

1. GENERAL

- 1.1 Taney Parish Primary School, Sydenham Villas, Dundrum, Dublin 14, is a co-educational national school in the state education system under the patronage of the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin.
- 1.2 There are 446 pupils (229 boys, 217 girls, 30th September 2010) in the school.
- 1.3 The school is a double-stream school, with two classes at each standard from Junior Infants to 6th Class. Pupils normally enrol and attend at the school after their 4th birthday and leave after their 12th birthday.
- 1.4 The present review is prompted not by any change in the long-standing culture of high-standard behaviour, but by a requirement to incorporate new obligations into the Code of Behaviour, arising out of the passing of the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000* and the publication of *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools* published by the National Educational Welfare Board in May 2008.
- 1.5 This revised Code of Behaviour has emerged as a result of extensive consultation throughout school years 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 with teaching staff, ancillary staff, parents, senior pupils and the Board of Management. The Code was adopted for use from 1st September 2010 at a meeting of the Board of Management on 29th July 2010.

2. MISSION AND AIMS

- 2.1 The school's mission is to provide opportunities for learning, teaching and personal development for all children attending here, irrespective of personal circumstances, and in a manner which values Christian morals and individual needs.
- 2.2 The aims of this Code of Behaviour are:
 - to create a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
 - to create a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning.
 - to encourage pupils to take personal responsibility for their learning and their behaviour.
 - to help young people to mature into responsible, participating citizens.
 - to build positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support among pupils, staff and parents.
 - to ensure that the school's high expectations for the behaviour of all the members of the school community are widely known and understood.

3 ENCOURAGING HIGH STANDARDS OF GOOD BEHAVIOUR

3.1 EXPECTATION OF HIGH STANDARDS

PUPILS

- Pupils are expected to take increasing responsibility for their school work and their behaviour.
- Pupils are expected to be aware of and to keep the school rules and classroom rules.
- Pupils are expected to be truthful.

- Pupils are expected to do their best in class.
- Pupils are expected to attend school regularly and punctually.
- Pupils are expected to be respectful of people and property.
- Pupils are expected not to threaten or physically hurt another person.
- Pupils are expected not to engage in behaviour that is hurtful.
- Pupils are expected not to engage in bullying behaviour as defined in the Anti Bullying Policy.
- Pupils are expected not to engage in behaviour that interferes with learning and teaching.
- Pupils are expected not to steal.
- Pupils are expected to treat others equally regardless of gender, age, race, family status, religion, sexual orientation, disability and membership of the Traveller Community

TEACHERS

- Teachers, (and other school staff as appropriate), model and teach a dignified, respectful, courteous, cheerful, truthful, kind, considerate, fair, forgiving and helpful approach in their daily duties.
- Teachers and other school staff have high expectations of pupils, and discuss, compliment, comment on, praise, advise and support pupils on their dealings with others.
- Teachers bring the school rules and classroom rules to the attention of pupils in age appropriate language at the start of each term, regularly during each term and when necessary otherwise.
- Teachers approach the management of behaviour in a manner consistent with procedures in the Code of Behaviour.
- Teachers offer extra support and guidance, as appropriate, to children with Special Education Needs to help them to understand and to comply with rules and expectations.
- Teachers are expected to treat others equally regardless of gender, age, race, family status, religion, sexual orientation, disability and membership of the Traveller Community

PARENTS

- Parents are expected to be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and to bring the school rules to the attention of their children. Parents make their children aware of their expectation that their child(ren) will comply with the rules.
- Parents are expected to support pupils and teachers in implementing these rules and in applying the procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour to address behavioural issues.
- Parents are expected to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and punctually.
- Parents are expected to offer extra support and guidance, as appropriate, to children with Special Education Needs to help them to understand and to comply with rules and expectations.

3.2 **ACKNOWLEDGING AND PROMOTING GOOD BEHAVIOUR**

Good behaviour is acknowledged and promoted in a variety of ways:

- As appropriate, pupils are involved in the discussions leading to the establishment and revision of the school and classroom rules.
- Acceptable standards of behaviour, once established, are clear and widely understood.
- The approach of teachers to misbehaviour is consistent, fair and appropriate to the pupil's age

and ability.

