**Code of Behaviour**

**Ballina Primary School**

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6. **Introduction and Rationale:**

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of Ballina Primary School has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for its pupils, staff and parents. The Code of Behaviour enables the school to strike an appropriate balance between its duty to maintain an effective learning environment for all and with its responsibility to students whose behaviour presents a challenge to the teaching and learning process. The code of behaviour is a key tool that supports the learning of every student in the school by providing clear guidance in the area of responsible behaviour. The Code of Behaviour facilitates the smooth running of the school and promotes the child’s legal right to receive his/her education under the Primary School Curriculum. The Code of Behaviour of Ballina Primary School has been developed in accordance with *“Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools”* (National Educational Welfare Board, 2008).

1. ***Vision:***

At Ballina Primary School, we aim to create an atmosphere of security, safety and happiness that promotes the dignity and individuality of every person. We strive to develop friendly and harmonious relationships within the school where each pupil is encouraged to be responsible for his/her behaviour. To this end pupils are regularly reminded of their responsibilities inside and outside of the classroom. Rules provide clear boundaries and describe in simple terms how pupils should behave in order to learn well and to develop into mature and responsible individuals. Pupils are reminded of school rules and classroom rules in language appropriate to their age.

1. ***Review of Policy:***

This code was reviewed and updated by the teaching staff of Ballina Primary School in consultation with the Board of Management, parent representatives and pupil representatives in October 2019 and the whole process was informed by the “*Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*” (National Education Welfare Board 2008). The finalised draft of the policy was submitted for Patron’s Approval.

1. **School Ethos**

Ballina Primary School is a Roman Catholic School in the Archdiocese of Cashel and Emly. It aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church and promotes the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith. While Ballina Primary School is a Roman Catholic School, we welcome pupils of all faiths and none. Enrolment is open to all pupils living in the parish. Our school identifies itself with the Parish of Ballina and Boher. The pupils are prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation. Pupils are taught to appreciate and respect people of different religious affiliations and of different nationalities in the world.

1. **The School Philosophy Underpinning the Code of Behaviour.**

At Ballina Primary School, we strive to create a safe, secure and happy learning environment that reflects our Christian ethos mindful at all times of the dignity and individuality of every pupil in our care. In so doing, we seek to enable each pupil to reach his/her full potential.

We aim to:

* Develop friendly and harmonious relationships within the school so that each pupil can learn and grow;
* Promote a pastoral care system where each person takes responsibility for his/her own behaviour.
* Build a spirit of collaboration between school leadership and management team, teachers, non-teaching staff, parents and pupils and create a sense of belonging to a vibrant learning community.
* Foster in the pupils a sense of pride in themselves, their work, their school.
* Develop in students an awareness and appreciation of our culture and heritage and an appreciation of our civic responsibility in the preservation of the environment.

1. ***Aims and Objectives Of The Code:***

The aims and objectives of the code are:

* To create and maintain a positive and happy learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
* To allow the school to function in a smooth and harmonious 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 that each child is unique and accommodating individual difference.
* To foster compassion and forgiveness.
* To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community
* To assist pupils, parents and school staff in understanding the aims and objectives of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of its systems and procedures.
* To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

1. ***Principles Underpinning Our Code of Behaviour:***

In Ballina Primary School the principles underpinning our Code of Behaviour are founded on our core values:

* Respect for self and others.
* Courtesy and kindness.
* Fairness and equity.
* Compassion and forgiveness.

**Board of Management and the Code of Behaviour:**

The Board of Management acknowledges the role played by the School Principal, the Deputy Principal, the teachers, the ancillary staff, the pupils and the parents in the review and operation of the Code of Behaviour and the collaborative endeavour in the review and operation of the Code. The Board of Management of Ballina Primary School expects that all members of the School Community will fulfil their responsibilities as outlined in this policy. The Board of Management will conduct an annual review of the Code of Behaviour.

