



Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy

Updated
December 2013

Ennis National School

Code of Behaviour

ENNIS NATIONAL SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of Ennis National School has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for its pupils, staff and parents.

The Code of Behaviour details:

1. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school;
2. The whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour;
3. The measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards;
4. The procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
5. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil
6. The school's Anti-Bullying Policy; and
7. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

The Code of Behaviour of Ennis National School has been developed in accordance with '*Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*', National Educational Welfare Board, 2008.

The staff of Ennis National School has received professional development in the Incredible Years programme. The approach to behavior is underpinned by a school atmosphere which practices the key elements of Incredible Years

- Building Positive Relationships
- Proactive Teaching
- Giving Attention, Encouragement and Praise
- Motivating through Incentives
- Decreasing Inappropriate Behaviours
- Sparing use of negative consequences

POLICY FORMULATION

In formulating this policy the Board of Management completed the following steps;

- i. Parents and Staff were informed that an initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was available and they were invited to make submissions on the content of the code within a specified timeframe.
- ii. Class teachers were requested to discuss the topic of 'rules' with their classes and submit a list of pupils suggestions to the Principal.
- iii. A staff sub-committee drafted an initial Code of Behaviour which was reviewed and where appropriate amended in-line with feedback received.
- iv. The finalised draft of the policy was submitted for Board of Management Approval.
- v. The Code of Behaviour is reviewed annually by staff.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THE CODE

The aims and objectives of the code are:

- To allow the school to function in an orderly 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 the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community
- To assist school staff, parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

MISSION STATEMENT

The staff of this school want to create a climate of physical, emotional, social, and intellectual safety for students, teachers and parents so that teaching and learning can occur within relationships of mutual valuing and respect.

With this in mind, the teachers of the school see education not just as providing students with knowledge and skills but also as providing for the emotional, social, sexual, physical and spiritual development of students.

In this school we want students to be self-motivated and to be at peace with themselves, others and the world. Achievement of these aspirations by the school requires the help and co-operation of students, teachers and parents.

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

Pupils

General Behaviour

- Arrive on time for school
- Wear the school uniform and have everything you need for school
- Be well behaved and be kind and mannerly to everybody
- Look after school property and the property of other children
- Do your best both in school and for homework.
- Make sure that Mobile Phones (and all other electronic devices, eg. Consoles, Ipods) remain out of sight, be turned off on entering the school grounds and remain off until leaving.

- Eat and drink at the proper times only. Chewing gum is not allowed.
- Walk on corridors (left-hand side). Move quietly through all areas of the school.
- Walk in 'single file and smile'.
- Stand back for all adults.
- Entry to the Halla is with the teacher's permission only.

Classroom Behaviour

- Listen – to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking
- Put up your hand if you want permission to speak (Quiet Hand)
- Work – to the best of your ability
- Follow – the directions of your teacher
- Obtain – permission to leave your seat or the classroom
- Respect – the teacher, other pupils and visitors to the classroom.

Playground Behaviour

- Ball play is not allowed on the playground unless under teacher's supervision
- Stay on your designated yard and do not leave the yard without permission
- If you need to go to the bathroom, ask for a toilet pass
- Play safely on the yard keeping your hands, feet and objects to yourself
- No rough play or 'chaintag' chasing games (bulldog etc)
- When the bell rings, stop, walk to your line and wait quietly for your class teacher

Rules for Corridors / Common Areas

- Each class must use the designated door to enter and leave the school. Children must not use the main entrance door.
- Walk on corridors and move quietly through all areas of the school.
- Walk in single file (Single File and Smile)
- Stand back for all adults.
- Entry to the Hall is with the teacher's permission only.

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

Acceptable Use Policy

Personal Devices

Pupils using their own technology in school, such as leaving a mobile phone turned on or using it in class, sending nuisance text messages, or the unauthorized taking of images with a mobile phone camera, still or moving is in direct breach of the school’s acceptable use policy. Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action, including warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Staff

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 each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school.

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

- Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in an age appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year.
- Ensure the rules are displayed in the classroom (10 + 1 Rules).
- 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.
- Always aim for the least disruptive intervention
- Use of natural/logical consequences
- Keep a written record of all incidents of continued, serious or gross misconduct. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and, the consequences of its repetition.
- Inform pupils when instances of misbehaviour on their part are being recorded.
- Report repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the Principal.

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive Behaviour in school. Parents/guardians can assist the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, encouraging punctuality and regular attendance and by ensuring that homework is given due time and effort.

