



St. John the Baptist Primary School

BALLAGHKEENE N.S.

**THE BALLAGH,
ENNISCORTHY,
CO. WEXFORD**

Code of Discipline and Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Management of Ballaghkeene N.S. is required by legislation to prepare and make available a Code of Behaviour for its students. The code of Discipline and Behaviour has been formulated in accordance with the NEWB Guidelines for schools which have their legal basis outlined in the Education Welfare act 2000

MISSION STATEMENT AND THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

In line with our Mission Statement, every individual is valued, encouraged and respected for their uniqueness and facilitated to reach their full potential in a positive and supportive atmosphere. The aim of this code is to ensure the right of each child to an education in a relatively disruption free environment. We, as a staff, believe our Code of Behaviour has an important role to play in fulfilling these aims and objectives. St. John the Baptist N.S Ballaghkeene aims to treat every child, irrespective of ability, creed, race or gender, with dignity, fairness and respect. Implementation of this Code of Behaviour is central to the provision of effective teaching and learning in our school. It is a reflection of our school ethos and central to our Mission Statement.

School Mission Statement

Ballaghkeene N.S. aims to provide a happy, secure, friendly learning environment, where children, parents, teachers, support staff and Board of Management work in partnership, where each individual is valued, encouraged and respected for his/ her uniqueness and facilitated to reach his/ her full potential in a positive, supportive atmosphere, where the Christian virtues are upheld and promoted on a daily basis.

It is very important that children understand that they have rights. It is essential that they understand that with these rights come responsibilities. Every effort is made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school. The code offers a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are utilised by teachers e.g. Pupil of the Week, Certificates, Golden Time, Class Dojo, positive behaviour charts, Class of the Month etc.

The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences wherever it is possible within the confines of large classes.

It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, pupils and parents.

The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/ her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for the good order within the school premises.

WHERE AND WHEN THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR WILL APPLY

This Code of Behaviour will apply to all school activities, regardless of timing and location. This will encompass the normal school day, activities that may extend beyond normal opening and closing times and all extra-curricular activities such as school tours, outings, performances and sporting pursuits.

Aims of Ballaghkeene N.S.'s Code of Behaviour

- to create a safe, secure and positive environment where teaching and learning can occur
- to promote a friendly, happy atmosphere which will help every child to reach their full potential
- to foster an atmosphere of acceptance, respect and consideration for all
- to promote positive behaviour and self-discipline where the children take ownership of their own behaviour
- to help our children to realise that they have choices about the behaviours they exhibit
- to help our children to mature into responsible and full participants in a learning community

- to assist Parents/ Guardians in understanding the expectations and procedures that underpin the Code of Behaviour
- to ensure that all procedures of reward or sanction are implemented in a fair manner throughout the school

RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO GOOD BEHAVIOUR

The teachers and adults encountered by the children in Ballaghkeene N.S. have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other. Our example has an important influence on the children.

As Teachers and a staff as a whole we aim to:

- create a positive climate with realistic expectations
- promote, through example, honesty and courtesy
- model the good behaviour we expect from the children
- provide a caring and effective teaching and 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 or disability
- show appreciation for the efforts and contributions of all

The Parents and Guardians of the children in Ballaghkeene N.S. have the responsibility to ensure that their children abide by the expectations outlined in this Code of Discipline.

The children in Ballaghkeene N.S. can help enormously to make our school a positive, happy and effective learning environment by adhering to the school rules.

SCHOOL RULES

Behaviour on the yard before school day starts

The children will arrive at Ballaghkeene N.S. not earlier than 8.50 a.m. for all classes. The children should be in their appropriate line waiting for their class teacher at 9:00 a.m. All classes will walk into the school building at 9:00 a.m. The bell will sound at 9:00 a.m. marking the beginning of the school day. The children are not allowed to play at the front of the school before school starts as a health and safety measure.

Behaviour and Procedures on Wet Mornings

If it is a wet morning the children will be invited into Ballaghkeene N.S. at 8.50 am. All teachers are to be in their classrooms at 8:50 a.m. ready to receive the children. The Deputy Principal/ Learning Support Teachers and SNAs will supervise the pupils on entry until the bell rings at 9:00 am.