***Parents/ Guardians and the Code of Behaviour.***

Parents/ guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive behaviour in school. Parents of pupils of Ballina School can expect our Board of Management and teaching staff to provide:

* A quality education for their child.
* A safe and happy environment for their child.
* Recognition and provision for the individual difference of each child.
* Support for children who need it.
* Fairness and consistency in the way the Code of Behaviour is administered.
* An atmosphere of support and inclusion rather than criticism.
* Contact at an early stage to inform them of any problems.
* A willingness to listen to their viewpoint.
* Suggestions and support about problems in school.

Ballina Primary School expects parents to assist the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules and to:

* Be familiar with and support the various policies and procedures of the school.
* Show support for teachers in their implementation of the school’s behaviour policy.
* Ensure that their child has the necessary materials for schoolwork.
* Treat all school staff and other children with respect, courtesy and polite language.
* Ensure children attend school regularly and are punctual.
  + 9:00am-1.40pm Junior Infants and Senior Infants
  + 9:00am-2.40pm Rang 1-6
* Collect their child(ren) punctually at the end of the school day.
* Send a written explanation if a child is absent from school for any reason. If you envisage your child being absent for a number of days a telephone call, e-mail or written note to the school office to explain the child’s absence is important. Parents are reminded that under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 the school authorities are obliged to report absences in excess of twenty days.
* Inform the class teacher if they wish to collect their child early from school for any reason. (e.g. dentist appointment).

**Parents are asked to note the following:**

* Pupils are not allowed to leave the school, once they arrive in the morning. Please inform the class teacher/ school secretary by note, email or telephone call if alternative arrangements are being made for a child’s collection. If emergencies arise please contact the school by telephone.
* It is essential that parents return contact/ emergency telephone numbers to the school or inform the school of any change in address or telephone numbers.
* Please ensure children wear full uniform and are clean, neat and well groomed.
* Please ensure children wear appropriate clothing/footwear for PE. Pupils are forbidden to wear jewellery during PE as it is a safety hazard.
* Please provide a healthy lunch daily for their children.
* Please label all belongings and clothing clearly. This is essential for returning belongings to their rightful owners.
* Be vigilant about your child’s homework and sign their homework journal daily when you are satisfied that he/she has completed it. If for some reason your child fails to do or complete homework assignments, you are required to write a note in the homework diary and sign it.
* Co-operate with school staff and attend meetings when requested.
* Be available and willing to discuss a problem(s) your child may have in school in a calm reasonable fashion.
* Please make an appointment, through the secretary, if they wish to meet with a teacher to discuss any concerns or problems they may have. Telephone calls may be made during school hours or a note may be written in your child’s homework diary or through a letter to the teacher.

**Ways in which parents/guardians can promote good behaviour:**

* Try to nurture a positive attitude towards school and all those involved in it.
* Try not to pass on any negative experiences which parents themselves may have had at school.
* Model good behaviour in your relationship with teachers.
* Support the work being done in school in teaching the Code of Behaviour.
* Parents can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules and behave in an acceptable manner.

***Staff and the Code of Behaviour.***

It is the Principal’s responsibility to ensure the school’s Code of Behaviour is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils. However staff members have a collective responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within the school.

Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class. Teachers will:

* Be prepared for class.
* Be cognisant of the various needs and ability levels of all children in their classes and adapt their teaching methodologies accordingly.
* Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in an age appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year.
* Ensure the class rules are displayed in the classroom.
* Encourage self-discipline and positive behaviour.
* Ensure there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times.
* Implement the reward/sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner.
* Keep a written class record of all incidents of repeated, serious or gross misconduct. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and, the consequences for the child if the behaviour is repeated.
* Inform pupils when specific instances of misbehaviour are being recorded.
* Report repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the Principal.

**Principles of Effective Classroom Management which Support the Code of Behaviour:**

Smooth, well- functioning classrooms do not just happen. They are the result of consistent efforts on the part of the teacher to create and maintain conditions that help effective learning. These include:

* A well prepared stimulating scheme of work, catering for the needs of all the children to be drawn up at the beginning of the each school term.
* Adherence to agreed structures and procedures will eliminate opportunities for misbehaviour e.g method of entry to classrooms, supervision of class by neighbouring teacher should the class teacher be called away, punctuality of the teacher, etc.
* An enriching and stimulating classroom environment to generate and sustain the children’s interest in their class work.
* The organisation of classroom furniture and the assignment of responsibilities to children, such as distributing and collecting materials to promote good classroom order.
* Maintaining a firm, fair and consistent code of conduct within the class and while on yard duty.
* Keeping a record of repeated minor breaches or any serious breach of discipline and notifying same to the Principal.

