



Ratified: 9/11/2022

## **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR - SHANBALLY NS**

### **Introduction**

Our School aims to provide a happy, secure, friendly, learning environment, where children, parents, teachers, special needs assistants, ancillary staff and board of management/single manager work in partnership. Each member of the school community is valued, encouraged and respected for their uniqueness and facilitated to reach their full potential in a positive atmosphere.

This will enable the child to live a full life and will equip themselves to avail of further education so that they may go on to live a full and productive life as an adult in society. The school community are committed to the realisation of these objectives. Our aim is to create a happy, secure environment for our pupils in which there is a sense of good order and a reasonable approach to discipline. In this way the school can operate smoothly for the benefit of all.

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and the staff of Shanbally NS.

In Shanbally NS, we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour continues to prevail in our school.

The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the principal. Each teacher, supported by the SNA's and other school staff, has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within their classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.

Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school. This policy was drawn up initially by the In-school Management Team, in association with the school community including staff, parents and pupils. It was then reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management.

This policy will be supported (amongst others) by the following school policies:

- Admissions policy
- Anti-bullying
- Attendance
- Health and safety statement
- Dignity at work
- Social, personal and health education

### **Aims of the code**



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- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To foster and reinforce the positives as they are about imposing sanctions.
- 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 pupil's journal, availability of policies and an ethos of open communication.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.
- The Code covers the nine grounds of discrimination- gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.

### **Responsibility of Adults**

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 should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations.
- Promote positive behaviour, 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 and ability.
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.
- To discourage physical aggression and encourage 'Be Kind, Have fun, Do your best.'

### **School Rules**

1. We show respect for ourselves and others.
2. We show respect for our own property and the property of others.
3. We show respect towards other students and their learning.
4. We are kind and willing to help others.
5. We follow instructions from staff immediately.



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6. We walk quietly and in an orderly manner in school.
7. We show courtesy and good manners.
8. We try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict.
9. We ask permission to leave the classroom/school.
10. We do our best in class.
11. We take responsibility for our own work.
12. We wear the appropriate school clothing.
13. We follow our Healthy Eating Policy.

These can be summed up as 6 Golden Rules:

1. We listen. We don't interrupt.
2. We are gentle. We don't hurt others.
3. We are honest. We tell the truth.
4. We are kind.
5. We work hard. We use our time productively.
6. We look after property. We don't damage things.

These 6 "Golden Rules" will be the main ones used for infant classes. Rules apply during school-time and during all school related activities.

### **Class Rules**

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children, based closely on the "Golden Rules". Class rules will be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Where possible they 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/Reward System**

Part of the vision of Shanbally NS is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and similarly that children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Our reward system seeks to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by



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the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements/ acts of kindness. 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 copy or homework journal.
- A visit to another member of staff or to the principal for commendation.
- A word of praise in front of a group or class.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.

Field trips, annual school tours and any special events will be reserved for those who have consistently strived to behave well. If a child is not responding positively to class supports in relation to his/her behaviour, the teacher will begin the process of drawing up a behaviour improvement plan. Behaviour plans will be drawn up on a case by case basis. This plan is usually worked out with the parent/guardian so that the teacher can get a greater understanding of the rewards/sanctions that may work best for each child.

- If the inappropriate behaviour continues, the teacher will meet with the child's parents/guardian again.
- If there is no improvement following the second parent/teacher meeting and if the child is still behaving inappropriately, the parent/guardian will be called to meet with the Principal and/or the chairperson of the Board of Management where the situation will be discussed in detail.
- Guidelines will be drawn up for future behaviour in the school and playground.
- The school reserves the right to arrange a meeting with the parents/guardians of a child at any time, should the child's behaviour be deemed to be unacceptable.
- If a parent refuses to meet with a class teacher the matter will be referred to the Principal. Any refusal to meet with the Principal and/or Chairperson will automatically be referred to the Board of Management and regarded as a serious breach of co-operation in our school behaviour policy.

