



Greystones Community National School  
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## **Code of Behaviour**

### **Introduction**

Our School aims to provide a happy, secure and friendly learning environment, where children, parents, teachers, special needs assistants, ancillary staff and board of management work in partnership. Each individual 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 him/her to avail himself/herself of further education so that he/she may go on to live a full and useful life as an adult in society.

The staff is committed to the realisation of these objectives. Our aim is to create an environment for our pupils in which there is a sense of good order and a reasonable approach to discipline. In this way, a large group can be organised so that the school can operate smoothly for the benefit of all.

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school.

In Greystones CNS, we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians. We will ask our parents/guardians to sign a code of behaviour as a commitment to helping their child to adhere to the school rules and the overall development of a harmonious school environment. We hope to adopt a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can 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 has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her 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 by the principal in conjunction with the Board of Management and the school staff. A copy will also be disseminated to parents for their perusal. It will be reviewed regularly. There may be occasions where it is deemed necessary to review the code of behaviour as situations arise. This is due to the developmental nature of the school.

## **Aims of the code**

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships.
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour.
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the school website, availability of policies and an ethos of open communication.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

## **Responsibility of Adults in the school**

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 for example, honesty and courtesy.
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment.
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others.
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.
- To discourage physical aggression and encourage '*Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet*'.

## **School Rules**

1. We show respect for self and others.
2. We show respect for our own property and the property of others.
3. We show respect for other students and their learning.
4. We are kind and willing to help others.
5. We follow instructions from staff immediately.
6. We walk quietly in the school building.
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 understand that calling another child any name that is hurtful to them is against the school rules.
11. We understand that purposefully exclusion of another child from a game or group is hurtful and therefore against the school rules.
12. We understand that touching another child or adult in a way that is hurtful or that makes them uncomfortable is against the school rules.
13. We understand that wearing make-up, jewellery and nail varnish is against the school rules.
14. We wear our correct school uniform with pride.
15. We do our best in class
16. We take responsibility for our own work
17. We follow our Healthy Eating Policy.

These can be summed up **as 6 Golden Rules:**

1. We listen. We don't interrupt and put our hand up to speak.
2. We are gentle. We don't hurt others.
3. We are honest. We tell the truth.
4. We are kind. We do not call others hurtful names.
5. We work hard. We don't waste time.
6. We look after property. We don't damage things.

These 6 "Golden Rules" will be the main rules used in the school. 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 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/guardians will be contacted at an early stage.

### **Incentives/Reward System**

Part of the vision of Greystones CNS is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. Our reward systems seek 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 the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work. Reward systems vary from class to class and may change throughout the year.

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
- A visit to another member of staff (Superwalk) or to the principal for commendation (See Supervision Policy)
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Sticker Chart with prize when completed and sent home.
- Pupil of the Week at assembly
- Class Dojo comments/photos communicated to parent
- Class Dojo points on Interactive Whiteboard
- Special duties given to children, i.e. Leader, messenger, line leader, class jobs
- Fostering a sense of pride in our school through regular assemblies
- Golden Time

### **Unacceptable Behaviour**

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: minor, serious and gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher, or the supervising teacher at break-times. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour parents/guardians may be involved and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of minor misbehaviour include:

- Consistently not wearing appropriate uniform
- Use of chewing-gum in school
- Not following instructions.
- Inappropriate responses to teacher correction e.g. ignoring, back answering etc.

Examples of serious misbehaviour include:

- Behaviour that is hurtful
  - Behaviour that interferes 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 teacher correction.
  - Throwing items around the classroom in an aggressive way.
  - Identity-based name calling that is used in a pejorative way.
  - Sending a text message or private message which is hurtful to another child.
- The use of electronic equipment or mobile-phones in school

Examples of gross misbehaviour include:

- Actual violence or physical assault on self, a teacher or another pupil
- Serious theft
- Serious damage to property
- Bullying
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes
- Posting or endorsing a derogatory comment online about any member of the school community
- Sending group text messages or group private messages which are hurtful to another child
- Sexualised language directed at a person

## **Sanctions**

The purpose of sanctions 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.

