



BALLYCASTLE HIGH SCHOOL

Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy

- *Approval by the Board of Governors: 25 June 2015*
- *The implementation of this policy will be monitored by: Senior Management Team*
- *This policy will be reviewed every two years*





Aims

- To encourage above all an awareness of the importance of self-discipline and a sense of responsibility.
- To accustom pupils to sound habits of good behaviour.
- To enhance pupils' self-esteem and foster a spirit of openness and co-operation, by placing greater emphasis on praise and reward than on punishment and critical control.
- To ensure an appropriate standard of manners and common courtesy within the school as a whole which is set, primarily, by the Principal and Staff.
- To establish a calm, purposeful and happy atmosphere within the school where boundaries of acceptable behaviour are clearly understood.

Good discipline in Ballycastle High School is based on the positive relationships that are created between staff and pupils. Discipline problems are avoided by adopting a series of positive strategies rather than having to resort to a punitive system centred on sanctions. The following strategies are employed to create an ethos which reduces indiscipline to a very low level.

- Consciously fostering a sense of personal worth in all pupils
- Encouraging a sense of mutual respect between staff and pupils and among pupils themselves.
- Creating a well-planned, well taught and interesting curriculum.
- Creating a pleasant well equipped learning environment.
- Promoting a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- Providing a well organised and effective system of pastoral care.
- Maintaining close contact between home and school.

The good discipline which pertains in Ballycastle High School can be explained partly by the employment of these strategies, partly by the positive attributes of predominantly small town and rural children and partly because it is a small school where each individual is valued and well known. Clearly it is easier for a child to gain a sense of worth in these circumstances.

Responsibility for Positive Behaviour Promotion

- The responsibility for the supervision and control of school discipline is delegated by the Board of Governors to the Principal who entrusts the maintenance of good discipline to his staff.



- All members of the school community are expected to exercise self-discipline and take responsibility for the consequences of their actions.
- The Learning for Life and Work classes contribute to building an awareness of the importance of self-discipline.
- Appropriate sanctions will be imposed where behaviour does not reach the required standard.
- Underlying the application of discipline is a care and concern for the good of every individual and also the greater good of all those who make up the school community.
- When in school uniform, pupils are visibly part of the School community. This policy is deemed to apply to all pupils when in Ballycastle High School uniform, even if outside the School's bounds and beyond the limits of a normal school day.
- This policy will apply to pupils on school trips or when engaging in school activities, even if outside the School's bounds, beyond the limits of a normal school day or during school holidays.
- The School may act when it is established that a pupil has been involved in criminal or other activity outside school which involves, and is to the detriment of, other members of the school community, and/or, in the view of the School, brings the name of the School into disrepute. The offence committed may be regarded as a legitimate school concern and those involved may, therefore, be subject to internal school disciplinary measures.

Recognising Achievement

The school values the positive contribution that its pupils make, both in terms of individual achievement and in ways which enhance the life of the school community as a whole. To this end, an achievement system is employed to reward, encourage and validate the positive contributions made by pupils to the School community and the curriculum. Achievement points will be recorded by class teachers on SIMs and, at the end of every half-term the top achievers in each year group will be recognised in an appropriate way.

As well as the achievement points system, the positive contributions made by pupils are recognised in a number of ways:

- end of year certificates and school reports;
- displays of pupil work;
- award of prizes at Prize Day;
- public commendation at assemblies;
- publication of achievement on the School's website, social media and in the local press.



Behavioural Patterns

Pupils must conform to the following standards:

1. The school requires pupils to treat all staff, teaching and non-teaching with courtesy and respect.
2. Pupils must treat each other with mutual respect whether as individuals or as groups.
3. Pupils must carry out reasonable instructions from members of staff.
4. Pupils must behave in an orderly manner not only in school but also when going to or coming from the premises.
5. Litter must be deposited in the bins provided.
6. Pupils are only permitted to leave school with a permanent or temporary pass issued by the school office on an authenticated parental request.
7. Pupils arriving by bus must go directly into school on disembarking in the morning and board the buses in the school grounds after school.