**Staff Promoting Positive Behaviour:**

Through the Religious Education Programme, the SPHE (Social Personal Health Education) curriculum and incidentally throughout the school day positive behaviour skills will be taught to pupils to encourage good co-operation, listening, respect, turn taking and manners. Staff will have a common understanding of expectations and also a common approach to sanctioning. Staff will promote an atmosphere of mutual respect. As a general rule the school will endeavour to create an environment where positive behaviour is reinforced through praise and reward. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school, so that positive behaviour is instantly recognised and positively rewarded. Special attention will be paid to pupils who have previously been associated with poor behaviour so that not only good behaviour but also improvement in behaviour is acknowledged. Pupils can encourage each other to adhere to rules, in the interest of all pupils.

A reward scheme for promoting positive behaviour may be used. Such rewards may include;

* Praise, Encouragement, Thanks.
* Stars, Stickers, Positive comments in copies.
* Pencils/stationery/sweets.
* Homework off occasionally/Homework pass.
* Points and star system.
* Special awards for outstanding achievement.
* Student of the Week/Month Award per class.
* Group of the Week Award per class.
* Special mention at Assemblies.

**Ways in which teachers can promote good behaviour:**

* Teachers regularly praise good behaviour in a consistent manner.
* Involve children in forming class rules.
* Reward systems in all classes e.g. (Rewards will reflect interests and needs of the child)
* A ‘Good note’ to parents in homework journal.
* Teachers model good behaviour.
* Giving children responsibility in the school.
* A written comment on pupils’ work.
* Use of school reports to comment favourably, not only on good work and academic achievement but, on behaviour, on involvement and on general attitudes.
* School assembly will be used to remind pupils of certain rules and/ or standards of behaviour.

***Pupils and the Code of Behaviour:***

Each child coming to school has a right to expect an environment where he/she can learn and play in safety. Pupils of Ballina Primary School can expect that their school will be:

* Safe
* Happy
* Encouraging and supportive
* Affirming of children of all abilities
* Able to deal effectively with bullying and adheres to the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy.

**School Rules**

**General Behaviour:**

Each pupil is expected to:

* Be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults.
* Treat all staff, visitors and other children with respect, courtesy and politeness.
* Be kind to each other.
* Be honest in their dealings with others.
* Show respect for the property of, the school, other children and their own belongings
* Attend school on a regular basis, be punctual and to remain within the school premises during school hours unless one has oral/written permission to leave
* Do his/her best both in school and for homework.
* Dress appropriately: the school uniform (Rang 1-6) must be worn at all times, except on P.E. days when the school tracksuit is worn. Junior/Senior Infants must wear the school tracksuit every day. No make-up is allowed and for health and safety reasons, only stud earrings are permitted.
* Maintain a high standard of behaviour while on the school premises and while engaging in any school-related activity.
* Walk in the corridors and on entering/ leaving the school building.
* Follow the healthy lunch eating policy of the school.

**Specific Restrictions:**

* No mobile phone use on school premises; football boots are not to be worn inside the school building; no chewing gum or glass bottles are allowed in the school.
* No misbehaviour that is dangerous to self or others (e.g. No mock fighting, horseplay, fighting, physical violence, threatening, intimidation, discrimination or victimization).
* Bullying and harassment of any kind is not acceptable. The Principal and teachers have a professional duty of care to address bullying and the Department of Education and Skills reinforces this duty in requiring schools to have anti-bullying policies. Therefore bullying and harassment will not be tolerated and will be dealt with as per the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy.

