

# **Nazareth House P.S.**

## **Behaviour Policy**

### **Mission Statement**

Nazareth House Primary School is a Catholic school, committed to upholding the legitimate rights of children, teachers and parents. The staff will aim, at all times, to create a safe climate so that learning and teaching can occur within relationships of mutual valuing and respect. We believe education should provide for and equip children with skills and values necessary to make a positive contribution in a changing world. Nazareth House Primary School wants children to be self-motivated and to be at peace with themselves, others and the world. To achieve these aspirations the school requires the help, commitment and co-operation of children, parents, staff, governors and the wider community.

### **Aims**

- To create an environment which encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To define acceptable standards of behaviour.
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour.
- To promote self-esteem, self-discipline and positive relationships.
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

### **STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR**

In seeking to define acceptable standards of behaviour it is acknowledged that these are goals to be worked towards rather than expectations which are either fulfilled or not. Thus the school has a central role in the children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. Just as we measure academic achievement in terms of progress and development over time towards academic goals, so we measure standards of behaviour in terms of the children's developing ability to conform to our behavioural goals.

The children bring to school a wide variety of behaviour patterns based on differences in home values, attitudes and parenting skills. At school we must work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. It follows that acceptable standards of behaviour are those which reflect these principles.

### **School Ethos**

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we should aim to:

- create a positive climate with realistic expectations;
- emphasise the importance of being valued as an individual within the group;
- promote, through example, honesty and courtesy;
- provide a caring and effective learning environment;

## **Classroom Management**

Classroom management and teaching methods have an important influence on children's behaviour. The classroom environment gives clear messages to the children about the extent to which they and their efforts are valued. Relationships between teacher and children, strategies for encouraging good behaviour, arrangements of furniture, access to resources and classroom displays all have a bearing on the way children behave.

Classrooms should be organised to develop independence and personal initiative. Furniture should be arranged to provide a environment conducive to on-task behaviour. Materials and resources should be arranged to aid accessibility and reduce uncertainty and disruption. Displays should help develop self-esteem through demonstrating the value of every individual's contribution, and overall the classroom should provide a welcoming environment.

Teaching methods should encourage enthusiasm and active participation for all. Lessons should aim to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding which will enable the children to work and play in co-operation with others. Praise should be used to encourage good behaviour as well as good work. Criticism should be a private matter between teacher and child to avoid resentment.

## **Rules and Procedures**

Rules and procedures should be designed to make clear to the children how they can achieve acceptable standards of behaviour.

Rules and procedures should:

- be kept to a necessary minimum;
- be positively stated, telling the children what to do rather than what not to do;
- actively encourage everyone involved to take part in their development;
- have a clear rationale, made explicit to all;
- be consistently applied and enforced;
- promote the idea that every member of the school has responsibilities towards the whole.

## **Rewards**

Our emphasis is on rewards to reinforce good behaviour, rather than on failures. We believe that rewards have a motivational role, helping children to see that good behaviour is valued. The commonest reward is praise, informal and formal, public and private, to individuals and groups. It is

earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy achievements. This is as true for adults as for children. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

Assembly presentations include

- Table of the week for Key Stages 1 and 2

### **Sanctions**

Although rewards are central to the encouragement of good behaviour, realistically there is a need for sanctions to register the disapproval of unacceptable behaviour and to protect the security and stability of the school community. In an environment where respect is central, loss of respect, or disapproval, is a powerful penalty.

The use of sanctions should be characterised by certain features:-

- It must be clear why the sanction is being applied.
- It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions.
- Group sanctions should be avoided as they breed resentment.
- There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences.
- **It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is punished.**

Sanctions range from expressions of disapproval, through withdrawal of privileges, to referral to the Vice-Principal/Principal, letters to parents and, ultimately and in the last resort, exclusion (following C.C.M.S.guidelines Appendix1). Most instances of poor behaviour are relatively minor and can be adequately dealt with through minor sanctions. It is important that the sanction is not out of proportion to the offence.

Where anti-social, disruptive or aggressive behaviour is frequent sanctions alone are ineffective. In such cases careful evaluation of the curriculum on offer, classroom organisation and management, and whole school procedures should take place to eliminate these as contributory factors. Additional specialist help and advice from the Educational Psychologist or Child Guidance Service may be necessary. This possibility should be discussed with the Principal.