### **Unacceptable Behaviour**

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised:

- 1- minor
- 2- serious
- 3- gross

All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher, or the supervising teacher at break-times. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of 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 minor misbehaviour include:***



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- Bringing electronic equipment or use of mobile-phones in school.
- Not wearing appropriate school clothing; bringing in chewing-gum.
- Not following instructions.
- Inappropriate responses to staff correction e.g. ignoring, back answering etc.

***Examples of serious misbehaviour include:***

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Behaviour that interferes consistently with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Bringing dangerous equipment to school
- Leaving school/school activities without permission.
- Continued and repetitive inappropriate responses to staff correction.
- Throwing items around the classroom in an aggressive way.

***Examples of gross misbehaviour include:***

- Assault on a staff member or pupil
- Serious theft
- Serious damage to property
- Bullying
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes

## **Bullying**

***Bullying is repeated aggression – physical, verbal or emotional - conducted by an individual or group against another or others.***

- **PHYSICAL:** includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping, etc.
- **VERBAL:** name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates.
- **EMOTIONAL:** threats or persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Threats to extort money or possessions. “Cyber/text” bullying.

The school takes particular care to intervene early in responding to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.

Issues in relation to bullying are explored continually during SPHE lessons and using Circle Time, Drama, Walk Tall etc.

Should a parent/guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed with a teacher, all staff members are more than willing to facilitate a meeting, made through the proper channels i.e. a phone call to the office, or a note to the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties. The first person to be informed should be the class teacher.



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This arrangement ensures that all concerns are dealt with in a dignified, meaningful, respectful manner, without infringing on valuable teaching time. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, should not be described as bullying.

Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same manner as breaches of discipline – already outlined in our Code of Behaviour.

In the case where a bullying incident is reported the school reserves the right to inform the relevant parties of the identity of the person making the complaint, when this is deemed necessary.

### **Sanctions**

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

- helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others.
- helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences.
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in the Code of Behaviour.
- signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.
- challenge the pupil to self-reflect and monitor. This may take the form of a behaviour contract\* and/ or social story.

*(Social stories explain social situations to children and help them learn ways of behaving in these situations).*

#### **\*Behaviour Contract Intervention**

1. Select one behaviour to address
2. Establish a baseline through careful observation
3. Write a simple and specific contract
4. Explain the contract to the child
5. Implement the contract
6. Evaluate the behaviour

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning.
- keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers (in consultation with the principal) may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the circumstances involved. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupil devise strategies for this.



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1. Praising the positive behaviours of other pupils in the class.
2. Teacher/SNA operating from an area in close proximity to pupil that is misbehaving.
3. Non- verbal warning e.g. making pupil aware that you can see their behaviour.
4. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve behaviour.
5. Temporary separation from peers in class i.e. the thinking chair. One minute for each year the child has been born e.g. 5 years old, 5 minutes.
6. Temporary removal to another class. Child is given work to continue with in another classroom.
7. Loss or privileges e.g. play time, playground, golden time.
8. Communication with parents.
9. Referral to the principal.
10. Principal communicates with parents.
11. 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).

Usually sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

We will endeavour that all sanctions will be appropriate and timely.

### **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.

#### **Suspension**

The school at all times retains its right and its obligation to implement its Code of Discipline, up to and including Suspension or even Expulsion if deemed necessary as last resorts.

All pupils are subject to the Disciplinary Code and sometimes, in cases of serious/gross misconduct involving harm to others or serious damage to property, the BoM may have no option but to resort to suspension.

The decision to suspend a pupil must be justified on serious grounds. Such a determination by the School Principal/Deputy Principal/BoM that the:

- Pupil's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to his/her own safety and the safety of others in the school community.
- Pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on his/her own education and the education of other pupils.
- Pupil is responsible for serious damage to school property.
- A single incident of serious/gross misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

**It is the Board of Management's statutory obligation to provide staff with a safe place of work.**



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The Tusla (NEWB) publication *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools* states that “Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern”. Where suspension is being considered, Shanbally NS will follow the guidelines of Chapter 11 of this publication.

