

# Code of Behaviour Policy

Aghamore NS. Aghamore, Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo. Tel: 094 9367597 email;aghamorens.ias@gmail.com

Review of Code of Behaviour Policy 02/012/2020.

Present: All Teaching Staff.

## Rationale:

It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) which refers to the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It is detailed in section 23 (2), the code of behaviour shall specify:

- A. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
- B. The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
- C. The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
- D. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and
- E. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

## Aims:

- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community.
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.

- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

### **Expected Behaviour in our School:**

- Each pupil is expected to be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults.
- Each pupil is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other peoples and their own belongings.
- Each pupil is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual.
- Each pupil is expected to do his/her best both in school and for homework.

In accordance with Section 23 (40) of the Education Welfare Act the principal provides the parents of pupils with a copy of the school's code of behaviour. Parents are required to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour provided is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by their child/children.

In line with circular 20/90 a positive school ethos is based on the quality of relationships between teachers and the ways in which pupils and teachers treat each other. This positive ethos permeates all the activities of the school and helps in forming a strong sense of social cohesion within the school.

In our school, we treat all children with respect and dignity. There is a strong sense of community and co-operation among staff, pupils and parents and all are agreed that their focus is primarily on the positive and recognition of positive behaviour.

- Parents are given a copy of Code of Behaviour when their child is enrolled.
- New members are given a copy.
- All current staff has a copy.
- Child with SEN who present with behavioural difficulties will have a differentiated code of behaviour.

Our school's SPHE curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving,

and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship.

- SPHE is currently taught in accordance with DES guidelines.
- Parents of newly enrolled children are informed about aspects of the SPHE curriculum and their part in supporting it through information letters and booklet.

## **Board of Management**

'The Board of Management has a role to play in the maintenance of desirable standards of behaviour in a school. It should be supportive of the Principal Teacher in the application of a fair code of behaviour and discipline within the school' (Circular 20/90).

- Board of Management is consulted in the reviewing /drafting of the code of behaviour
- Board of Management supports the implementation of the Code of Behaviour on an ongoing basis.
- Board of Management supports the staff in implementing the Code of Behaviour by providing opportunities for staff development - permission to attend courses. Sub cover if needed.
- Board of Management deals with serious breaches of behaviour in accordance with the Education Welfare Act.

## **Parents:**

Co-operation between staff and parents is encouraged by

- Code of behaviour is given to parents on the enrolment of their child.
- Parents are aware of and cooperate with the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Parents ensure their children attend school regularly.
- Parents attend meetings at the school if requested

- Parents help their children with homework and ensure that it is completed
  - Parents ensure their children have the necessary books and materials for school.
- Parents attend parent /teacher meetings.

## **Pupils**

- Pupils are involved in the drafting of a Class Code
- Drafting rules for the classroom
- Taking part in assemblies

## **Classroom**

- Each class's behavioural expectations are consistent with the ethos as expressed in the code of behaviour and which set a positive atmosphere for learning.
- All pupils have an input in devising the class rules.
- Teachers ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave.
- A clear system of acknowledging good behaviour and sanctions for misbehaviour.
- Classroom management techniques that ensure a variety of activities and methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation.

## **Playgrounds:**

- Juniors play at the front/Seniors at back.
- No child allowed climb hill
- Children must not leave yard (to get ball etc) without supervisor permission.

- Yard Duty Supervisor and SNA on yard duty every day.
- All children go out at break times if weather permits - Parents are encouraged not to send sick child to school. If child becomes ill they may wait in the GP room until collected by parents.
- On wet days, children stay in classrooms and are supervised by yard duty supervisor. Suitable 'Rainy-Day' activities are provided.
- If child needs to use the toilet they ask permission from Yard Duty Supervisor and use toilets across from staffroom.
- When bell rings, children assemble in GP room and are supervised until collected by class teacher.

## **Strategies:**

### **Positive Strategies:**

- Children are encouraged to walk in the communal areas.
- Staff speak to children in a positive manner. Encouraging and praising where appropriate.
- At the start of each term, a special assembly is held in the GP room to remind children of school rules.
- Each class group devises a 'Class Code' as part of SPHE. This Class Code is displayed in each classroom.
- Good behaviour is encouraged and acknowledged.

### **Strategies used in response to incidents of unacceptable behaviour:**

Misbehaviour is categorised under the following headings:

Minor /Serious /Gross.

### **Procedures:**

- 'The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross will be judged by the teachers and/or Principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours, as follows:
- Each teacher records incidents of misbehaviour that are of a serious nature or are persistent.

- All staff ensures consistency in the application of sanctions.
  - 1) Reasoning with the pupil
  - 2) Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
  - 3) Prescribing additional work for 15 mins at breaktime
  - 4) Remove from classroom to another classroom. During COVID remove to a table outside classroom door with door open for supervision.
  - 5) Communication with parents. On 3<sup>rd</sup> Communication with parents, they are advised that should we get to this stage again BOM will be involved re formal suspension.
  - 6) Suspension (See section 5 on suspension)
  - 7) Expulsion

Initially misbehaviour will be dealt with by the class teacher by way of warning and/or advice but, if it is more serious or persistent, the parents may be involved.

