

St. Joseph's N.S. Brackloon

Code of Behaviour & Discipline Policy

Introduction:

Brackloon N.S. is a Catholic school and all children, staff and visitors are encouraged and helped to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ who said “**Treat others as you would like them to treat you**”. In line with this ethos, it is imperative that we create a positive school culture where the core values of **Respect, Empathy, Trust and Integrity**, are implicitly and explicitly modelled for the children who come to work, learn and play in our school each day.

This policy was reviewed and re drafted following consultations with the Home/School Association, Student Council and members of the School's Board of Management. The NEWB guidelines on 'Developing a Code of Behaviour' were used in drafting this new policy.

The school has a central role in the children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. In seeking to define acceptable standards of behaviour it is acknowledged that these are goals to be worked towards rather than expectations that are either fulfilled or not.

Children need limits set for them in order to feel secure and develop the skills for co-operation. Therefore any rules will be age appropriate, with clear agreed consequences.

Parents can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, by visiting the school and by talking to the members of staff.

A code of behaviour is established to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

Aims of the Code

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others
- To facilitate the education and development of every child
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption

- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the parent's information booklet(new enrolments), availability of policies and an ethos of open communication
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.
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Responsibility of Adults (Teachers, Parents, members of the B.O.M.)

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we are expected to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations
- Promote, through example, honesty and courtesy
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all
- To discourage physical aggression

School Rules

- Respect for self and others
- Respect for other's property
- Respect other students and their learning
- Kindness and willingness to help others
- Follow instructions from staff immediately
- Walk quietly in the school building
- Courtesy and good manners
- Readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- Ask permission to leave the classroom
- Do your best in class
- Take responsibility for your own work

These can be summed up as 6 main rules;

- Respect/ Be courteous
- Do your best
- Be tidy
- Be Safe

- Walk
- Listen

Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children. These reflect and support the school rules, but are presented in a way that is accessible to the children. Class rules should be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. They should where possible emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. 'Walk' and not 'Don't run'). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

Incentives

Part of the vision of St. Joseph's N.S. is to help children achieve their personal best - academically, intellectually, socially and spiritually. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and that similarly children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Any Reward Systems put in place to encourage children to work to the best of their ability will recognize the individuality of each child and that each one has a personal 'best'. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to at all times by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

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

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- A system of merit marks or stickers
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher. In cases of serious misbehaviour or gross misbehaviour, parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the Principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of serious misbehaviour:

- Behaviour that is hurtful or highly offensive (including name calling, bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)

- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft

Examples of gross misbehaviour:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil
- Serious theft
- Serious damage to property

When a pupil(s) misbehave, the teacher and/or Principal will speak with the child in relation to the incident. An appropriate sanction for the misbehaviour will then be chosen by the teacher and/or Principal.

Sanctions chosen will be based on the following considerations:

- It must be clear why the sanction is being applied
- The sanction must relate as closely as possible to the behaviour
- It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions
- Group punishment should be avoided as it breeds resentment
- There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences
- It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus

Sanctions

1. Reasoning with pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class
4. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened
5. Loss of privileges
6. Detention during break
7. Communication with parents
8. Referral to Principal
9. Principal communicating with parents
10. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000)

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health & safety.

Suspension and Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised.

For serious misbehaviour or a gross act of misbehaviour, suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case with the Principal or Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management. Highly offensive, aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

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

Reinstatement following Suspension

Following a period of suspension, the parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code 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.

Children with Special Needs

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning support/ resource teacher, and/or Principal who will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

Methods of Communicating with Parents

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties.

Parents should be encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following methods of communication will be used within the school:

- Informal parent/teacher meetings and Formal parent/teacher meetings
- Through children's homework journal
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- Phone call to parents

Communication of Policy Document

This policy will be made available to school personnel, emailed to all parents and provided to the Home School Committee. A hard copy will be provided to any member of the school community who requests one.

Review of Policy

The policy will be reviewed in 2017 or at an earlier time if a request is made for a review by members of the school community.

Signed: _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: _____