



# ALEXANDRA COLLEGE DUBLIN

## Alexandra College Junior School Code of Behaviour Policy

This behaviour management policy seeks to make a positive statement about the kinds of behaviour which the Junior School wishes to promote amongst its pupils. Clear rules and procedures, consistently and fairly applied, are necessary to ensure the school is a place where all pupils will be happy and feel secure.

The responsibility for upholding this policy rests with the staff and the Board of Management. The support of parents for this Policy is also crucial and it is expected that all parents/guardians will ensure that their daughter(s) will comply at all times.

In drawing up the policy, an opportunity has been given to allow for the input of staff, parents, pupils, the Junior School Committee and the Board of Management. The support of all stakeholders is essential for its successful operation.

Account has also been taken of the requirements set out in the Education Act 1998 and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

In devising this policy for the Junior School, we were conscious that the individuality of each child should be accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption-free environment.

We endeavour to create a positive school environment where learning and development based on Froebelian principles, can take place and where there is the highest possible degree of consensus about standards of behaviour among pupils, staff and parents.

We aim to motivate children in every possible way; to develop the personality and ability of each child, to ensure true understanding of what it is required to learn, to develop self-reliance, perseverance and the ability to accept a challenge in the work.

We aim to provide the widest possible experience in the curriculum and to encourage a real interest and pride in all work and progress.

The rules have been devised with input from the children and are kept to a minimum and are positively stated.

We have agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the Junior School and a high standard of co-operation among staff pupils and parents.

The Junior School has devised the "Family Group System" through which pupils, staff and parents get the opportunity to attain this goal.

In the belief that the most effective schools are those with the best relationships with parents, every effort will be made by the Head of Junior School and staff to ensure that parents are kept well informed. The school provides a welcoming atmosphere towards parents. All parents are informed, not only when their children are in trouble, but also when they have behaved particularly well.

A copy of this policy is available on the school website and all new parents will receive a hard copy. The Code of Conduct has been sanctioned by Board of Management and will be reviewed at two yearly intervals.

**The Code of Behaviour encompasses all school activities whether on or off campus.**

## Junior School Alexandra College

**The aims of the Code of Behaviour are:**

- To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
- To promote and develop a positive educational community which encourages self-discipline, co-operation in learning and develops self-esteem.
- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others
- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility in pupils based on respect for the learning and teaching environment
- To foster and value openness of mind and to aspire to having a sense of responsibility for ourselves and society
- To foster an atmosphere of tolerance and trustworthiness
- To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption
- To expect proper and appropriate behaviour at all times
- To apply sanctions in an appropriate, equitable and just manner

**The Code of Behaviour is viewed within the context of the Pastoral Care responsibility of the school.**

## Implementation

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Rules will be kept to a minimum, emphasise positive behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

### **Affirming Positive Behaviour**

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives rather than on sanctions.

Whenever possible, the staff approach is to notice, encourage and reward good behaviour, rather than to take good qualities for granted.

It is intended that every girl should have equal access to rewards with no particular emphasis placed on those who are academically more able.

### **Pastoral Care**

The school considers it important to support pupils and parents and to find a means whereby school, parents, and pupil may cooperate together in resolving a behaviour issue that has become a trend. From a Pastoral Care perspective, young people often need structured guidance after acting in an anti-social or inappropriate manner. It is useful to encourage the child to confront her misdemeanour through specific and challenging questions which require her to reflect on the unacceptability and consequences of these actions. This leads to the young person addressing the problem, taking responsibility and bringing about a final, positive outcome through a change in their conduct. The purpose is to provide time for the young person to reflect upon the occasion when they chose to act inappropriately and to examine the conduct that led to a negative outcome. When children choose to act inappropriately, any sanction or punishment imposed should aim to address the specific problem and also to help pupils to gain insight into their actions.

### **School Rules**

School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly (Appendix 1).

Generally, the use of mobile phones is not necessary in the Junior School as the children are encouraged to use the school phone when needed. An exceptional circumstance is girls travelling alone to and from school. They are permitted to carry mobile phones under rules and conditions (Appendix 2).