### 1. **Examples of serious misdemeanours:**

Constantly disruptive in class/stealing/damaging another pupil's property. Repeated instances of bullying behaviour/back answering a teacher/leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission / phone in school/ encouraging others to misbehave/break school rules / repeatedly using inappropriate/foul language /bringing weapons to school / deliberately injuring a fellow pupil.

### 2.1 **Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with serious misdemeanours:**

- Send to the Deputy Principal - 5 days x 15 at lunchtime.
- Send to the Principal - 10 days x 15 mins at lunchtime. Inform parents.
- Principal meets with one/both parents. - next step.

- Chairperson of the Board of Management is informed and parents requested to meet with the Chairperson and Principal.

## **2.2 Examples of Gross Misdemeanour**

Setting fire to / causing malicious damage to school property / deliberately leaving taps on / aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher / staff member / pupil/ sharing of inappropriate content via internet on any device.

## **2.3 Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with gross misdemeanours:**

- Call parents take child home.
- Contact BOM
- Expulsion will be considered in an extreme case in accordance with Rule 130 (60)
- "No pupil can be struck off the rolls for breaches of discipline without prior consent of patron and until alternative arrangements are made for enrolment of pupil at another suitable school in the locality."

**It should be noted that these lists consist of examples only: It is not meant to be totally comprehensive list of misdemeanours and procedural steps.**

## **School's Approach to Parental Involvement in Managing Problem Behaviour:**

Parents will be kept fully informed from the outset of instances of serious or recurring misbehaviour on the part of their children.

- Parents are contacted when teacher reaches stage 5 of Code of Behaviour and when steps 1-4 have been taken and were unsuccessful.

Parents are invited to the school, put at their ease in order to maximise a co-operative approach. Relevant teachers and Principal are present at these meetings. Meetings are conducted in a professional and courteous manner. Child/Children will not be present at such meetings.

- Aghamore NS has an open door policy. Parents are free to contact teachers or speak at meet and greet time, log an appointment by phone, e-mail, note/letter or in person.
- During COVID 19, parents are advised to email the school with any concerns they may have. If it is felt a face to face meeting is required this will be arranged by appointment in a socially distancing environment.

### **Serious Emotional & Behavioural Problems:**

- Children who are emotionally disturbed are immediately referred for psychological assessment.
- Through the special Educational Needs Organiser, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Service Executive, NEPS. Family support.
- S.E.N. personnel may facilitate teachers in sharing practice and support in the management of challenging behaviour.
- All relevant professional development opportunities are made available to staff.
- If it becomes necessary to consider the use of physical restraint as a strategy for dealing with violent or threatening behaviour school will seek competent legal advice.
- In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil himself/herself or the safety of other pupils or staff, school may consider temporary exclusion while consultation with SENO and/or EWO takes place appropriate resourcing, alternative placement, etc.

### **Suspension / Expulsion procedures**

The Education Welfare Act 2000 stipulates that a code of behaviour shall specify 'the procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the



school concerned' and "the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student." (Section 23 920 c, d)

## **Suspension**

The principal shall inform the education welfare officer, by notice in writing, when a student is suspended from a recognised school for a period of not less than 6 days. (Section 21 (4) a)

Circular 20/29 states that 'Parents should be informed of their right to come to the school and be invited to do so in order to discuss the misbehaviour with the Principal Teacher, class teacher and chairperson of B.O.M. This should always be done when the suspension of a pupil is being contemplated'.

Serious/gross misbehaviour may, with the B.O.M authorisation, warrant suspension. If in the opinion of the Principal and relevant staff members suspension is warranted, the following procedure will be implemented as per NEWB guidelines:

### **The following factors will be considered before suspending a pupil:**

#### **The nature and seriousness of the behaviour**

- What was the precise description of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been?
- Has the problem behaviour escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

#### **The context of the behaviour**

- What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. in class, in particular teacher's class, in a group)?
- What factors may have triggered incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)?
- What is the age, stage of development and cognitive ability of the student?
- Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (e.g. particular home circumstances, special educational needs)?

#### **The Impact of the behaviour.**

- How are other students and staff affected by the student's behaviour?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?
- Does the behaviour have particular or greater impact on some students or teachers?
- Does the student understand the impact of their behaviour on others?

#### **The interventions tried to date**

- What interventions have been tried? Over what period?
- How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?
- What has been the result of those interventions?
- Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?
- Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought where appropriate?
- Are any other interventions such as peer mediation, restorative justice approaches or family conferencing available?
- Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?
- Has any other agency been asked for assistance (e.g. Child Guidance Clinic, Child and Adolescent services)?

#### **Whether suspension is an appropriate response**

- Does the student's behaviour warrant suspension?
- Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student? (Children with additional needs have differentiated Code of Behaviour.

#### **The Possible impact of suspension**

- Will suspension allow additional or alternative interventions to be made?
- Will suspension help the student to change the inappropriate behaviour?
- How will suspension help teachers or other students affected by the behaviour?

- Will suspension exacerbate any educational vulnerability of the student?

**Expulsion:** The Board of Management has the authority to expel a child. This authority will be exercised in line with the procedures outlined in the Development of a Code of Behaviour Guidelines for Schools NEWB.

### Review & Monitoring

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Board of Management on an annual basis and when the need arises. The board of Management will ensure that support is provided for all staff.

Policy adopted by the BoM on: \_\_\_\_\_.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_.

Chairperson

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

Principal/Secretary BoM

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_.

Chairperson

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