The following forms of behaviour are unacceptable.

1. Bullying in any form direct or indirectly.
2. Physical assault on fellow pupils or members of staff.
3. Playing truant from school, cheating in examinations, stealing, swearing, willful damage to property or misconduct in class.
4. Smoking, drinking alcohol or use of drugs of any nature. (Where a pupil requires medication the Principal must be informed in writing).

In serious cases of assault, use of controlled drugs or alcohol, or willful damage to public property the school reserves the right, after informing parents, to refer such matters to the police.

All Staff are required to deal with behavioural problems in accordance with the following procedures. This ensures pupils will know exactly how they stand in relation to breaches of discipline and uniformity of practices is maintained. Pupils will not thus be able to use the practice of playing the actions of one member of staff against that of another.

Individual teachers must also ensure that in order that pupils know where they stand uniformity of implementation is maintained at all times. Periods of laxity alternating with zealous implementation create confusion for pupils.



The Hierarchy of Positive Behaviour Promotion and Disciplinary Measures

To enhance the promotion of positive behaviour and ensure a consistency of management and response throughout the teaching staff, a structure of 4 levels has been designed to categorize the variety of misconduct which may occur. In parallel, a clear chain of responsibility within the staff has been devised.

It is also pertinent to note that SEN pupils may have their own Individual Behaviour Plans. These will have been agreed by the SENCO and will follow what is outlined in this document. (Teachers should also be aware of anything particular to behaviour in a pupil's IEP).

The Levels of Misconduct clearly categorise offences, with Subject teachers/form teachers dealing with Level 1, Heads of Department Level 2, Heads of Year/Senior Teachers/Vice-Principal Level 3 and the Principal dealing with Level 4.

All information on pupils will be recorded electronically, using the Behaviour Management Module of the School Information and Management System (SIMs), providing the school with an effective and confidential method of tracking each pupil's progress.

STAFF

- For Stage 1 misconduct, staff may reprimand the pupil verbally, impose appropriate extra written work or hold a subject detention at break or lunch time. All sanctions should be recorded in SIMs using the 'comment' feature in the class marksheet.
- Where an offence is repeated or sustained over a period of time (Stage 1 or 2 misconduct), the pupil will be referred to the Head of Year. The Head of Year may issue a formal lunchtime detention.
- For a serious offence (Stage 4 misconduct) or for persistent disruptive behaviour, which affects the learning of other pupils or which has a negative impact upon the life of the School, the pupil will be referred to the Head of Pastoral Care or Vice-Principal, and if appropriate, the Principal.
- When dealing with misconduct it is important that staff act within the guidelines and use their professional judgement.
- If a teacher considers a situation to be of such a serious nature that it requires action or investigation by a Head of Year, Vice-Principal or Principal, it is essential that the Head of Year receives a full written report, sent electronically. The Head of Year will ensure that this information is attached to the pupil record on SIMs.
- All incident reports to Heads of Year, Vice-Principal and Principal should be regarded as confidential matters and the school guidelines on data



protection should be adhered to. No pupil should be asked to carry report documents nor should these be left lying around. Records should be kept secure. These reports may be required for referral to the Board or outside agencies.

- Class teachers or form teachers who believe that a pupil may have a problem of a personal nature - this may originate within the school, community or at home - should inform the Head of Year as soon as possible via written report.
- Teachers, where possible, should avoid sending pupils to the Head of Year during class time. There will be times, of course, when a problem is so serious that it has to be dealt with quickly. Heads of Year, the Vice-Principal and the Principal are readily available. A written report will still be required in such situations.
- Communication between Class Teachers and Heads of Year is very important and the Year Head will keep Class Teachers well informed of the course of action pursued after a referral.

HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

The Head of Department should support teaching colleagues to deal with persistent offences within the department. They should ensure that a range of common strategies have been employed to encourage pupils to display positive behaviours. A written record of strategies employed should be provided on referral to the Head of Year.

In cases of serious incidents, with regard to health and safety, the Head of Department has the right to withdraw pupils from practical activities. This should be discussed with the Head of Year and parents' informed.

HEADS OF YEAR

Heads of Year should, (in keeping with their posts of responsibility), thoroughly investigate all problems referred to them and if required they should take appropriate action. This action may be in the form of Counselling, Sanctions or Referral. Referral should be employed only if the measures open to the Head of Year have been exhausted or if the problem is sufficiently serious or persistent to be beyond their remit as Year Heads.

- For persistent or serious offences within the classroom (Stage 2/3 misconducts), including those necessitating a pupil's removal from the classroom, the pupil will be referred in the first instance to the Head of Year.
- The Head of Year, after discussion with the class teacher and/or Head of Department, will decide on the next course of action. This may include issuing a departmental detention.



- For serious offences inside the classroom, or from a member of staff for serious offences outside the classroom the Head of Year (who has responsibility for dealing with Stage 3 misconduct) can employ a range of strategies such as speaking to the parents, using a Report Card or Daily Monitoring Sheet, setting additional work or placing the pupil in main lunchtime detention. Detention, if used, must not preclude a pupil's midday meal.
- Heads of Year may also report persistent offenders or those who commit, in the view of the Head of Year, sufficiently serious offences, to the Head of Pastoral Care, the Vice-Principal or Principal.
- If Heads of Year refer a problem to the Vice-Principal or Principal the report of the initiating teacher, the report of the investigation undertaken by the Head of Year detailing any action taken should accompany the referral.

PRINCIPAL AND VICE-PRINCIPAL

- For a serious or persistent offence of any nature (leading to Stage 4 misconduct), the pupil will be referred to the Principal or a Vice-Principal.
- The Principal or Vice-Principal may draw on a range of sanctions, applying the one that is most appropriate and proportionate in the light of the circumstances.
- Pupils may be isolated from their peers through the course of one or more days, not exceeding a total of five, so that appropriate levels of support may be put in place. During that time, pupils will be under the direct supervision of the appropriate member of staff and have no contact with other members of their year group.
- The Principal may suspend a pupil.
- When the Vice-Principal or Principal undertake a matter referred to them by a Head of Year a report on the actions taken will be made to the Year Head, and maintained on SIMs.

NOTIFICATION

1. It is the responsibility of the Subject teacher to inform parents in writing via the relevant section of the school diary when sanctions have been employed.
2. If after investigation a Head of Year feels that a problem is of sufficient seriousness to contact a parent by letter, a copy of the letter should be referred to the Principal before dispatch. The letter should state clearly the nature of the problem and the reason why parental assistance is being requested.
3. If an interview with a parent is required the Head of Year may invite a parent to discuss the problem having arranged a mutually agreeable time. The Principal must be informed in advance of such an appointment. A full report



must be kept of such an interview, recording the reason why it was called and the outcome.

4. In the event of a matter being of a more serious nature, and the support of the Principal if required, a formal interview will be called by the Principal who will also keep a record.

SUPPORT AGENCIES

If a problem is related to attendance the Head of Year should consult WITH THE Head of Pastoral Care, who will in turn liaise directly with the Education Welfare Officer.

After all internal procedures are exhausted and where behavioural or educational problems are of such a serious nature as to either inhibit the progress of the education of a pupil or other pupils, the matter will be referred to the Education Authority's Psychology Service in writing and after consultation with parents or guardians. Full written reports will accompany the referral.