**Classroom Behaviour**

Each pupil is expected to:

* Listen to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking.
* Work to the best of his/her ability and attempt all assignments. Homework diary (Rang 1-6) must be signed by parent/guardian each week night Monday-Thursday. Test copies must be signed as directed by the class teacher.
* Follow the direction of his/her teacher or supervisor.
* If, due to inclement weather, the pupils are allowed to remain indoors during break/lunchtime, they must remain seated unless given permission to do otherwise by the supervising teacher/school staff.
* Obtain his/her teachers permission to leave the classroom

**Specific Restriction:**

* Any form of misbehaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn is unacceptable.

**Playground (Playing Pitches) Behaviour**

Each pupil is expected to:

* Play safely avoiding any games or play that are rough or dangerous.
* Follow the directions of the playground supervisor(s)
* Remain on school grounds at all times in their class designated areas.
* Obtain permission before re-entering the school building during break periods
* Avoid hitting, punching, kicking, verbal abuse.
* Assemble in their class areas each morning. The playground is supervised from 8.45am.
* Line up with their classes at the appropriate spot when they hear the bell ring at the end of each break/ lunch.
* Use the bins provided in the playground for litter and composting.

**Behaviour during School Outings/Activities**

Each pupil is expected to:

* Follow his/her teacher’s directions at all times.
* Remain with the teacher/supervisors and group of pupils at all times.
* Behave politely towards those they meet on such trips.
* Observe the rules of general good behaviour.
* Obey the rules/regulations both of the venue and personnel.
* Abide by school restrictions (no mobile phones or handheld devices allowed on school outings/tours).

**Note:**

Pupils will be subject to the school’s code of behaviour anywhere on the school premises and on any out of school activity where the child/children are representing the school (e.g. sport events, cultural events, school tours etc.)

1. **Inappropriate Behaviour**

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. The Code also specifies the supportive interventions and the disciplinary actions that will be employed.

**Misbehaviours: Level One.**

Level 1 misbehaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and common areas. Children will be taught what is expected and how they should behave. Listed below are some examples of the types of misbehaviour that are included in Level 1.

* Failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers.
* Defying a teacher or other adult; cheek; disobedience, disrespect, sulking.
* Disturbing the work or play of others.
* Disrespectful language, tone, or manner.
* Ignoring staff requests.
* Constantly not wearing uniform.
* Non-compliance with school /classroom rules.
* Interrupting class work.
* Misbehaving in class line.
* Regularly not completing homework without a good reason.

**Please note the list is not exhaustive.**

***Supportive Interventions: Level 1.***

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

* Classroom-based interventions, such as class meetings/Circle Time, with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members)
* Talking about misbehaviour with the child.
* Informal notes regarding incident/intervention/date. This information would be useful should a problem persist.

**Disciplinary Actions: Level 1.**

Consequences for Level 1 behaviour are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Individual teachers are responsible for taking the appropriate remedial action for Level 1 misbehaviour. Some examples of Level 1 remedial actions are:

* Verbal reprimand/reminder(s), including advice on how to improve.
* Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
* Temporary separation from peers, friends or others or withdrawal to another classroom if necessary.
* Additional written work may be assigned.
* Loss of privileges (e.g. participation in sporting/ other school activities/ favourite subject on rotational basis)
* Parents /Guardians will be notified through the child’s homework diary or the child’s written explanation.
* Pupil’s name is written into the class teacher’s incident book.

**NOTE: Although incidents of misbehaviour are recorded, the emphasis is on encouraging pupils to behave well and praise is given for commendable behaviour. Parents will be informed at an early stage if problems occur and not simply at the point where a crisis has arisen.**

**Level Two**

**Misbehaviours: Level 2**

Level 2 behaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and well-being of the students and staff. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 2.

* Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention.
* Being constantly disruptive in class.
* Being discourteous to a staff member.
* Behaviour which is dangerous to self or others (e.g. mock fighting, horseplay, fighting, physical violence, threatening, intimidation).
* Behaviour of a sexual nature/ suggestion or sexual bullying (Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching, or harassment)
* Behaviour that is hurtful (bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimization)
* Intentionally damaging school or personal property.
* Stealing.
* Cheating.
* Use of profanity and/or unacceptable language.
* Use of suggestive language of a sexual nature or language containing sexual innuendo.
* Derogatory reference of any form to another person’s race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin.
* Disrespectful language or behaviour toward an adult.
* Possession or use of dangerous toys; sporting equipment or illegal substances.
* Bringing weapons to school e.g. catapults, pen knives, pellet guns etc.
* Turning on or using a mobile phone in school.
* Leaving the school without permission during the school day or leaving the care of school staff during school outings.
* Inappropriate or derogatory reference to a member of the school community posted or shared on social media.
* Blatant disregard for school rules and property.

**Please note the list is not exhaustive.**

**Supportive Interventions: Level 2**

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

* Team meeting to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Deputy Principal or Principal.
* Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education, a play therapist.
* Referral of a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent).

**Disciplinary Actions: Level 2**

The disciplining of students for Level 2 behaviour is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour and developmentally appropriate levels. The disciplinary actions at Level 2 are administered by the class teacher and the Principal. Some examples of Level 2 responses are:

* Verbal reprimand/reminder(s), including advice on how to improve.
* Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
* Temporary separation from peers, friends or others or withdrawal to another classroom if necessary.
* Additional written work may be assigned.
* Loss of privileges (e.g. participation in sporting/ other school activities/ favourite subject on rotational basis.
* Detention during break or lunch time with additional written work prescribed.
* Confiscation of any items causing a nuisance or danger. Confiscated items, such as mobile phones may be reclaimed by parents with an undertaking re further use. The school, in consultation with parents, reserves the right to delete any offending material on mobile phones etc.
* Pupil’s name is written into the Principal’s “Green Book”. If this is continuous the principal will contact the parents/guardians to arrange a meeting to discuss the matter.
* The pupil writes an apology which is signed by the parent/guardian and this is recorded in the “Principal’s Green Book”.
* The principal may at his/her discretion contact parents by letter/phone call immediately if a situation warrants it.
* Parents are called on to give guarantees of pupil’s future good conduct.

**Level Three**

**Misbehaviours: Level 3**

Level 3 behaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and/ or personal well-being of others. They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school. Some situations may result in contact with the Garda Síochána and/ or other outside agencies. Level 3 behaviours may also involve disciplinary actions administered by the Chairperson and/ or the Board of Management. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 3.

* Repeated or very serious instances of Level 2 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention.
* Intentional possession or use of weapons or illegal substances.
* Violent fighting or intentionally causing physical harm to others.
* Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin.

**Please note that the list is not exhaustive.**

**Supportive Interventions: Level 3**

**Listed below are some examples of Level 3 supportive actions:**

* Team meeting to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Deputy Principal or Principal to agree on supportive interventions.
* Seek advice from CPSMA, St. Senan’s Education Office or from other outside agencies, as necessary.
* Meeting to include Principal, Parents and pupil.
* Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education, a play therapist.
* Referral of a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent).

**Disciplinary Actions: Level 3**

Behaviour at Level 3 may involve suspension from school. The length of the suspension will depend upon the severity and frequency of the specific Behaviour. Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension is contained in this document. Level 3 responses:

* **Suspension from school for one to five days:**

This response will occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour or Level 2 behaviour of significant severity. The Principal / Chairperson of B.O.M., following due process and procedure, can issue a suspension.

* **Suspension from school for five to ten days:**

This response will occur with the repeated incidence of Level 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this Behaviour. A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management.

* **Expulsion:**

Incidents of Level 3 behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled.

1. **PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSIONS & EXPULSIONS**

**Suspension**

**Definition of Suspension:**

*‘requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days’*

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

**Authority to Suspend:**

**The Board of Management authorises the Principal, with the approval of the  
Chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance concerning such suspensions.**

**Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension**

An **‘Immediate Suspension’** will be deemed to be necessary where after a preliminary investigation the Principal/Chairperson BOM reaches the determination that the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety and wellbeing of pupils or staff of the school. An ‘Immediate Suspension’ may be for a period of one to five school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

An **‘Automatic Suspension’** is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of Ballina Primary School, having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by Health & Safety Legislation, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur ‘Automatic Suspension’ as a sanction;

• Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff

or

• Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property

or

• Leaving the school without permission during the school day.