Should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child’s behaviour they are welcome to make an appointment to discuss their concerns.

In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour parents will be invited to participate in the intervention process. Each teacher has a copy of “parent contact sheet” which should be filled in by teacher and pupil and sent home for parents to sign.

PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

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.

A reward scheme for promoting positive Behaviour will be used. Such rewards will include;

- ‘Congratulations’ and ‘Good News’ postcards sent to parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Personalised letters to parent(s)/guardian(s) or notes in Homework Diary
- Special privileges
- Principal’s Awards
- Special Mention at assemblies

In infant classes, a designated teacher visits classes on a weekly to discuss class behavior. Positive behaviors and good news are recorded in the Behavior Book.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

Possible strategies to tackle minor behaviour issues:

Leaning on chair

- Ignore
- Proximity praise
- Non verbal + eye contact warning/verbal warning.
- Remove chair for 1-5 mins.
- Parent contact sheet – must be shown to Principal/Vice principal once completed.

Incorrect uniform

- If possible provide each class teacher with a tie to lend pupils’ who do not have one throughout the day.
- Assembly (with uniform checks) to occur more frequently.
- Skirts to be knee length (perhaps notify parents of this through a circular).
- An award for best turned out class (perhaps in conjunction with visits for Principal’s Award).

Walking in corridor

- Children should move through the corridors silently.
- Insist on silence before leaving classroom.
- If noisy in transit, turn around and bring them back to class.
- Other teachers comment when passing classes in transit.

Speaking out of turn

- Emphasise the quiet hand.
- Ignore
- Proximity praise
- Non verbal + eye contact warning/verbal warning.
- Parent contact sheet – must be shown to Principal/Vice principal once completed.

Toilet Breaks

- Keep a note of excessive trips to the bathroom.
- Perhaps, talk to children individually not in front of class.
- Use of bathroom tags so it is instantly visible when bathrooms are in use.
- Encourage children to use bathroom at break times.

Healthy eating

- Remind parents and children of healthy eating policy,
- Perhaps parent's council could take on some responsibility in promoting our healthy eating policy.

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 disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed.

| LEVEL 1 BEHAVIOURS | |
|---|---|
| Level 1 behaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and playground areas. | |
| Typical Behaviours (not exhaustive) | Sanctions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers • Running in the hallways • Disturbing the work or play of others • Disrespectful language, tone, or manner • Ignoring staff requests • Making fun of others • Failing to complete homework | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Non-verbal sign 2. Reminder of rules and verbal warning (IF THEN: IF the rule is not followed THEN a sanction will be applied) 3. The child will miss out on the next 'sought-after' activity e.g. 'Golden Time', Computer Time, PE, Art 4. The behaviour is recorded by teacher and the child will miss out on the next 'sought-after' activity e.g. 'Golden Time', Computer Time, PE, Art 5. Temporary separation from class or friends e.g. "Time Out" in designated space on playground or 'Time Out' in another classroom at same class level |

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|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failing to wear school uniform • Use of profanity | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. In-school supervised Detention (one break period) 7. Formal note to parent from the class teacher (through Homework Diary). A text should be sent to advise parents to check the note. |
| Supportive Interventions | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom-based interventions, such as Circle Time or class meetings, with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members) • Discussion of behaviour with the child • Informal notes regarding incident/intervention/date. This information would be useful should a problem persist. • Implementation of Individual Behaviour Plan | |

LEVEL 2 BEHAVIOURS

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 Principal / Deputy Principal.

| Typical Behaviours (not exhaustive) | Sanctions |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour • Behaviour which is dangerous to self or others (e.g. pushing, hitting, fighting) • Intentionally damaging school or personal property • Stealing • Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Principal/Deputy Principal meets with pupil, class teacher and parent. Child is put on 'Daily Behaviour Report' which is to be signed daily by principal and parent. 2. In-school supervised detention 3. Loss of Privileges, eg School Outings, Participation in School Teams 4. In-school suspension of 1-3 days following a further meeting between parents, pupil, class |

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disrespectful language or behaviour toward an adult • Possession or use of dangerous toys or sporting equipment (e.g. darts, bow and arrows, any kind of knives, etc.) • Aggressive behaviour • Interference with / Violation of the Person (clothing, inappropriate touch, etc) • Throwing objects deliberately at other pupils | <p>teacher and principal.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Suspension from school of one to five days, depending on the severity of the Behaviour . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduced school day will be considered where this might prove beneficial in assisting a pupil |
| Supportive Interventions | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Deputy Principal or Principal. • Implementation of extensive Behaviour Management Plan/Behaviour Contract • 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. • Referral of a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent). | |