Suspension and Expulsion

Suspension

- A decision to suspend a pupil will, save in exceptional circumstances, only be taken if any of the following circumstances apply:
 - If a Stage 4 misconduct has taken place;
 - In response to a serious breach or serious or persistent breaches of the school's Positive Behaviour Policy;
 - When to allow the pupil to remain at school would pose a serious threat to the health and safety of the pupil, other pupils or staff in the school;
 - Where alternative strategies to modify a pupil's behaviour and encourage more positive attitudes have been tried and have failed;
 - On a precautionary basis, in the case of suspected serious breach or breaches of the school's Positive Behaviour Policy where the school needs time to carry out a full investigation or where necessary to protect the integrity of such an investigation and where expulsion is a potential disciplinary outcome.
- A decision to impose suspension shall be taken by the Principal or Vice-Principal and shall be for a defined period not, initially, exceeding five days
- Wherever reasonably practicable and unless a serious threat to the health and safety of pupils or staff is judged to exist or precautionary suspension is required, suspension shall not be imposed until:



- After the relevant facts and evidence to support the allegations have been examined;
- The pupil concerned has had an opportunity to put his side of the case on the record or in writing and others involved have had an opportunity to give their version of events to the Principal;
- In cases of incidents involving a number of pupils any suspensions imposed on such pupils shall reflect, so far as is reasonably practicable, their individual responsibilities or participation in the events giving rise to the consideration of a decision to suspend.
- In the case of suspension the Principal/Vice-Principal will:
 - Inform the pupil's parents verbally of the suspension and the reasons for it as soon as possible;
 - Afford the pupil's parents the opportunity to come to discuss the matter with himself;
 - Confirm the suspension and the reasons for it to the pupil's parents in writing;
 - Inform the Chairman of the Board of Governors (or in his absence a Vice Chairman or other senior member of the Board) at the earliest opportunity, if possible at first verbally and then in writing, by letter or email;
 - Inform the Education Welfare Office of the Education Authority in writing.
- The length of the period of suspension may be extended beyond five working days by the Principal only if he obtains permission to do so from the Chairman of Board, and up to a limit of forty five working days in any one school year; in every case written notice of the reasons for and the duration of the extension shall be given to the pupil's parents and the Education and Welfare Office of the Education Authority.
- In cases of unacceptable behaviour or conduct, suspension will normally serve as a final warning about a pupil's behaviour.
- Following any further serious offence, the Principal may recommend consideration of the step of expulsion to the Board of Governors.
- Precautionary suspension shall not be viewed as a penalty or as a disciplinary outcome.

Expulsion

- Following a pattern of persistent serious misbehaviour or where occasioned by a grave offence, the Principal may decide that he needs to recommend to the Board of Governors consideration of the step of expulsion of the pupil from the school.
- In such a case a pupil will always have served a period of suspension before expulsion is implemented.
- The procedure for expulsion is as follows:



- The Principal/Vice-Principal will suspend the pupil using the procedures set out above;
- The Principal will, if he feels it necessary to do so, consult with an advisory sub-committee of the Board, before deciding to recommend to the full Board of Governors at the earliest opportunity consideration of expulsion;
- The Board will at such meeting either reject the Principal's recommendation, in which case the matter will proceed no further, or agree that expulsion should be considered in which case the matter shall proceed to the next step.
- The pupil's parents will be informed that the Board is considering expulsion and will be invited to a consultation meeting with the Chairman of the Board (or his nominee), the Principal and a senior officer of the Education Authority. At this meeting the parents will have the opportunity to put their case for consideration. Consultation will include discussion about the future provision of suitable education for the pupil concerned. If the parents fail to attend this consultation meeting either through neglect or refusal this shall not prevent a pupil from being expelled;
- The Chairman (or his nominee) and the Principal will report to the Board of Governors, which will make its final decision at a Board meeting. The Principal shall outline the facts of the investigation to the Board meeting. If the parents wish to make a further written or verbal submission to this meeting of the Board, they may do so. The pupil concerned will have the right to attend this meeting with his parents.
- If the Board of Governors recommends expulsion, the Principal will immediately inform the pupil's parents in writing of the decision. In this letter the Principal will give details of the right of appeal to the Expulsion Appeals Tribunal and how, where and when to do so.