- Teachers, as adults and professionals, have a strong capacity to develop good relationships with pupils and a greater responsibility for the relationship. Teachers balance warmth and empathy with objectivity, professional detachment, fairness and consistency.
- The good relationships between parents, teachers and pupils are highly valued and nurtured. Adults model the good relationships that are expected from pupils.
- Praise and encouragement are used widely to encourage pupils in their endeavours. Positive feedback about good behaviour is given both verbally and visually, formally and informally.
- Rewards are dispensed at the teachers' discretion when merited. Teachers are conscious of the possibility of the ineffective use of rewards, namely, when they become the goal of learning, result in unhelpful competition, repeatedly go to the same pupils or seem unattainable to some pupils, thereby de-motivating them.
- Favourable commendation is awarded, as appropriate, to pupils discretely, in public in classrooms and at school assembly when merited.
- Telling the "story of the school" with its tradition of high standards of behaviour and achievement at appropriate opportunities by referring to the actions and words of past and present pupils and teachers.

3.3 HOW PUPILS, STAFF AND PARENTS HELP EACH OTHER MEET STANDARDS EXPECTED IN SCHOOL

Support for one another is demonstrated in a variety of ways:

- Excellent, open lines of communication between teachers and pupils, and between parents and teachers, are established and nurtured.
- The school's Code of Behaviour is distributed to each applicant parent at the time of registering an intention to apply for a place and at the time of filling up an application form for a place in the school. The parents' signatures on the application form indicate an acceptance of the Code.
- The school's Code of Behaviour and the appended school rules are distributed to all parents on the first day of each school year.
- At the start of each school term, the school rules are revised with pupils by the class teachers and a copy is sent home with each pupil so parents may reinforce the messages.
- The Principal revises with pupils the definitions of bullying, what pupils should do if they are bullied, and, the consequences of engaging in bullying behaviour at Senior Assembly at the start of each school term. The teachers revise these issues during the term, when appropriate.
- Advice and guidance to pupils on how to behave is offered in many situations each day by teachers.
- Pupils are encouraged to speak with one another about their experiences, highlighting their successes and analysing their disappointments.
- The Social Personal and Health Education curriculum provides opportunities for developing co-operative and supportive mechanisms for addressing obstacles to achievement.
- Parents support pupils and teachers when behaviour issues arise by working with them to overcome difficulties.
- Parents familiarise themselves with the Code of Behaviour and the Anti Bullying Policy.
- Parents ensure that their children are aware of the school rules and stress the importance of adhering to them.

4 RESPONDING TO INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

4.1 MINOR ISSUES WHICH MAY REQUIRE A SANCTION/RESPONSE

- Pupils are encouraged from a young age to work towards resolving issues that arise and the skills to do so are both taught and modelled by teachers.
- Pupils bring behaviour issues to teachers for resolution when they are unable to resolve them and teachers encourage, support and show pupils how they may be able to resolve these issues. In this way, pupils are building up the skills necessary for the resolution of issues in later life.
- The school operates a protocol of resolving issues at the lowest level possible and so the class teacher will attempt to help when things go wrong when necessary. Parents approach the class teacher, therefore, in the first instance to resolve concerns they may have.
- When the teacher judges it is necessary, (s)he will become involved and help resolve a behaviour issue. The vast majority of issues will be resolved at this point. This may happen with or without consulting the parent or the Principal or another designated senior member of staff.
- Parents are kept informed, as appropriate, about the resolution of behaviour issues and the teacher makes decisions on when this is appropriate or responds to parents' queries at a convenient or suitable time. Teachers act on the principle that it is better for parents to be aware than not aware of behaviour issues which arise.
- The Principal will intervene informally in the resolution of minor issues, as appropriate.