### **Communication and parental partnership**

We give high priority to clear communication within the school and to a positive partnership with parents since these are crucial in promoting and maintaining high standards of behaviour.

Where the behaviour of a child is giving cause for concern it is important that all those working with the child in school are aware of those concerns, and of the steps which are being taken in response. The key professional in this process of communication is the class teacher who has the initial responsibility for the child's welfare. Early warning of concerns should be communicated to the Principal so that strategies can be discussed and

agreed before more formal steps are required.

A positive partnership with parents is crucial to building trust and developing a common approach to behaviour expectations and strategies for dealing with problems. Parental participation in many aspects of school life is encouraged. This participation assists the development of positive relationships in which parents are more likely to be responsive if the school requires their support in dealing with difficult issues of unacceptable behaviour.

The school will communicate policy and expectations to parents. Where behaviour is causing concern parents will be informed at an early stage, and given an opportunity to discuss the situation. Parental support will be sought in devising a plan of action within this policy, and further disciplinary action will be discussed with the parents. Further to Staff Assertive Discipline Training and in line with our policy all classes develop their own Positive Behaviour Plan and strategies in consultation with children and parents.

Our Behaviour Policy is modelled on the "Assertive Discipline" Procedures where rewards and sanctions are negotiated and agreed by all.

## Appendix 1

Under the provisions of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 and the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1993 and in the pursuance thereof and of the Regulations contained in SR No 99 of 1995 or any statutory modification thereof, the CCMS hereby makes the following Scheme for the suspension and expulsion of pupils attending Catholic maintained schools.

### — SUSPENSION —

The suspension of a pupil from school is a severe sanction which can only be proposed where the pupil's behaviour is presenting serious difficulties to the school and where suspension is considered to be in the best interests of the school/pupil.

In normal circumstances, suspension should only be considered after reasonable attempts have been made to modify the pupil's behaviour in the school.

### REGULATIONS GOVERNING SUSPENSION

#### NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES

1. A pupil may be suspended from the school only by the Principal\*.
  2. An initial or subsequent period of suspension shall not exceed five school days.
  3. Where a suspension is to be extended notification of, and the reasons for, the extension shall be sent in writing to the parent/guardian before the expiry of the current suspension.
  4. A pupil may be suspended from school for no more than 45 school days in any one school year.
  5. Notification of suspensions must be given to the parent/guardian of the pupil, to the Chairman of the Board of Governors, to the local Diocesan Administrator of CCMS and to the designated officer of the local Education and Library Board.
- \* "Principal" includes, where the Principal is absent or otherwise unavailable, the Vice-Principal or other person for the time being performing the duties of Principal.

### **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

In exceptional circumstances and because of the grave nature of - or the gross extent of - any behaviour, a pupil may be suspended immediately.

1. The Principal must ensure that in such cases steps are taken for the safe delivery of the pupil so suspended to the parent/guardian or if he/she is not available to a person who in the reasonable opinion of the Principal, or his/her nominee, will be able to accept responsibility for the custody of the pupil.
2. In the case of such suspension the pupil shall be regarded by the school as being in the care of the parent/guardian as soon as he/she leaves the school premises or, if appropriate, is delivered into the custody of the parent/guardian or to a person who accepts responsibility for him/her.
3. Notification of suspensions must be given to the parent/guardian of the pupil, to the Chairman of the Board of Governors, to the local Diocesan Administrator of CCMS and to the designated officer of the local Education and Library Board.

**IN BOTH NORMAL AND EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES  
THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES MUST BE FOLLOWED:**

## **PROCEDURES GOVERNING ALL SUSPENSIONS**

Where a pupil is suspended from school, whether initially or by way of extension to an existing suspension, the Principal must immediately:

1. give written notification of the reasons for and the duration of the suspension to the parent/guardian of the pupil, the Chairman of the Board of Governors, the local Diocesan Administrator of CCMS and to the designated officer of the local Education and Library Board.;
2. inform the parent/guardian that his/her child shall be regarded by the school as being in his/her care from the end of the school day in which suspension takes effect and for the duration of the period of suspension and of any renewal thereof; (In the case of suspension in exceptional circumstances, Par. 2 above will apply.)
3. ensure that the letter informing the parent/guardian of the suspension is delivered to the parent/ guardian as soon as is practically possible, and if at all possible on the same day as the suspension is imposed. A copy of this letter must be posted by first class post, with proof of posting, on the same day to the parent/guardian;
4. inform the parent/guardian that, during the period of suspension, work for the child will be available for collection at the school;
5. invite the parent/guardian to visit the school to discuss the pupil's behaviour.