Representation

- Parents/guardians may not be accompanied by a legal representative at either the consultation meeting or the final Board meeting at which the decision about expulsion will be taken.

Investigation

- In the event of an alleged offence being denied by the pupil concerned the school's investigation of such alleged offence will be commensurate with the level of offence and potential penalty.
- If the offence is serious, in addition to the matters outlined above under the heading "Suspension and Expulsion", no action will be taken by the school without allowing the pupil concerned to state his position. If



necessary, the school will interview other pupils and members of the school community, take written statements and review other evidence.

- In all instances the standard of proof shall be the balance of probabilities.
- Where a serious matter is being investigated, the pupil concerned has the right, where practicable, to be accompanied by parents/guardians at the time of interview.
- Where it is not practicable for the pupil to be accompanied by parents or guardians he/she may be accompanied by a member of staff.
- During the investigation procedures, the pupil concerned has the right to be informed of any allegations made against him.
- The identity of any pupil witnesses may be withheld at the discretion of the Principal.
- If an alleged offence is also the subject of an external investigation of the police or other competent authority, the school's investigation will be subject to any requirements of such external investigation. The school may continue, implement or suspend its own investigation and disciplinary procedure as it considers appropriate during the course of the external investigation.

Appeals Procedure

- A pupil has the right to appeal against a disciplinary procedure. This may be done personally, or by his parents to the Principal. An appeal must be in writing and be delivered to the School within seven days of the decision under appeal and must set out the grounds of the appeal.
- The right of appeal in the school context against a decision of the Principal is to the Board of Governors of the school. Such an appeal should be sent in writing to the school, addressed to 'The Chairman of the Board' within seven days of notification of the Principal's decision, setting out the grounds of appeal.
- The Board of Governors is duty bound and shall advise parents of their right to appeal a decision to expel to the Education Authority.
- Under current statutory provisions an appeal against the decision of the Board of Governors to expel a pupil is made, initially, by sending a written Notice of Intention to make a formal appeal within ten days of receipt of the letter from the Board of Governors setting out the decision to expel.

Evaluation

The disciplinary procedures of the school are kept under review and updated in line with current practice.



Appendix 1: School Rules

- All members of the school must be treated with courtesy and respect.
- An orderly school is a pre-requisite for efficiency and mutual comfort in all its activities.
- Each member of the school staff is part of the disciplinary structure in school with their own authority, but the ultimate authority is in the hands of the Headmaster.
- All pupils will conform to school rules.
- Disorderly conduct on the part of pupils coming or going from school, by bus or walking, will be regarded as a school offence.
- Pupils should walk on the left-hand side of the corridor or stairway.
- Smoking, or possession of cigarettes at any time is strictly prohibited.
- Litter must not be deposited in the school or its grounds; use should be made of the litter bins provided.
- Any damage to the school or its property caused wilfully will be reported to the Education Authority and in extreme cases to the PSNI.
- Pupils are not allowed to go into town or leave school before the regular time without a permanent or temporary pass issued by the school office.
- All pupils are required to attend school and classes punctually.
- Pupils should only enter and leave the school grounds by the pathways and gates provided.
- All pupils will wear the prescribed school uniform as detailed: variations are not permitted.
- All pupils' property should be clearly marked with the owners' name.
- Pupils should not bring valuables to school or leave money or articles of value in cloakrooms or classrooms.
- Pupils doing games and physical education must give watches etc. to the teacher in charge for safe keeping.
- This is a nut-free school, please do not bring nuts, or food containing nuts into school.
- Sugary carbonated drinks are not to be brought into school, but if so, will be confiscated.
- No hot take-away food should be consumed in the school building.