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 for the varying levels of inappropriate behaviours. The list is by no means exhaustive and teachers use a range of behaviour management techniques as situations arise in different contexts.

## **In class (typically for instances of repeated Minor Misbehaviour)**

**We use Class Dojo and Student of the Week awards to reinforce good behaviour in class. There is also a great work and a shooting star section at the top of the behaviour chart where children who have been working extra hard can have their name placed. However, when the Golden Rules (pg 3) are broken we use a colour coding/traffic light system – green, amber, red. There are 5 stages in this process which are only in colour format for the children. All children start the day on Green.**

**All children’s names are on Green at the start of the day (See page 11 for picture)**

**Green – Ready to Learn(Stage 1)** –A Verbal Warning – the child is given a verbal warning about specific inappropriate behavior. They will also be advised on how to improve behaviour.

**Amber – I can do better (Stage 2)** –A Second Warning– the child is told they have been engaging in a specific inappropriate behaviour and the child’s name is moved to “I can do better”

**Amber – Make Better Choices (Stage 3)** –Thinking Time in Class – the child will take a thinking time for a specific inappropriate behavior and will go to an assigned area in the classroom. Their name is moved to Make Better Choices. This will be usually for a short period – typically one minute per year old (EG) 5 years old, 5 mins.

**Red – (Stage 4)** –Thinking Time in partner teacher’s classroom. For the fourth instance of inappropriate behavior for a specific inappropriate behavior the child’s name will be moved to red and they will go to a partner classroom to think about their inappropriate behaviour. At collection, parents/carers will be informed if a child has reached Stage 4.

**(Stage 5)** - After returning to their classroom if they continue to engage in inappropriate behavior they will be sent to the Principal/Deputy Principal who will discuss their behaviour with them. The Principal/Deputy Principal may contact the parents to discuss their child’s behaviour in detail.

## **Procedures and sanctions for gross misbehaviour/repeated serious misbehaviour:**

### ***Staff Procedure (in order)***

1. Behaviour Incident Report is completed, saved on Aladdin and hard copy placed on pupil file in office.
2. Discussion with parents and staff including the principal.
3. Think Sheet completed by child with SLT.
4. Think Sheet added to pupil file.
5. Copy of Behaviour Incident Report can be made available to parents
6. Appropriate sanction is implemented

***Any or all of the following sanctions are used as appropriate:***

1. Removal from class and referral to principal/deputy principal
2. Formal communication with parents / guardians
3. Implementation of Daily or Weekly Behaviour Tracking with set targets
4. Implementation of Continuum of Support (See SEN Policy)
5. Implementation of individual behavioural plan
6. BOM informed
7. Suspension
  - Sent home early (informal suspension) with parent
  - Formal suspension for up to three days
  - Immediate suspension for up to three days
- Restorative Conference on return to school
- Agree to Behaviour Contract and/or behaviour plan on return to school
8. Report to Gardaí (as necessary)
9. Expulsion

## **Playtimes**

**Verbal Warning:** the child may be given a verbal warning and told that if they continue the inappropriate behaviour they will have to have a time out.

**Thinking Time:** the child is asked to stand in a designated area for a brief period of time to reflect on the behaviour that was inappropriate.

If a child is receiving regular Thinking Times, this can be entered in the yard book.

## **Individual Behaviour Plans**

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 poor 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 where the situation will be discussed in detail. Guidelines will be drawn up for future behaviour in the school and playground. Very occasionally, this may include a request from the teacher/principal that the parent/guardian of the child supervise their child in school or during a school outing.
- 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 will automatically be referred to the board of management and will be regarded as a serious breach of co-operation in our school behaviour policy.

## **School Tours**

Children whose behaviour may pose a risk to the health and safety of themselves or others may need the support of their parents/guardians on a trip if requested by the class teacher/principal. If the school feels it needs this support it will request parents to attend in a supportive capacity. In practice this usually involves being nearby should they be needed.