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension by telephone, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected. In no circumstance will a student be sent home from school prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will issue in due course, but **no later than 2 school days** after the imposition of the suspension.

Such a notification will detail:

* the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
* the reasons for the suspension
* any study programme to be followed
* the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be completed **no later than 2 school days** after the incident the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss;

* the circumstances surrounding the suspension,
* interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.

The Board of Management of Ballina Primary School acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given;

1. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.

**Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions:**

In cases other than those of Immediate or Automatic Suspension the following procedures will apply;

Where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management of Ballina Primary School will initiate a formal investigation of the matter.

The following procedures will be observed;

A written letter containing the following information will issue to Parent(s)/guardian(s);

1. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
2. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled **no later than 5 school days** from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.

The Board of Management of Ballina Primary School acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

1. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
2. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Where a decision to suspend has been made the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision. The letter will confirm:

* the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
* the reasons for the suspension
* any study programme to be followed
* the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
* the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.

**Expulsion**

**Definition of Expulsion:**

‘A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.’

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

**Authority to Expel:**

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

**Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:**

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will apply:

a) A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required)

As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s);

1. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
2. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond

b) The Principal (or Board of Management Nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management

Where the Principal (or nominee) forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal (or nominee) makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

In this event the Principal (or nominee) will:

1. inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
2. ensure that parent(s)/guardians have records of: the allegations against the student; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
3. provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)

c) Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal’s (or Board of Management’s Nominee) Recommendations & the Holding of a Hearing

If, having considered the Principal’s report, the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student a hearing will be scheduled.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing

1. as to the date, location and time of the hearing
2. of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
3. that they may if they so choose be accompanied at the hearing

The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that;

1. the meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
2. the principal (or BOM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other’s presence
3. each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party
4. the parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose

d) Board of Management Deliberations & Actions following the Hearing

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled the Board

1. Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.
2. Will not expel the student before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification
3. Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
4. Will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer
5. Will suspend the student, if it is deemed likely that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils or staff.

e) Confirmation of the Decision to Expel

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing that the expulsion will now proceed. They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of Ballina Primary School acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

1. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
2. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.
3. **NOTIFICATION OF A CHILD’S ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL**

Under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 Section 23(2)(e) and Section 18, parents must send in a written note explaining why their child was absent, on the day the pupil returns to school following the absence(s). Schools need to know why the pupil was absent as they are required to fill this information in on the National Education Welfare Board’s (NEWB) attendance form. If a note is not received, the school must record this as an unexplained absence on the NEWB returns.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should adhere to the following procedures when notifying the school of a pupil’s absence;

* The school should be notified of the absence on the first day the pupil returns to school
* The reason for the absence should be notified to the class teacher
* The absence should be notified in writing by letter/using the child’s journal/ by email to the school office.
* Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided
* Significant absences cause by ill health should be certified.
* If your child is absent for any reason a written note signed by parent/guardian is required on your child’s return to school. If you envisage your child being absent for a number of days a telephone call/or written note/ email to the school to explain the child’s absence is important.

The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more, where the child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular and when the pupil is removed from the school register

1. **RECORDS**

A pupil’s behaviour will be recorded either in the class teacher’s incident book or the Principal’s Green Book where deemed necessary. Such records will contain:

* Incidents of misbehaviour,
* interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
* Evidence of improved behaviour
* Any sanctions imposed, and the reasons they were imposed

Pupils will be told when a record is being made about their behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained. All records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection legislation.

1. **Review of Code of Behaviour.**

This Code of Behaviour was drawn up in consultation with the Parents’ Association, Board of Management, pupils and staff. It is subject to annual review and updating as necessary. The Principal welcomes the views of parents at any time, so that the operation of the Code of Behaviour can be more effective.

***Ratification & Review:***

This policy has been ratified by our Board of Management and will be reviewed regularly.

Mr. Tom Moore

(Chairperson Board of Management)