

## **Holy Spirit BNS, Ballymun**

### **Code of Behaviour**

**September 2023**

#### **Introduction**

In February 2023 the school began the process of updating its' Code of Behaviour. Up to this point, the school had used the Discipline For Learning programme where each child had a merit book and had specific school rules to follow during the 3 stages of the school day. The school found that since the Covid-19 school closures, many staff had become accustomed to using new tools such as ClassDojo to promote good behaviour. Therefore, the school decided to update its Code of Behaviour in consultation with pupils, parents and staff.

The staff set about writing a new set of school rules which reflected their recent experiences working in the school. Following dialogue with staff and pupils an updated set of class rules and staged responses was prepared and presented to the staff. In May 2023, the parents were asked for their input through an online questionnaire. Subsequently, the Code of Behaviour was drafted and sent out for consideration to the school community.

In August 2023, the staff received Behaviours of Concern training from Mason, Hayes and Curran Solicitors. They received practical tips and advice to help the school safeguard students/staff and to empower the school to face difficult scenarios with confidence. This policy should be read in conjunction with the policies on Behaviours of Concern Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Yard Supervision and Procedures Policy.

#### **Aims**

The aims of the Code of Behaviour of the Holy Spirit BNS are:

- To provide guidance for pupils, staff 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 every child.
- Prevent bullying behaviours in the school.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.

#### **1. Rationale**

The Holy Spirit BNS Code of Behaviour was written in accordance with Circular 20/90 of the Department of Education and Skills on school discipline, the Education and Welfare Act (2000), the Equal Status Act of 2004 and Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (NEWB, 2008).

#### **2. Children's Rights**

Children have the right to:

- A safe secure and comfortable environment in which to learn and play.
- Be listened to, express opinions and to question.
- Be respected by all members of the school community.
- Grow and be valued as individuals.
- Develop intellectually, emotionally and physically with an understanding of special needs and disability.

- Be included in all aspects of school life.
- Receive feedback and clear information regarding topics and concerns affecting their school life (Including information on the Code of Behaviour).

### **3. Staff Rights**

All school staff, including SNAs, teachers, secretary and caretaker, have the right to:

- Educate/work in a safe and clean environment with minimal disruption.
- Be respected by all members of the school community.
- Support from professional services.
- Support from colleagues, senior management, principal and Board of Management.
- Information about on-going training and professional development opportunities.
- Adequate resources appropriate to their duties.
- Support and co-operation from parents/guardians.
- Voice their concerns to management about the children's safety, behaviour and academic progress.
- Confidentiality

### **4. Parents/Guardians' Rights**

Parents/Guardians' have the right to:

- Be respected by all members of the school community.
- Information regarding the progress of their child or children.
- Feel welcome, to be listened to and to be able to voice their concerns.
- Access to the Holy Spirit BNS Code of Behaviour and all other school policies and procedures.
- Appeal to a higher authority, e.g. Board of Management, Department of Education.
- Confidentiality

### **5. Staff Responsibilities**

- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- Recognise and affirm good work using merit books, Class Dojo, school assembly etc.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents where appropriate and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

### **6. Pupils' Responsibilities**

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.

- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow school and class rules.
- Work to the best of their ability and allow fellow pupils to do likewise.

## **7. Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities**

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
- Be courteous, respectful and polite in dealings with school staff and personnel.
- Refrain from posting or inflaming positions with comments on social media about the school.
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Parents should not communicate with other parents' children, unless they have permission from the parents concerned.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour.
- Provide up to date contact information and current addresses for ease of communication with home.