Punctuality: Children normally assemble in their line between 8:50 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. for all classes

Class hours: 9:00 a.m.-1:40 p.m. Junior & Senior Infants
9:00 a.m.-2:40 p.m. 1st-6th Class

It is not advisable that children be on the premises before 8:50 a.m. as they cannot be adequately supervised. All children should be collected on time. All Junior & Senior Infants must be collected at 1:40 p.m. except in exceptional circumstances.

Addressing adults

The children should address teachers and other members of staff by their correct title e.g.

Mr. Nolan, Ms. Hanrahan, Ms. C. Sinnott, Ms. Stanley, Ms. L. Sinnott, Ms. Wright, Ms. D. Doyle, Ms. K. Doyle, Mr. Murphy, Ms. Dunne, Ms. McDonald, Ms. O'Toole, Mr. Hendrick, Ms. Carey, Ms. Walsh, Ann (Kirwan)

All Parents and Guardians should aim to:

- familiarise themselves with Ballaghkeene N.S.'s Code of Behaviour and discuss same with their child
- encourage their child to abide by the school rules
- encourage punctuality every day
- encourage full attendance
- use the 'drop and go' system appropriately if dropping their child to school by car and to refrain from parking in the spaces designated for staff
- label their child's belongings for easy identification
- support their child with their homework and sign their Homework Journal
- inform their child's class teacher about illnesses / school absences in writing/Aladdin
- ensure their child is wearing their full school uniform
- ensure their child is eating a healthy lunch in accordance with our Healthy Eating Policy
- encourage good behaviour and respect for others at all times
- communicate with their child's teacher about factors likely to affect their child's behaviour in school
- make an appointment to meet with a teacher/ the Principal with the secretary

GUIDELINES FOR POSITIVE SCHOOL BEHAVIOUR

Promoting Positive Behaviour - "*Mol an Óige agus Tiocfaidh sí*"

Part of the vision of Ballaghkeene N.S. 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 that similarly children use a variety of approaches to solving problems. All children deserve encouragement to attain their personal best. Our reward

systems seek to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by all adults in Ballaghkeene N.S. Praise for good behaviour should be as high as for good work.

The following are examples of how praise will be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in child's copy / Homework Journal
- A visit to another teacher / Principal for commendation
- Words of praise/ moladh in front of class / bualadh bos
- Words of praise/ moladh at assembly once a month
- Words of praise/ moladh after yard in front of whole school
- Delegating some special responsibility of privilege
- A mention to Parents/ Guardians, written/ verbal communication/ Class Dojo/ Well Done Wall/ Class of the month poster

The following standards of behaviour are expected of all members of Ballaghkeene N.S. community.

- Respect for self and others
- Respect for school property and buildings
- Respect for other children's property
- Follow instructions from staff immediately
- Walk quietly in the school buildings
- Do their best in all activities
- Listen to those who are speaking, including visitors to their classroom
- Be kind and show a willingness to help others
- Show courtesy and good manners at all times

Rewards and Incentives for Positive Behaviour

The school positively reinforces good behaviour through a series of school initiatives and strategies employed by individual classroom teachers. Greater emphasis is placed on rewards than on sanctions. **This is not an exhaustive list** but some of the rewards may include the following:

- Reward/ Star charts/ Stamps/ stickers/ points
- Class Dojo
- Homework passes
- Student of the week certificates
- Class / group of the week / points systems
- Praise at school assembly - certificates/ Kindness awards
- Praise from classroom Teacher and other members of staff
- Class of the Month competition
- Traffic lights (more commonly used in Junior classes)
- Golden time

From when a child enters the school premises a level of behaviour is expected which conforms to the aims of the school and the school rules. Pupils are expected to behave themselves on all school outings and while in school uniform. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour, refusing to work or persistence in breaking school rules will generally be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour depending on the circumstances. Polite language is expected from pupils and swearing or jeering is considered to be misbehaviour.