### **Before/After School**

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening time of 8a.m. or after the official closing time of 3 p.m. Pupils involved in such activities (3-6pm) are expected to behave in accordance with school behaviour policy during these times.

### **Incident Record**

In consultation with teachers a record of instances of misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour or bullying will be maintained by the Junior School Head in the Incident Record. This will be a formal record and may be called up in any case of suspension or expulsion. It will be retained by the school until any pupil mentioned in it reaches the age of 18.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Junior School Head is expected to:**

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Publish the Behaviour Policy (including School Rules) to all parties once ratified by the

#### Board of Management

- Provide and engage in CPD with staff on matters of behaviour management
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Respond to incidences of misbehaviour/bullying in a structured manner and keep records
- Maintain an Incident Record of all behaviour matters
- Arrange for review of the Code, as required but no later than three years from last review.

#### **The Teachers are expected to:**

- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- Recognise and affirm good work. (See Strategies and Incentives)
- Prepare schoolwork and correct work done by pupils.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour and in accordance with the school behaviour policy.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour/bullying or repeated instances of misbehaviour in Incident Book.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents (following consultation with the Junior School Head) when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

#### **Pupils are expected to:**

- Attend school regularly and punctually unless there is a genuine reason for absence in which case the school must be informed by a parent/guardian in writing, stating the reason for absence.
- Treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable
- Share and show care for fellow pupils at both work and play
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others
- Show respect for all school property, the property of fellow pupils and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
- Take pride in their appearance, wear the school uniform/tracksuit correctly, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.
- Listen to and obey a teacher's advice/instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly
- Refrain from all hurtful remarks, swearing and name-calling
- Include other pupils in games and activities
- Follow school and class rules

#### **Parent/guardians are expected to:**

- To know and support the school Code of Behaviour and to encourage their children to adhere to it.
- To encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.

- To ensure that their children come to school on time regularly and punctually, refreshed and prepared for work, unless there is a genuine reason for absence in which case the school must be informed by a parent/guardian in writing, stating the reason for absence.
- To take an active interest in their children's work and progress, be involved where possible and look to support school events.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems, which may affect child's progress/behaviour.

**The BOM is expected to:**

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- Support the Junior School Head and staff in implementing the code.
- Ensure regular review of the policy.
- Examine and apply this policy in accordance with relevant legislation
- Fulfil its legal obligations for reporting to relevant bodies
- Engage in the application of the measures to deal with gross misbehaviour
- Ratify the code.

## **In-School Management of Behaviour**

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and Alexandra Junior School places a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives rather than on sanctions.

**Strategies/Incentives to encourage good behaviour**

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment on a child's exercise book.
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group or at Assembly
- Individual class merit awards.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Written or verbal communication with parent.

**Discouraging Misbehaviour/Sanctions**

The use of sanctions is an important element in the Junior School's Code of Behaviour. They are used in support of the child and intended to change and improve her behavioural pattern. The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development (See Guidelines Appendices 3&4) These may include:

- Reasoning with pupil.
- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve, setting realistic targets.
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class.
- Prescribing completion of discussion sheets from the Conduct File/Incident Book.
- Loss of privileges.

- Detention during break.
- Communication with parents.
- Referral to Principal.
- Principal communicating with parents.
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by Circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health/safety

**Reviewed by JS Head, Staff and JS Committee Date: September 17<sup>th</sup> 2019**

**Board of Management Ratified on \_\_\_\_\_ Chair BOM \_\_\_\_\_**

**Board of Management Next Review Date: September 2022**

## Appendix 1 School/Class/Extracurricular Rules

**It is the intention of the Junior School to form its behaviour rules in positive language and rules will be kept to a minimum. Rules will be reviewed annually at staff meetings and published at the commencement of the school year. Parents and pupils will be given a copy of the rules at the commencement of each school year.**

### School Rules

Samples

- ✓ Pupils must walk quietly in corridors, going to and from play area, hall, etc.
- ✓ Pupils must follow the instructions, stay in designated area, and may leave the playground only with a teacher's permission
- ✓ Pupils must play safely at all times.
- ✓ Anti-social, dangerous or hurtful behaviour is forbidden, (e.g. wrestling, headlocks, jockey backs, bullying, intimidation, teasing, jeering, fighting, spitting, kicking, bad language, exclusion).
- ✓ Pupils should walk to gates/door at going home time.