## **8. General Guidelines**

- Show respect, courtesy and co-operation towards all children, teachers, other staff and parents, in the classroom, the playground and on school outings.
- Show respect towards personal property, school property and the environment.
- Show respect for other people's personal space, i.e. no verbal or physical violence, aggression, or any form of bullying behaviour.
- Show respect for other people's feelings.
- Children should behave in an orderly fashion in the classroom, moving around the school, going to and from the playground, if travelling as part of a school trip or if representing the school at any event.
- Children should bring all books, copies and materials necessary to do their class work properly each day.
- Children should complete all assigned work (written and oral) both at school and at home.
- Children should listen to others and take turns to speak in class.
- Children must not behave in any way which endangers themselves or others and should always take care of our younger pupils.
- Children should not exclude others from games.
- Children must stay within the designated playground boundaries during break time.
- Children must not leave school grounds without permission from the teaching staff.
- Chewing gum is not allowed on the school premises and children must follow the healthy eating policy.
- Children may not have mobile phones on school grounds unless permission is granted by principal.
- Items which could be dangerous or could cause harm are not allowed at school.

## 9. Bullying

Bullying is repeated verbal, psychological or physical aggression by an individual or group against others. The most common forms of bullying are aggressive physical contact, name-calling, intimidation, extortion, isolation and taunting. Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will always be expected to cooperate with the school in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

## 10. School Rules

School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly.

### Class Rules (*Junior Infants – 2<sup>nd</sup> Class*)

1. Be kind
2. Listen to the teacher
3. Follow instructions
4. Quiet hand up to speak
5. Stay seated until teacher says otherwise
6. Do your work and let others do theirs

### Class Rules (*3<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Class*)

1. Show respect for others
2. Listen to the teacher
3. Follow instructions
4. Quiet hand up to speak
5. Stay seated until teacher says otherwise
6. Do your work and let others do theirs

The following chart is a staged response to poor behaviour and some example of misbehaviours.

Description of behaviour	Action Taken	By who?
<b>Green</b> Pupils are ready to learn and following class rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Verbal praise</li><li>• Class Dojo points/messages to parents if appropriate</li></ul>	Class Teacher
<b>Amber</b> Pupils have been asked to follow the class rules more than once (A rule reminder can be given before moving pupils to this stage)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pupil given verbal warning.</li><li>• Pupil may be given visual reminder of warning</li><li>• At beginning of next stage of day (i.e. after lunch/after yard) pupil is deemed to be back in green zone</li></ul>	Class Teacher
<b>Orange</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Time out / Thinking table</li></ul>	Class Teacher

<p>Pupil continues to misbehave after warning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupil sits at a designated table on his own to complete work. (approx. 20 - 40 minutes depending on age)</li> <li>• Teacher makes note of this in a behaviour notebook.</li> <li>• On completion of time out, the pupil is deemed to be back in green zone.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Red</b> Persistent and continued failure to follow instructions. This stage should follow a warning and a time out</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupil sent to partner teacher or SET to complete independent work. (approx 20 - 40 minutes depending on age)</li> <li>• No more than one boy should be sent to an individual teacher at any given time. If more than two boys reach this stage at the same time, contact Mr. Cannon (3rd - 6th) or Mr. Rourke (J.I. - 2nd).</li> <li>• Teacher makes note of this in a behaviour notebook/DFL book.</li> <li>• On return to the classroom, the pupil is deemed to be back in green zone.</li> </ul>	<p>Class Teacher Partner teacher Paired SET</p>
<p><u>Very Serious Misbehaviour</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Deliberate continued defiance</li> <li>➤ Verbal and physical abuse</li> <li>➤ Deliberate damage to property</li> <li>➤ Fighting/Swearing/Spitting</li> <li>➤ Stealing</li> <li>➤ Leaving classroom without permission</li> <li>➤ Threatening and aggressive behaviour</li> <li>➤ Pupil is recorded as being in orange or red zone daily (important that records are kept)</li> <li>➤ (This is not, and cannot be, an exhaustive list)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child removed from classroom - excluded from class for part or all of day</li> <li>• Parents Informed</li> <li>• Class teacher fills out serious misbehaviour form and returns to assistant principal, who keeps it on file</li> </ul>	<p>Assistant Principals: C Rourke (J.I. to 2nd) M Cannon (3rd - 6th Class)</p> <p>If neither are available contact deputy principal or principal</p>

Children whose behaviour is unsafe or persistently disruptive must have support in place in parallel with escalating sanctions. These can be chosen from the following, non-exhaustive list:

- Individualised behaviour plan, usually accompanied with targets and a behaviour tracker with associated rewards.
- Behaviour tracked and checked every day by assistant principals.
- The child reports to the principal at agreed intervals to monitor behaviour.