Classroom Behaviour

Each teacher will have a set of expected classroom behaviours for his/ her class level. Some teachers, for example in the senior classes, may draft a list of class rules with the help of the children in their class. Class rules should be kept to a minimum of 4 or 5. Class rules should emphasise positive behaviour e.g. 'walk' and not 'don't run', 'lámha suas' and not 'don't speak without raising your hand'. The following general behaviours apply to all classes:

- Co-operate fully with your Teacher's/ SNAs/ Substitute Teacher's instructions
- Complete your work to the best of your ability
- Present your work neatly in books and copies
- Get on with your work and let others get on with theirs
- Aim to be in your line every morning at 8.50 a.m.
- Go home promptly at 1:40 p.m./ 2:40 p.m. after your class is brought to the gate/door
- Enter and leave your classroom quietly
- Ask permission before leaving your seat and classroom
- Complete all Homework to the best of your ability
- Help to tidy up your classroom at 2.40 p.m. every day
- Wear your full school uniform when appropriate
- Eat a healthy lunch every day

Behaviour on the Yard at Break-Times

Children have the opportunity to play and socialise with each other at morning and lunch break-times. The following points will help to keep the children safe on the yard.

- Children are encouraged to treat others as they would like to be treated themselves
- All age groups have a designated play area and should remain in that yard
- Children should never leave the school grounds
- Buddy benches around the yards facilitate quiet play
- Children eat their lunch in their classroom before/ after yard times
- Children must ask permission from a supervising teacher/ SNA to leave the yard e.g. going to the toilet. 6th Class helpers will accompany children from JI, SI and 1st class indoors
- Children with injuries will be treated in the secretary's office
- Serious injuries (e.g. bangs to head, cuts, bruising) will be recorded in the Incident Book (this is kept in the secretary's office) and the class teacher will be informed of

such injuries at the end of break. Teachers will write a note in the child's Homework Journal/ notice through Aladdin to inform Parents/ Guardians if the secretary has not already contacted the parents by phone

- It is the responsibility of the school secretary, to communicate all communications to parents/guardians to the class teachers at the end of every day
- When the bell rings the children will move swiftly and carefully and walk to their line
- When the class teachers collect their lines, the children should walk in single file to their classroom
- Children are encouraged to be fair and inclusive when setting up their games
- Rough play and bad language are not allowed at any time

Behaviour for Indoor Play

On wet days the children will remain in their classrooms during break-times. The following points will help to keep the children safe on these occasions.

- Children will stay in their classrooms at all times
- Children can play with games/ activities provided by their teacher
- Two children from 6th class will be assigned to each classroom. They can play with the children, read stories, play games on the whiteboard etc. They will discuss the class' behaviour with the class teacher upon his/ her return after break-time.
- Teachers will be on corridor duty on wet days
- SNAs will help supervising the classes of the children they work with on wet days

SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION (SEN)

All children are required to comply with the spirit of the Code of Behaviour. Ballaghkeene N.S. recognises that some children with SEN may need extra time and help in understanding some rules. Specialised **Behaviour Plans** may be necessary at times. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Behaviour Plans will be put in place in consultation with the class teacher, Parent/ Guardian, SET teacher and Principal. All will work together to make sure the child receives all the support they need. Any professional advice from our NEPS Psychologist will be taken into consideration.

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

BULLYING

The school does not tolerate bullying. We have procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying which are outlined in our Anti-Bullying Statement.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH MISBEHAVIOUR:

The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. Individual teachers may put alternative measures in place depending on the circumstances involved and the age of the child. **This list is not exhaustive.**

Unacceptable Behaviour

Three levels of Misbehaviour are recognised: **minor, serious and gross**. All everyday instances of **minor misbehaviours** will be dealt with by the class teacher or the supervising teacher at break-times.