LEVEL 3 BEHAVIOURS

Level 3 behaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal wellbeing of the pupils and staff of the school. They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment. Situations, which include illegal activity, may result in contact with the Garda Síochána after parental involvement.

| Typical Behaviours (not exhaustive) | Sanctions |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension from school for one to five days: This response will occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour or |

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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting fires • Intentional possession or use of weapons • 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, handicap, or ethnic origin • Coercing other pupils to fight or to engage in very serious misbehaviour | <p>Level 2 behaviour of significant severity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: Repeated incidents of Level 3 behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled. |
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SUGGESTIONS ON DETENTION/TIME OUT/STAYING IN AT LUNCH TIME

Timeout is a time for the pupil concerned to self-regulate and to be ready to re-join class

Timeout within the classroom

- Pupil to be placed in an area of the classroom where he/she cannot see other pupils
- Ignore the pupil during timeout
- Duration of timeout is approximately one minute per year old e.g ten minutes for ten years old
- If the pupil disturbs others during timeout, increase timeout by two minutes
- A refusal to go to timeout will result in a breaktime detention. Allow pupil time to make choice

Timeout in the playground

- Pupil to walk with staff member on supervision for duration of timeout or go to designated timeout area for the relevant playground
- Designated time out zones:
 - Infants: chair on the raised area.
 - Other yards- just inside doors.
- Duration of 1/3/5 minutes
- If pupil interacts with other during timeout, increase timeout by two minutes
- A refusal to cooperate with timeout will result in a breaktime detention. Allow pupil time to make choice
- Use of bad language/derogatory remarks or physically hurting another child is an instant time out from yard.

Detention: A child earns detention for repeated offences both in class and on yard.

- 4 steps:
 1. Time out in another classroom (ideally at the same level)
 2. Lunch time detention
 3. In class detention (a full day spent in another room).
 4. Suspension
- There should be a designated class room (Room 25) and day (Thursday).
- The rota for supervision of lunchtime detention runs in conjunction with infant duty rota.
- Class teacher has to assign work for pupil in detention.
- A text to be sent home if a child is to receive detention informing parents of the detention and the reasons for same.

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 of Ennis National School has formally delegated the authority to impose an 'Immediate Suspension' to the Principal Teacher. An 'Immediate 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.

Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an 'Automatic Suspension' for named behaviours detailed in this policy. 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.

The Board retains its authority to suspend a student in all other cases/circumstances.

Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension

An 'Immediate Suspension' will be deemed to be necessary where after a preliminary investigation the Principal 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 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.

An 'Automatic Suspension' is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of Ennis National 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 towards a pupil or member of staff
- Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property
- Threatening or abusive behavior (including verbal abuse) towards a member of staff
- Running away from school during school contact time without parental consent

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 with the school Disciplinary Committee to discuss;

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

The Disciplinary Committee will comprise of the Chairperson (or nominated representative), Principal and nominated teacher representative.

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

- i. 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 Disciplinary Committee of Ennis National 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);

- i. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
- ii. 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 Ennis National School acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

- ii. 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.
- iii. 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 the Disciplinary Committee recommend a suspension of longer than five days, the Board of Management will hold a meeting to authorise the decision of the Disciplinary Committee and where necessary to determine the length of suspension.

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 Science under Section 29 of 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 Suspend:

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);

- iii. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
 - iv. 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 BoM 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:

- i. inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- ii. 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
- iii. 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 BOM'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

- i. as to the date, location and time of the hearing
- ii. of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- iii. 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;

- i. the meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
- ii. the principal (or BoM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other's presence
- iii. each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party
- iv. 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

- i. Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.

- ii. 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
- iii. Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
- iv. Will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer
- v. 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 Science 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 Ennis National School acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

- i. 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.
- ii. 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.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Introduction:

The aim of Ennis National School's Anti-Bullying policy is

- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians.
- To promote a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To ensure appropriate supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
- To develop procedures for noting, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To implement a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.

- To work with appropriate agencies in countering all forms of bullying and promoting anti bullying behaviour.

Statement on Bullying:

- Every person in the School is entitled to respect and to be free of any type of bullying.
- The School will work proactively, as far as it can, to ensure that bullying does not take place.
- Reporting incidents of bullying is responsible behaviour.
- A record will be kept of all reported incidents of bullying.
- The matter will be dealt with seriously.
- The School has a programme of support for both the bully and the bullied.
- Appropriate action will be taken to ensure that it does not continue.