Appendix 2: Pupil Code of Conduct

DISCIPLINE

Good discipline in Ballycastle High School is not based on a system of punishment rather it is based on positive relationships. Discipline problems are less likely to occur if you are:

- considerate when dealing with other pupils
- play your part in developing a sense of mutual respect between staff and pupils and among pupils themselves
- help to sustain a pleasant learning environment
- participate in extra-curricular activities
- understanding the school's system of pastoral care
- help to maintain close contact between home and school

The good discipline which exists in Ballycastle High School can be explained partly by this approach, partly by the quality of children in the school and partly because it is a small school. It is important that you feel valued in our school.

An orderly school is essential if we are to function efficiently – it benefits all its users. All pupils are expected to comply with the school rules. In the unlikely event however of there being serious misbehaviour the school will follow the procedures for the suspension and expulsion of pupils as laid down by the Education Authority. Copies of the Board procedures are available from the school or the Board itself.

“If a pupil engages in an act of violence against the person or property of a member of the school staff, or to an immediate member of the member of staff's family, at any time whether inside or outside school, disciplinary action will be taken against the pupil which may include consideration of the option to expel.”

Appendix 3: Categories of Misconduct

Misconduct			
Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
		<i>Repetition of stage 2 misconduct or not responding to stage 2 sanction</i>	<i>Repetition of stage 3 misconduct or not responding to stage 3 sanction</i>
For Example:		For Example:	For Example:
Lateness to class	Repetition of stage 1 misconduct or not responding to previous sanction	Fighting	Theft
No homework		Leaving school without permission/signing out	Truancy
Not prepared for class/games		Bullying	Sectarianism
Incorrect uniform		Lying to a member of staff	Racism
Littering		Forging of notes/signatures	Inappropriate use of camera/video phone/recording device
Inappropriate behaviour in class / library / ICT room		Inappropriate conduct in front of staff/other pupils	Graffiti/defacing school property
Inappropriate behaviour outside of class/in corridors		Cheating/plagiarism	Alcohol/Drug abuse
Lack of cooperation in class/back chat.		Inappropriate material (eg of a pornographic or offensive nature)	Smoking
Shouting out inappropriately Inappropriate use of Yr13/14 study		Missing class/games without permission	Inappropriate conduct harming the image of the school
Work related deadlines not met		Misbehaviour in school or whilst travelling to or from school in association with a school activity that puts other pupils or staff at risk.	Persistent failure to respond to guidance and correction
Chewing gum Spitting		Lateness to school	Bringing an offensive weapon into school
Swearing		Piercings	Systematic bullying



Misconduct			
Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Mobile phone misuse within class		Inappropriate use of internet/social media	Fighting
Inappropriate entry into and/or when leaving a class		Smoking	Inappropriate behaviour to a member of staff
Ignoring safety rules			
Disobedience to a member of staff			

Appendix 4: Chain of Responsibility

Stage 1 Misconduct	Stage 2 Misconduct	Stage 3 Misconduct	Stage 4 Misconduct
Dealt with by Subject teachers/ Form teacher/ (Staged approach to be followed as indicated below)	Dealt with by Head of Department	Dealt with by Head of Year/Head of Pastoral Care/Vice-Principal	Dealt with by Principal
1. Verbal Warning	Verbal Warning Note in Homework Diary	Verbal Warning Note in Homework Diary Additional Work Main detention	Parental interview (Head of Year/ Head of Pastoral Care/Vice-Principal)
2. Note in Homework Diary	Withdrawal from practical activities	Report Card	Suspension
3. Additional Work		Parental phone-call	Expulsion
4. Subject Detention		Daily report sheet	
If pupil is outside of the classroom, it is responsibility of member of staff to deal with the incident		Withdrawn from class	
		Parental interview (Head of Year/ Head of Pastoral Care/Vice-Principal)	

This schemata is indicative of the normal approach to behaviour management in Ballycastle High School. However, Principal/Vice-Principal/Senior staff may use discretion in the application of sanctions should the context warrant it.