4.2 MORE SERIOUS ISSUES WHICH REQUIRE A SANCTION/RESPONSE

- The school operates a protocol of resolving issues at the lowest level possible.
- Sanctions (or responses) are imposed from the list of **STRATEGIES DEPLOYED TO DEAL WITH MINOR AND MORE SERIOUS ISSUES** and will be applied as a ladder of increasingly serious intervention from the **THREE STEP** menu of sanctions (or responses) outlined below. Teachers will respond to minor and more serious issues by choosing appropriate sanctions/responses from the 3 step menu of sanctions as appropriate. Sanctions/responses from step 3 will be used after some/all of the sanctions/responses from step 2 have been tried and have failed to affect the desired result. Similarly, sanctions/responses from step 2 will be used after some/all of the sanctions/responses from step 1 have been tried and have failed to affect the desired result.
- In general, when behaviour issues arise which require a sanction, either because of the level of disruption, upset or hurt caused, or because of the persistence of the disruption, upset or hurt, the teacher (and sometimes the teacher together with the Principal) will investigate matters and the teacher (and sometimes the teacher together with the Principal) will decide on the appropriate sanction. In deciding on the appropriate sanction, the teacher (and sometimes the teacher together with the Principal) will have regard to mitigating factors such as family circumstances, a marked improvement up to now, genuine remorse and offer of restitution, the level of provocation or taunting that may have occurred before the event or the encouragement of a parent to engage in such behaviour. Detentions are normally notified to parents in the back page of the pupils' Homework Diaries.

4.3 STRATEGIES DEPLOYED TO DEAL WITH MINOR ISSUES AND MORE SERIOUS ISSUES

The following strategies, indicating a **THREE STEP** menu of sanctions on a ladder of increasingly

serious intervention are used to address misbehaviour described in this policy as Minor Issues and More Serious Issues:-

THREE STEP MENU OF SANCTIONS/RESPONSES

Step 1

- Reasoning with the pupil.
- Verbal Reprimand, including advice on how to improve.
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others (in class or in the playground).
- Loss/Withdrawal of privileges (e.g. loss of homework privilege, no free choice activity at play time, no choice of seating at lunch time, last to leave classroom at end of school day, etc.).
- Carrying out a useful task in the school or at home (e.g. tidying library, finishing school work at home not complete in class, washing up art containers, tidying classroom games, equipment, sorting games etc.).
- Communication with parents.

Step 2

- Detention during a break period.
- Time out in another classroom (after consulting with Principal, as appropriate).
- Referral to Principal.
- Communication with parents.

Step 3

- Communication with parents.
- Report to the Board of Management, as appropriate.
- Suspension.
- Expulsion.

The possession of, or use of, or supply to others of legal or illegal drugs is deemed sufficiently serious an issue for the principal to approach the matter at Step 2 or Step 3 of the THREE STEP menu of sanctions without the need to use the strategies outlined in Step 1.

If deemed necessary by a teacher, a pupil will be placed in detention for a behaviour issue for lunch break from 12.30 pm to 12.50 pm. On occasion, a pupil may be placed in detention during mid-morning breaks, if judged necessary by a teacher or the Principal. Detentions are notified to parents in the back page of the Homework Notebook or otherwise as the teacher or Principal deem appropriate.

5 STRATEGIES DEPLOYED TO DEAL WITH BULLYING

- 5.1 The school recognises the potentially serious physical, academic and emotional/psychological effects of bullying as spelled out in Section 3.2 of the Anti Bullying Policy. This is reflected in the Board of Management's adoption, on 20th September 2005, of a separate policy entirely for dealing with the issue.
- 5.2 Because of the insidious and serious nature of bullying behaviour and the fact that children of a young age sometimes find it difficult to describe the nature of what is happening to them, which can prolong the upset being caused, the school takes a very serious view of this activity and, when an allegation of

bullying behaviour is made, and a prima facie case is determined following a preliminary investigation, the school will move swiftly:

- to eliminate the behaviour.
- to send a strong signal to indicate a zero tolerance of the behaviour.
- to impress on the perpetrator the seriousness of the effects of the behaviour and how the school community shows no tolerance for it.
- to place the offending pupil in detention while a full investigation is undertaken.

5.3 After a full investigation which proves bullying behaviour, as described in Section 2.1 of the Anti Bullying Policy, has taken place, the pupil will be informed that the outcome of the investigation is that (s)he has engaged in bullying behaviour which is unacceptable. The pupil will be offered an opportunity to make restitution. The pupil's parents will be informed that the pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour. The following steps, indicating a ladder of intervention, are then used to address the incident:-

Step 1

- Detention during a break period or periods. The matter is closed if no further incidents of bullying occur. If a further incident/incidents occur(s), then step 2 will be implemented.

Step 2

- In the presence of his/her parents, the pupil will give a formal commitment to the School Principal and/or Chairman of the Board of Management not to engage in the offending behaviour again (to include pupil and parents signing both a copy of the Code of Behaviour and an undertaking to comply with same). The undertaking will be on the understanding that a failure to live up to the undertaking and/or a repeat of the offending behaviour, will result in an automatic suspension. The matter is closed if no further incidents of bullying occur. If a further incident/incidents occur(s), then step 3 will be implemented.

