school are to develop in each pupil:

- His/her full academic, social and physical potential.
- Awareness of, care for, and understanding of the environment.
- An acceptable manner of behaviour in a relatively disruption-free environment.
- Clear and accurate verbal and written expression.
- Creativity, inventiveness, adaptability and independence.
- Wide general knowledge.
- Sound moral values and attitudes, leading to spiritual fulfilment.
- Habits of industry and perseverance
- Good interpersonal relationships, pupil to pupil, pupil to teacher and with members of the wider community.
- A high degree of self-confidence and self-reliance.
- Interest in activities (social and religious) of the community.
- Growth in the ability to make reasoned judgements and choices.
- Respect for poverty

Devising the Code of Discipline for Ballintubber National School

In devising the code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school.

The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption-free environment.

Every effort has been made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school. The code offers a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are utilised by teachers.

The school places greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the long run, give the best results.

The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences.

It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff, and between staff, pupils and parents.

The rules are being kept to a minimum and are positively stated in terms of what pupils should do.

All efforts will be made to match the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and interests of each pupil. This should help reduce boredom, lack of interest or lack of progress.

The aims of the Code of Discipline

- To help create a positive learning environment in which every pupil can benefit from school.
- To help pupils to become more self-disciplined and to encourage good standards of behaviour.
- To assist with the organisation of the pupils so that the school can operate smoothly for the benefit of all.
- To care in a practical way for pupils, staff, the school and its environment.

General Guidelines for Behaviour

All pupils are expected to behave in a responsible manner both to themselves and others, showing consideration, courtesy and respect for other pupils, teachers and other adults at all times.

Respect for Self

- Pupils are expected to come to school dressed in their school uniform, to be neat and tidy. They are responsible for the neatness of their own personal space and possessions, e.g., books, copies, desktop.
- Pupils should be mindful of their own safety and never do anything to endanger that safety.
- Pupils are expected to make the best possible use of school time. They should come fully prepared with the necessary books, writing materials, P.E. gear, etc., and with all "Homework" completed.

Respect for Others

Pupils are expected to:

- Behave in a courteous manner towards others.
- Avoid unbecoming and abusive language.
- Cultivate a generous and sharing spirit.
- Avoid disruptive behaviour in the classroom, respecting each child's right to learn.

Pupils should behave in an orderly way when going from place to place within the school so as not to distract others from their work and avoid anything which would endanger the safety of others.

A high standard of behaviour and respect for others is expected of pupils at all times. Pupils are reminded of this code at regular intervals and as preparation for all excursions, i.e., when taking part in school-related activities such as school tours and nature walks.

Respect for Property

Pupils must:

- Respect the property of the school and that of each member of the school community.
- Keep their classroom tidy.
- Avoid all actions which might cause any damage to property.

Responsibility for Discipline

The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal Teacher. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for the good order within the school premises.

A pupil will be referred to the Principal Teacher for serious breaches of discipline or for repeated incidents of minor misbehaviour.

Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour

The following strategies may be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour:

- Reasoning with the pupil.
- Reprimand (including advice on how to improve).
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others.
- Loss of privileges – deprivation of treats/school tour/excursions.
- Detention during a break.
- Prescribing additional work.
- Referral to Principal Teacher.
- Regular report to Principal.
- Communication with parents – a letter informing the parents of the incident/behaviour in question or an invitation to meet the teacher.
- Suspension (temporary)/Expulsion (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular 7/88, Department of Education and Skills.)

Teachers shall keep a written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour as well as a record of improvements in the behaviour of disruptive pupils. Before resorting to serious sanctions, e.g., suspension, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Parents will be involved at an early stage rather than as a last resort.

Communication with Parents

Communication with parents will be verbal or by letter, depending on circumstances. The parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, suspension will be considered.

Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents requested, in writing, to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal Teacher.

If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the pupil may have to be suspended for a temporary period. The maximum initial period of such exclusion shall be three school days.

A special decision by the Board of Management is necessary to authorise a further period of exclusion up to a maximum of ten school days to allow for consultation with the pupil's parents.

The ultimate sanction of expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, and shall only be considered with the prior consent of the School Patron.

The Principal will immediately suspend a pupil for a period of up to three days, if the pupil's behaviour is such that immediate action is necessary.

Discipline as a positive element

In the belief that the most effective schools tend to be those with the best relationships with

parents, every effort will be made by the Principal and staff to ensure that:

- Parents are kept well informed.
- The school provides a welcoming atmosphere towards parents.
- Parents are not only told when their children are in trouble but also when they have behaved particularly well.

To make the issue of discipline a positive element in the educational process of your child, the school has 5 basic rules which encapsulate the aims of our code of discipline. These "rules" are discussed regularly with the pupils to re-enforce positive behaviour for positive education.

Do your best

Observe Quiet Zones

Respect yourself and others

Be Prepared

Be Honest

These "rules" will be displayed throughout the school.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.