Minor Misbehaviours

Examples of Minor Misbehaviours include:

- Interrupting work in the classroom
- Being discourteous/ unmannerly
- Running in the corridors
- Rough play on the yard
- Leaving the classroom without checking with the class teacher
- Leaving the yard to go indoors at break times without checking with the supervising teacher /SNA
- Not wearing full school uniform
- Wearing of inappropriate jewellery/ make up
- Not adhering to Healthy Lunch Policy
- Late in the mornings
- Unfinished/ incomplete Homework
- Keeping a mobile phone in their bag during class time

Class teachers will keep a **running record of minor misbehaviours**. The cards system of white, yellow and red cards will be implemented within the school. A white card serves as a verbal warning and can be issued if a pattern of minor misbehaviours occurs. A record of the white card will be kept in the disciplinary folder in the office and parents will also be notified when a white card has been issued. Three white cards will result in a yellow card

Strategies to deal with minor misbehaviours during teaching and learning can include the following:

- ask the child to stop the behaviour
- discuss behaviour and reason with child
- advise child on how to improve the behaviour
- ask the child to move away from his/ her class group to consider the behaviour
- ask the child go to a nearby class to consider his/ her behaviour
- loss of privileges e.g. golden time/ free play/ activities/ representing the school/ attendance on a school trip / tour
- ask the child to write down their account of behaviour
- inform the Principal/ Deputy Principal about on-going behaviour

- communicate with Parents/ Guardians in Journal
- make an appointment with Parents/ Guardians
- make an appointment with the Principal and Parents/ Guardians

When all of the above has been exhausted then the matter will be referred to the Board of Management where;

- BoM will consider Suspension
- BoM will consider Expulsion

Serious Misbehaviours

Single instances of serious misbehaviour will be dealt with by the class teacher in conjunction with the Deputy Principal/ Principal. Any single incident may be brought to the Parent/ Guardian's attention at the discretion of the Deputy Principal/ Principal.

In cases of **repeated serious misbehaviours** Parents/ Guardians will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the class teacher and Deputy Principal/ Principal to discuss their child's behaviour. Any incidence of serious misbehaviour will result in a yellow card being issued. Where a yellow card has been issued, the parents of the pupil will be notified and invited into the school to speak with the principal regarding their child's behaviour. This includes the following examples:

- Behaviour that is hurtful including threats, bullying, harassment, discrimination, and victimisation
- Using violent and/ or aggressive behaviour towards others
- Verbal abuse of another child/ teacher/ adult
- Continued verbal abuse of a teacher
- Continued disruption of class
- Bad or inappropriate language
- Damage to school property
- Theft
- Using a mobile phone at school/ taking photographs

Gross Misbehaviours

Parents/ Guardians will be informed immediately by the Principal if there is **one incident of gross misbehaviour**.

Examples of Gross Misbehaviours include:

- Physical abuse of a teacher/ adult/ other child
- Seriously aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher/ adult/ other child
- Bringing dangerous implements to school
- Leaving Ballaghkeene N.S. without permission
- Serious damage to property e.g. structural damage to school building, broken window
- Bullying over a prolonged period of time after earlier interventions

- Carrying drugs/ alcohol/ cigarettes/ dangerous substances
- Mithing

A red card can also be issued immediately for a serious breach of discipline. Where a red card is issued, parents will be notified, the card itself will also indicate the type of misbehaviour involved. The issue of all cards will be recorded in the disciplinary record book located in the office. Three yellow cards also means a red card will be issued). A red card card means automatic suspension.

SANCTIONS FOR UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

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

- learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- see that their behaviour affects others
- understand that they have choices about their behaviour
- understand that their choices have consequences
- learn to take responsibility for their choices / behaviours
- discuss and devise strategies to prevent the behaviour occurring again

Sanctions should:

- reinforce the Code of Behaviour
- signal to other children that their wellbeing is being protected
- prevent serious disruption of Teaching and Learning
- be clear so that the child understands why the sanction is being applied
- make it clear that changes in behaviour are needed to avoid further sanctions
- make a clear distinction between minor and major offences
- relate to an individual and not a group
- focus on the child's behaviour not on the child himself/herself

SUSPENSION

Where there are repeated instances of misbehaviour or the issue of a red card, the Chairperson of the Board of Management may be informed and the parents shall be invited to meet with the Principal and the Chairperson and the class teacher or any combination of the above as appropriate. If the parents and, where appropriate, the pupil, do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a temporary period. Suspension will be in accordance with the NEWB Guidelines for Schools. In the case of serious misbehaviour the Board has authorised the Chairperson and/ or the Principal to sanction immediate suspension pending discussing the matter with the parents.