### **— EXPULSION —**

The expulsion of a pupil from a Catholic maintained school is the most serious disciplinary action that can be applied to a pupil. The Council for Catholic Maintained Schools would want the expelling Board of Governors to be satisfied that the reasonable options and alternative strategies had been considered before it made its final decision.

## **REGULATIONS GOVERNING EXPULSIONS**

1. A pupil shall not be expelled from a school otherwise than by the Board of Governors.
2. A pupil may be expelled from a school only after serving a period of suspension.

3. The decision whether or not to expel a pupil from school shall be made only after:-

(i) consultation has taken place between the Principal, parent/guardian of the pupil, a duly authorised officer of CCMS, the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the school and the duly authorised representative of the relevant Education and Library Board. These consultations shall include consideration of the future provision of suitable education for the pupil concerned;

(ii) an opportunity has been offered to the parent/guardian of the child to make representation to the Board of Governors in relation to the pupil and the circumstances surrounding possible expulsion. In addition, the Board of Governors will be prepared to consider written documentation submitted by the parent.

A refusal on the part of the pupil's parent/guardian to take part in such procedures shall not prevent a pupil from being expelled.

4. No pupil shall be expelled by a Board of Governors unless the Governors are satisfied, on considering all the evidence available to them, that the pupil has failed to meet the school's minimum required standards of behaviour and the Governors are further satisfied that expulsion is the appropriate sanction.

5. The Principal in writing shall draw the specific attention of the parent/guardian or the pupil, where he/she has attained the age of eighteen, to his/her right of appeal to an Appeals Tribunal against the decision of the Board of Governors under Article 49 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 as amended by Article 39 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1993. In particular, the Principal shall provide the parent/guardian with the address and telephone number of the particular Education and Library Board which has responsibility for making arrangements for hearing the appeal.

## **PROCEDURES FOR EXPULSION**

1. Where the Principal considers it appropriate he/she shall convene a special consultative meeting to which the following people shall be invited:

m Principal

m Parent/Guardian

m authorised officer of CCMS (local Diocesan Administrator)

m Chairman of the Board of Governors of the school

m authorised officer of the local Education and Library Board

This meeting shall consider the future provision of suitable education for the pupil concerned together with the possibility of expulsion from the school.

2. The Board of Governors shall convene a special meeting to consider

m the report from the Chairman of the Board of Governors

m the submission from the parent/guardian who has been invited to the meeting and who has been informed in advance of the purpose of the meeting.

Following consideration of all the evidence available to them and after the parent/guardian has left the meeting the Board of Governors shall make its decision.

3. If the Board of Governors has decided to expel the pupil, the Principal - on its behalf - shall, on completion of the expulsion procedure, forthwith notify in writing particulars of the said expulsion to the parent/guardian of the pupil, to the local Diocesan Administrator of CCMS, and to the designated officer of the relevant Education and Library Board.

4. The Principal shall, in writing, draw the specific attention of the parent/guardian, or to the pupil where he/she has attained the age of eighteen, to the right of appeal to an Appeals Tribunal against the decision of the Board of Governors under Article 49 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 as amended by Article 39 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1993. In particular, the Principal shall provide the parent/guardian, or the pupil where appropriate, with the address and telephone number of the particular Education and Library Board which has responsibility for making arrangements for hearing the appeal.

## **NOTES**

1. The requirement under Statutory Rules (No. 99) NI 1995 that no pupil shall be suspended from a school for more than 45 school days in any one school year must be observed even where expulsion of the pupil is being considered.

2. This scheme shall be subject to modification or amendment from time to time by the CCMS as is deemed necessary or appropriate in the light of changing circumstances and/or experience.

3. Under the Parents' Charter, parents require to be told the reason for the suspension and must be consulted before a decision to expel is taken. An appeals procedure has been introduced by the Schools (Expulsion of Pupils) (Appeals Tribunal) Regulations (NI) 1994 so that parents will be able to ask an independent tribunal to examine their child's case. The Board of Governors will be required to produce written documentation, including any written correspondence between the home and the school, showing details of serious misconduct and the steps taken by the school to remedy the situation over the period of the misconduct.

4. The Board of Governors will also be required to produce satisfactory evidence that it has complied fully with the procedures set out in this policy document.