Step 3

- Automatic suspension.

6 SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS

6.1 See Appendix A for procedures for suspending and expelling pupils.

7 ABSENCES OF PUPILS

7.1 The *Education (Welfare) Act, 2000*, Section 18, requires parents to notify the Principal of a school of the reasons for a child's absence. Section 23 of the same Act requires the Code of Behaviour of a school to outline the procedures to be followed relating to notification of a child's absence from school. In compliance with these sections, the following procedures apply.

7.2 For absences of pupils from school for a period of up to 3 days, parents will send a letter or fill up a form for the class teacher upon the return of the child to school outlining the reason(s) for absence.

7.3 For periods of absence in excess of 3 school days, parents will 'phone the school on the third day to indicate that the child will be absent for a period of longer than 3 days and indicating the approximate length of absence. Upon return from absence, parents will send a letter or fill up a form for the class teacher outlining the reason(s) for absence.

- 7.4 *The Education (Welfare) Act 2000*, Section 21(4) requires a School Principal to inform an Educational Welfare Officer in writing if the aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent from school during a school year is 20 days or more. Additionally, Section 21(4) authorises the School Principal to notify an Educational Welfare Officer if, in the opinion of the Principal, a child “is not attending school regularly”.
- 7.5 It is necessary on occasions, for a variety of reasons, for pupils to leave school early. Written notification of this, outlining the reason(s), must be given to the teacher in advance. Parents, or others acting on behalf of parents, who call to collect children early, will call to reception/the school office for this purpose. Under no circumstances are pupils allowed leave the school building unaccompanied to meet parents or others off-site.

8 WHEN DOES THE SCHOOL’S CODE OF BEHAVIOUR AND RULES APPLY?

- 8.1 The school’s Code of Behaviour applies during school hours, at all extra curricular classes, at swimming classes, at all fund raising and social events organized by the school or by the Parent Teacher Association, including the annual School Fair and School Sports, School Tours, at the Annual School Concert, at the Irish Dancing Display, at the Swimming Displays, at the Carol Services and at all events organised by, on behalf of, or in the name of Taney School.

9 THE POWERFUL IMPACT OF GOOD EXAMPLE

- 9.1 It is difficult to underestimate the powerful impact of good example on children.
- 9.2 Parents and teachers are, to a lesser or greater extent, dominant influences in children’s lives and, for this reason, the school holds as an ideal that parents and teachers model good example at all times.

10 REVIEW

- 10.1 This Code of Behaviour will be reviewed from time to time in light of experience.

APPENDIX A – PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

SUSPENSION

GENERAL

For the purposes of this Code of Behaviour, suspension is defined as:

requiring the pupil to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a pupil and may do so for up to 10 consecutive school days at one time. The authority to suspend a pupil for up to 3 consecutive school days has been delegated by the Board of Management in writing to the principal on 29th July 2010.

PROCEDURE FOR SUSPENSION OTHER THAN FOR AN AUTOMATIC SUSPENSION

When a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the principal will:

- Inform the student and his/her parents about the complaint either by phone or in writing
- Conduct or arrange for the conduct of an investigation of the matter
- Give the pupil and his/her parents an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed
- Convey a decision regarding suspension to the pupil and his/her parents

While this process is being undertaken, the principal will decide whether it is in the best interest of the offending pupil or any other pupil that the offending pupil will be held in detention until the matter is finalised. The principal will have regard to the following factors in deciding on the best course of action:-

- Whether the presence of the offending pupil on the yard is likely to lead to further incidents of misbehaviour or intimidation
- Whether the presence of the offending pupil on the school yard is likely to inflame the situation
- Whether it is possible to provide the level of supervision required to prevent further incidents, an inflammation of the situation or intimidation without this becoming oppressive

The parents of any pupil upon whom the principal proposes to impose a suspension may appeal the suspension to the Board of Management.

The Board of Management will not impose a suspension of more than 10 consecutive school days on a pupil at any one time.

The Board of Management will formally review any proposal to suspend a pupil, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which a pupil has been suspended in the current school year to 20 days or more.