Should parent(s) refuse to make themselves available their child may not be able to attend and will be supervised in another class for the day. The Board of Management's decision is final.

## **Suspension and Expulsion**

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

### **Suspension**

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a staff member or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour. Parents/Guardians concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the chairperson of the board of management will be informed and the parents/guardians will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the chairperson and the principal. If the parents/guardians do not give an undertaking to support the school in trying to bring about modification in the child's behaviour, the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the board has authorised the principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days.



## **Expulsion**

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, where all attempted strategies have failed, 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/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

## **Children with Special Needs**

Classroom Codes reflect the school's code of behaviour and are communicated clearly and regularly to pupils with special educational needs. Group-specific rules are negotiated and reviewed to reflect current pupil interests and needs.

While all pupils in the school are subject to the school's code of behaviour, some pupils come to school with special educational needs. Staff at GCNS have an appreciation and awareness of these complex and individual needs. These needs are taken into account during the implementation of the school's Code of Behaviour.

Pupils with special educational needs feel welcome and discipline is based on mutual respect. Rules exist to support the creation of a safe, secure and positive learning environment for all members of the school community. Positive behaviour is regularly and publicly celebrated in the school.

School rules are few and are presented in accessible forms for pupils with special educational needs. Reasonable accommodations are made to take account of the individual needs of those pupils who may require an individualised response.

Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to self-regulate, to take ownership of their behaviour and learning and to demonstrate understanding of where a rule has been broken.

Pupils with special educational needs understand the consequences of breaking rules and the importance of the rule is communicated to pupils. Disciplinary procedures are based on proportionate responses to (mis)behaviour.

Where a pupil with special needs is in breach of the school's Code of Behaviour the teachers will use their professional judgment in relation to regularity and level of sanctions. While teachers must be seen to be fair in the eyes of other pupils who may have exhibited the same type of misdemeanors, they may also show leniency in relation to pupils with specific learning/behavioural difficulties. Parents of these pupils will be kept informed of their child's behaviour on a regular basis and may be requested to work with the school in devising effective strategies to help the pupil to improve his/her behaviour.

The devising of such strategies may also entail contacting and meeting with relevant out of school agencies (National Council for Special Education (NCSE) (2011). Inclusive Education Framework: A Guide for schools on the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs, Dublin: NCSE)

We are also cognisant of our obligations under the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004 with regard to making reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities (NEWB, Guidelines on developing a Code of Behaviour).

We are also cognisant of DES Circular 40/97 and that children with special educational needs are not exempt as there is a duty of care to all children and staff but all circumstances will be taken into account.

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

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

### **Communicating with Parents**

Communicating with parents/guardians is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents/Guardians and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented 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/guardians have been established and are being reviewed regularly. (See Communicaton Policy)

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life (in the past or present), which may affect the child's behaviour.

Community National Schools place a huge emphasis on parental involvement. Teachers are encouraged to develop a very positive/open relationship with parents/guardians and to enable them to help their child as much as possible. Greystones CNS adheres to this philosophy and we hope that this will have a positive effect on pupil behaviour in our school.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management.

Chairperson's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Expectations of Parents/Guardians**

Parents/Guardians are expected to:

- Co-operate with and support the teacher/school as much as possible to ensure their child behaves in accordance with school expectations
- Never approach or reprimand another person's child on the school premises
- Ensure their children attend school and are punctual
  - Equip pupils with appropriate school materials, a sufficient healthy lunch and full uniform
- 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 pupils coats and other personal property
- Strictly supervise their children, when on school grounds.
- Supervise vigilantly their children's use of technology at home in order to ensure that they are not engaging in or victim of online inappropriate behavior.
- Posting of derogatory comments or endorsing such comments on social networking websites are seen as inappropriate behaviour.
- Approach staff members directly in relation to any issue that may arise.
- Speak respectfully to all staff members at all times.
- Drive carefully in and around the school environment. Please drive below 10 km per hour.
- Park responsibly in a designated car park spaces only.