### 11. Promoting Good Behaviour

Some strategies/incentives used in the Holy Spirit BNS to promote good behaviour.

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.

- A comment on a child's exercise book.
- A visit to another class or principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group.
- Individual class merit awards, points award or award stamps.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Pupil of the Week certificate at weekly assembly where 'good news' is shared.
- Written or verbal communication with parent.

## **12. Special Educational Needs.**

This Code of Behaviour applies to all members of our school community. Pupils with special educational needs will be provided with appropriate support and help to ensure they understand our school rules. As part of this support, individual behaviour plans may be drawn up, in collaboration with parents, to promote and reinforce positive behaviour. Pupils in the Autism Class have individual plans in the event of dysregulation or to reduce behaviours of concern.

## **13. Suspension**

Procedure in respect of suspensions (as per P.77 of the NEWB guidelines)

- Investigation of the facts to confirm serious misbehaviour.
- Parents will be informed by phone or in writing about the incident.
- In the case of an immediate suspension, parents will be notified by the Principal/Deputy Principal and arrangements made for the pupil to be collected immediately. The child will be supervised away from his class in the interim.

If suspension is still decided upon, the Principal will notify the parents in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm:

- The period of suspension including beginning and end dates.
- The reason for suspension.
- Any study/work to be completed during the suspension.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be followed by the pupil and parents.
- The provision for appeal to the Board of Management or Secretary General of the DES, if appropriate (where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year has reached 20 days)
- A pupil will not be suspended for more than 3 days. In exceptional circumstances, where the Principal considers that a suspension period longer than 3 days is necessary, he/she will refer the matter to the Board of Management for their consideration. A period of 10 days' suspension will be the maximum period imposed by the Board of Management in such exceptional circumstances.

Formal written records will be kept of:

- The investigation (including all notes of interviews held)
- The decision-making process
- The decision and rationale for the decision
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Board of Management 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.

#### **14. Expulsion**

Procedures with respect to expulsion (as per P. 82 of the NEWB guidelines)

- i. A detailed investigation is carried out under the direction of the Principal.

The Principal will:

- Inform the pupil and their parents/guardians about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- Give parents and students every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious/extreme misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.

- ii. A recommendation is made to the Board of Management by the Principal.

The Principal will:

- Inform the pupil and their parents that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- Provide Board of Management and parents with comprehensive information regarding the investigation and the grounds for possible expulsion.
- Notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing.
- Advise the parents that they can make an oral and written submission to the Board of Management.
- Ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them prepare for the hearing
- Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing (P84, NEWB guidelines)

- iii. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing (P.85, NEWB guidelines)

- If the Board of Management believes the pupil should be expelled, they must notify the Educational Welfare Officer, in writing. The student cannot be expelled before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification. However, the Board of Management may consider the sanction of suspension during this period, should the continuing presence of the pupil in the school be likely to seriously disrupt the learning of other students or represent a threat to the safety of other students and staff.
- The Board of Management should inform the parents, in writing, about its conclusions and the next steps in the process.

- iv. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

- Within the 20 days, the EWO must make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, parents, student and anyone else who may be of assistance.
- Convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend. The purpose of the above are to look at the possibility of the pupil continuing in the school or to look at alternative educational possibilities.

- v. Confirmation of the decision to appeal.

- When the 20 days have elapsed, the Board of Management will meet to decide whether to expel the pupil or not.

- Where the Board of Management remains of the view that the pupil should be expelled, a formal record of the decision will be made.
  - Parents will be informed immediately, in writing, that the expulsion will now proceed.
  - Parents and student will be informed of their right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal.
- vi. Appeals
- A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act 1998, Section 29). An appeal may also be brought by the NEWB on behalf of a student.
  - The appeals process begins with the provision of mediation by a mediator nominated by the Appeals Committee (DES).

Ratified by the Board of Management on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Review date 5 years