Shanbally NS will record the:

- The behaviours which have led to the BoM considering suspension.
- The measures which have been taken by the school to assist the pupil overcome these behaviours.
- The assistance sought from outside agencies – e.g. NEPS, NCSE (SESS), NBSS, etc.
- Where NEPS have been involved in advising on the child’s behaviour, it would be advisable to make them aware of any impending suspension.

Such accounting will be dependent on the level and quality of recording related to the behaviours of concern.

Where NEPS has been involved in advising on the child’s behaviour, it would be important to ensure that the local NEPS psychologist is made aware of any impending suspension.

“Suspensions can provide a respite for staff and the pupil, give the pupil time to reflect on the link between their action and its consequences and give staff and parents time to plan ways of helping the student to change unacceptable behaviour. However, suspension can be counter-productive if used without a clear rationale or without measuring its impact and value. School management should consider the risk of any unwanted outcomes from suspension, such as an increased sense of alienation from school that could lead to a cycle of behavioural and academic problems” - *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*, Chapter 11.

Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

## **Expulsion**

Tusla (NEWB) publication *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools* states that “Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the pupil’s behaviour”.

Where expulsion is being considered, Shanbally NS will follow the guidelines of Chapter 12 of this publication.

The decision to expel a pupil must be justified on serious grounds. Such a determination by the School Principal/Deputy Principal/BOM that:



- The pupil's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to his/her own safety and the safety of others in the school community.
- The pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect his/her own education and the education of other pupils.
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to school property.

**It is the Board of Management's statutory obligation to provide staff with a safe place of work.**

A single incident of serious/gross misconduct may be grounds for expulsion. Shanbally NS will accurately account for:

- The behaviours which have led to the BoM considering expulsion.
- The measures which have been taken by the school to assist the pupil overcome these behaviours.
- The assistance sought from outside agencies – e.g. NEPS, NCSE (SESS), NBSS, etc.

Such accounting will be dependent on the level and quality of recording related to the behaviours of concern.

Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour. Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that should only be taken by the BoM in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school should have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate, meeting with parents and pupil to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour:

- Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist
- Ensuring that all other possible options have been tried
- Seeking the assistance of support agencies (e.g. NEPS, HSE Community Services, NBSS, CAMHS, NCSE)

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 Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

### **Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)**

Following or during a period of suspension, where it has been alleged that the pupil poses a threat to the safety of others in the school and therefore did not qualify for internal suspension, the parent/guardian 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 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.

### **Pupils with Behaviours of Concern**

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However, the school recognises that some children may require assistance in understanding and following certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, SET and /or principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given.

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.

### **Communicating with Parents/Guardians**

Communicating with parents/guardians is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents/guardians and teachers should develop and agree to a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented consistently at home and in school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to talk in confidence firstly to class 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 are to be used within the school:

- Informal/formal parent/teacher.
- Through children's homework journal (infants do not have a homework journal, please check bags for notes) or a communication copy if in place.
- Aladdin Notes and School Emails.

Shanbally NS places an emphasis on parental/guardian involvement and communication. Teachers are encouraged to communicate with parents/guardians and to enable them to help their child as much as possible.

Chairperson signature: *Roisin Mehegan*

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### **Charter for Parents/Guardians:**

Parents/Guardians are expected to:

- Co-operate with and support the principal/school community as much as possible to ensure their child/children behaves in accordance with school expectations
- Ensure their child/children attend school and are punctual
- Equip pupils with appropriate school materials, a sufficient healthy lunch and appropriate school clothing
- Be courteous towards pupils, staff and other parents
- Make an appointment to meet with a teacher/the principal through the office
- Wait in an orderly fashion when collecting children
- Respect school property and encourage their children to do the same
- Label pupil's coats and other personal property
- Strictly supervise their children, when on school grounds.
- Drive and park carefully in and around the school environment

As the Board of Management is responsible for the Health & Safety of all staff and students, parents/guardians are requested not to approach or reprimand another person's child on the school premises.

By signing our Code of Behaviour, you are agreeing to make every effort to support the school in line with our Code of Behaviour. If you have any questions in relation to the Code of Behaviour, please refrain from signing it until you have clarification. Our policies are available on request from our office.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