Definition:

Bullying consists of **repeated** inappropriate behaviour whether by word, by physical action or otherwise, directly or indirectly applied, by one or more persons against another person or persons which undermines the individual person's right to personal dignity.

Types of behaviour deemed to be inappropriate:

- Humiliation; including name-calling, reference to academic ability etc.
- Intimidation; including aggressive use of body language.
- Verbal abuse, anonymous or otherwise.
- Physical abuse or threatened abuse.
- Aggressive or obscene language.
- Offensive joke; whether spoken or by email, text messaging etc.
- Victimisation; including very personal remarks.
- Exclusion and isolation.
- Intrusion through interfering with personal possessions.
- Repeated unreasonable assignment to duties that are obviously unfavorable.
- Repeated unreasonable deadlines or tasks.
- Threats, including demands for money.
- An attack by rumour, gossip, innuendo or ridicule on any individual's reputation.

Indications of Bullying:

The following signs/symptoms may suggest that a pupil is being bullied:-

- anxiety about travelling to and from school - requesting parents to drive or collect them, changing route of travel, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school;
- unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, 'mitching', 'ditching';
- deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school;
- pattern of physical illnesses (e.g. headaches, stomach aches);
- unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour; it may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays;

- visible signs of anxiety or distress - stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting;
- spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers;
- possessions missing or damaged;
- increased requests for money or stealing money;
- unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing;
- reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

Those signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied. If repeated or occurring in combination these signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil

Strategies for Prevention of Bullying

- The SPHE curriculum, including the Walk Tall and Stay Safe programmes, is used throughout the school to support the anti bullying policy.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences, by acknowledging good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- Pupils are helped to develop empathy by discussing feelings and by trying to put themselves in the place of others.
- Teachers respond sensitively to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with the pupils.
- Staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated.
- Members of the BOM are familiar with the school's policy on bullying and actively promote it on a repeated basis among staff, parents and pupils.
- Parents contribute to and support the school's policy on bullying by encouraging positive behaviour both at home and at school, by being vigilant for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying others, by communicating concerns to the school.

Maintaining awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour

Ennis National School will emphasise and reinforce the view that bullying behaviour is unacceptable by

- Using both the formal and informal curriculum to emphasise that bullying is unacceptable... visual arts activities, posters, drama, role play, SPHE, cooperative games...
- Devising a school anti-bullying charter, slogan or rhyme for display in classrooms and other prominent locations
- Having an "Anti-Bullying Week" early in the school year.

Supervision

Insofar as is reasonably practicable school activities will be supervised and monitored at all times, with particular emphasis on those occasions when situations of bullying are more likely to occur, such as

assembly time, play time and dismissal time.

Disclosure:

Children will be encouraged to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour. They will be helped to differentiate between incidents of a minor nature and those that constitute bullying. They will also be taught the difference between 'telling tales' and asking for help.

Procedures for Dealing with Instances of Bullying:

- I. Incidents of bullying will be recorded and retained in Class Files.
- II. Pupils will be informed that when they report incidents of bullying they are acting responsibly.
- III. A calm unemotional problem solving approach will be used to deal with bullying.
- IV. Incidents of bullying will initially be dealt with by the class teacher. Incidents that are of a serious nature or those that involve pupils from a number of classes will be referred to the Principal.
- V. On being informed of an alleged incident of bullying, the teacher dealing with the report will first interview the victim(s) and discuss the feelings which the victim(s) experienced because of the bullying behaviour.
- VI. An interview will then take place with the alleged perpetrator(s). If the bullying involves a group of pupils, members of that group will first be met individually and then as a whole. Having discussed the negative impact which bullying has on both perpetrator(s) and victim(s) responsibility will be placed on all individuals within the group to resolve the difficulty and to take appropriate steps to ensure that it does not happen again.
- VII. If on the conclusion of the preliminary investigation the teacher is convinced that bullying has occurred the Principal will be informed and parent(s)/guardian(s) of all concerned will be contacted.
- VIII. Depending on the seriousness of the bullying some or all of Level 2 Supportive Interventions will be utilised.
- IX. Repeated incidents of bullying behaviour will result in the imposition of sanctions. Such sanctions will be proportionate to the seriousness of the bullying behaviour.
- X. The School will maintain care for the victim over time. This will be done by speaking to the child a number of weeks after the incident to check on their continuing welfare. The child's parents will also be consulted.