Where the total number of days for which a student has been suspended in the current school year

reaches 20 days, the parents may appeal the suspension to the Department of Education and Science under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998* as amended by the *Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007*.

PROCEDURES FOR AUTOMATIC SUSPENSIONS

The principal has been authorised in writing on (date) to impose an automatic suspension where the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff or any other person or for any one of the named behaviours listed below:

1. To comply with the requirement to suspend as step 3 of the ladder of intervention in dealing with a pupil who has engaged in bullying behaviour, as defined, and steps 1 and 2 have already been applied and failed.
2. The use of a knife or replica knife or gun or replica gun or glass or any other offensive weapon or replica weapon or instrument or piece of equipment other than those specified by the school or a teacher to inflict injury or harm on another person or to threaten to inflict injury or harm on another person
3. The defiant refusal to carry out the instruction of a teacher or principal
4. To protect the safety of the pupil or other pupils or staff

In the circumstances of an automatic suspension, the parents will be notified and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected. No pupil will ever be sent home alone.

In the circumstances where an automatic suspension is considered by the principal to be warranted for one or more of the named behaviours, a preliminary investigation will be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. A formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of an automatic suspension.

REINTEGRATING THE PUPIL AND STARTING WITH A CLEAN SLATE

The principal will arrange for a member of staff to provide support for any pupil who has been suspended during the reintegration process. The pupil will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start.

RECORDING AND REPORTING

A record of the behaviour and sanction imposed will be kept which will include:

- The investigation
- The decision and the rationale for the decision
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

The school will then expect the same behaviour of this pupil as of all other pupils.

The principal, if acting on the written delegated authority to suspend, will report all suspensions to the Board of Management with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

The principal will report all suspensions to the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) in accordance with NEWB reporting guidelines (*Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 21(4)(a)*).

The principal and Board of Management will review the use of suspension in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school and to ensure that use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

EXPULSION

GENERAL

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil. This authority is a reserved function of the Board of Management and is not delegated to the principal.

Before expelling a pupil, the school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a pupil including, as appropriate:

1. Meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change his/her behaviour.
2. Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of the behaviour, if it should persist.
3. Ensuring that all other possible options have been tried.
4. Seeking the assistance of support agencies, if appropriate

A proposal by the Board of Management to expel a student requires serious grounds, such that:

1. the student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
2. the student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
3. the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

PROCEDURES FOR EXPULSION OTHER THAN FOR A FIRST OFFENCE

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

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing
5. Consultations arranged by an Education Welfare Officer of the National Educational Welfare Board
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

EXPULSION FOR A FIRST OFFENCE

The Board of Management reserves the right to expel pupils for a first offence for the following behaviours:

1. A serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff
2. Actual violence or physical assault
3. Supply of illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
4. Sexual assault

APPENDIX B – SCHOOL RULES

PUPILS MUST:

- Play in the schoolyard between 8.30am and 8.50am and during breaktimes, and not in classrooms or corridors (unless told otherwise on wet days) and not after school hours.
- Play in their designated section of the playground and never go outside the school grounds for any reason.
- Play in the playground but not on the grass or in the flowerbeds.
- Eat in classrooms and not in corridors and not in the playground. Use the bins provided for classroom litter. Children must bring home lunch litter.
- Switch off mobile phones coming in the gate in the morning and must not switch them back on until outside the gate in the afternoon.
- Play football only in the 3 designated football areas.
- Always walk and not run when inside the school building.

PUPILS MUST NOT:

- **Engage in bullying behaviour as defined in Anti Bullying Policy and explained by the principal and teachers.**
- Bring toys, crisps, popcorn, chewing gum, drinks in cans or glass bottles to school.
- Play piggybacks, British Bulldogs, rugby/American Football, wrestling, “trains”, “chains”.
- Bring basketballs, rugby balls, heavy leather footballs OR hard balls (cricket balls, hockey balls, solid rubber/plastic balls) to school.
- Bring to school or go on scooters, micro scooters, roller blades, skate boards or wear “heelie” shoes in the school grounds, corridors or classrooms.
- Climb up on anything: not on a wall, a tree, a roof, a fence, a table, a windowsill, the railings. Pupils must not pull out of any wire fencing.
- Engage in behaviour that is hurtful or threaten or physically hurt another person.
- Disrupt teaching and learning.
- Damage property or steal.