EXPULSION

Expulsion of a student is a serious step and one that will only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The grounds and procedure for expulsion are outlined in the NEWB Guidelines for Schools and will be adhered to by The Board of Management

CO-OPERATION

Good discipline in our school depends upon the co-operation between parents and teachers and every effort is made by the Principal and staff to ensure that parents are kept well informed.

A consistent attitude between parents and teachers is essential to the well-being of the pupils.

Where a pupil complains that he/ she has been unfairly chastised it is assumed that a teacher or parent had good reason for what they did and support of that person when the aggrieved child complains is encouraged. However it is always possible for the teacher or parent to discreetly check that there has been no misunderstanding. This support of each other by the teacher and parent gives a child security, which is essential to his/ her well-being.

SPECIAL CLASS

The school Code of Behaviour applies to all children in the school, including the children in the Special Classes for ASD. It is accepted that children with ASD may display challenging, defiant or oppositional behaviour. All efforts will be made by the school to manage such behaviours according to specific strategies outlined in a child's behaviour plan.

Daily Management of Behaviours

Staff should respond to behaviour misdemeanours calmly, according to the school's positive behaviour management approach. Children should be treated with dignity and respect at all times. Children's behaviours should be redirected subtly and calmly by staff when in public. Incidences of behaviour misdemeanours should be consistently recorded by the ASD-class staff in an agreed format, e.g. ABC charts, behaviour tracking charts, 5 point scale.

Behaviours should be analysed in order to identify the potential triggers or the functions of the behaviour. Serious behaviour misdemeanours should be recorded on Aladdin. If a child displays repeated and consistent negative behaviours, the information from these behaviour charts should be used to develop a behaviour plan, in collaboration and agreement with the parents of the child and supporting services, where possible. A behaviour plan should outline a clear behaviour goal, or 'desired replacement behaviour'. Staff should select appropriate intervention strategies based on the function of the child's behaviour.

All staff working with this child should employ these strategies consistently. Please see a sample behaviour plan on Google Drive / school intranet, and in Appendix C.

Management of extreme serious behaviour misdemeanors

ASD-class staff should adapt the Emergency Safety Plan (Appendix G) which outlines procedures to be followed in the incidence of an extreme challenging behaviour. The Board of Management advises that the procedures to be followed include: Serious incidences of behaviour misdemeanors should be communicated immediately to the principal by phoning the school office. Serious incidences of behaviour may include a child's attempts to injure him or herself or attempts to injure another person. Where the behaviour of one child escalates to the extent that the safety of children or staff are at risk, all other children should be evacuated from the room. Staff are not trained in manual handling and the Board of Management does not advise the use of this approach. MAPA training is to be sought and MAPA holding skills and guidelines will be followed in the event of extreme behaviours. Staff should not attempt to move a child who is experiencing a serious behaviour tantrum or meltdown. Staff should remove any items which the child may use to hurt him or herself and supervise the child from a safe distance. If a child or staff member is seriously injured, staff should notify the office immediately and an ambulance or GP will be called, the principal informed and parents/guardians contacted. Staff may administer First Aid if needed. If there are less than 2 SNAs present, make an emergency call immediately to another member of staff. Where a child's behaviour impacts in a negative way on the education or safety of other children in the class, or on the safety of staff, sanctions may be applied as outlined in the school Code of Behaviour.

Confidentiality

It is important that all pupils and staff are treated with dignity and respect at all times. Issues relating to the behaviours or care needs of the children should not be discussed by staff (teachers, SNAs, bus escorts) outside of the classroom.

Ratification of Policy

This Code of Discipline and Behaviour was ratified on 16 / 12 / 24

Signed: Geraldine Waters
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Darren Nolan
(Principal)

Date of next review: December 2025