### Class Rules

Samples

- ✓ Be polite and helpful. Courtesy and good manners to be shown to all.
- ✓ Treat others, their work and equipment with respect.
- ✓ Arrive on time to class wearing full uniform and properly equipped.
- ✓ Follow instructions when first time given.
- ✓ Listen to each other and show an interest in what each girl has to offer.
- ✓ Keep the school, classrooms and books clean and tidy at all times.
- ✓ Running, pushing and shoving are not acceptable.

### Rules for Computer Usage

Samples

- ✓ Computers can be used only when the class teacher is present
- ✓ The internet may be used for research purposes only following approval by teacher
- ✓ Internet searches should be planned carefully before computer usage
- ✓ Show consideration for others waiting to use the computer
- ✓ Food or drink must not be consumed near or on computers
- ✓ Seek help from the teacher if a problem arises

### Extracurricular Rules

**Extracurricular** activities are organised on or off campus after school hours by staff and/or parents to promote and develop a positive educational community, encourage self-discipline and cooperation. **The Code of Behaviour encompasses all school activities whether on or off campus.**

**In addition to the school and class rules the girls in consultation with teachers have devised the following guidelines:**

- ✓ Put safety first at all times.
- ✓ Respect all teachers and people in charge.
- ✓ Listen to the instructions that are given.
- ✓ Don't start an exercise until the teacher tells you to start.
- ✓ Don't cheat and play according to the rules.
- ✓ Take care of all equipment.
- ✓ Don't interfere with or argue with other people.
- ✓ Consider all people around you.
- ✓ Always be polite and helpful.

**Implementation:**

All girls are advised of and must abide by the guidelines. They sign duplicate copies of the guidelines at the beginning of the school year. Entrants at any other stage of the year must be similarly informed. They receive one copy and the school retains the other copy (JS Head's Office).

**Infringements will be dealt with under minor misbehaviour in the first instance.**



## Appendix 2 Mobile Phone Use

Generally, the use of mobile phones is not necessary in the Junior School as the children are encouraged to use the school phone when needed.

An exceptional circumstance is girls travelling alone to and from school. They are permitted to carry mobile phones under the following conditions:

- Parents must inform the school in writing that their child is travelling alone and in what way.
- Girls must turn off mobile phones (with identifiable mark or symbol) and hand to the class teacher before class begins.
- Girls must take responsibility for collecting mobile phones at the end of the school day.
- The Junior School does not accept any liability for the loss/damage of phones.

**Any infringement of these requirements will be dealt with under minor misbehaviour in the first instance.**

## Appendix 3 Misbehaviour

### **Disciplinary Actions and Sanctions for Misbehaviour**

The degree of misbehaviour e/g **minor, serious or gross**, will be judged by staff and / or JS Head based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity / frequency of such misbehaviour.

### **Examples of Minor Misbehaviour**

Interrupting class work / arriving late with no reasonable explanation / running in school / not listening and speaking out of turn / leaving seat without reason/ not wearing correct uniform/ being discourteous / not completing homework without good reason/ wearing jewellery, make-up or having nail polish /belongings not named/ hair not tied back/not bringing excuse notes for absences and homework/chewing gum/using mobile phones without permission (Appendix 4)

### **Steps taken by staff for dealing with minor misbehaviour:**

- Class teacher will normally deal with classroom misbehaviour.
- Verbal reprimand and reasoning with the pupil, including advice on how to improve, setting realistic targets.
- Time out from friends and others to reflect on misbehaviour.
- Loss of privileges.
- Noting of incidence in homework journal to parents.

### **Steps to be taken by staff when dealing with regular occurrences of minor misbehaviour:**

- A record is kept of regular instances of misbehaviour.
- Following 5 instances of misbehaviour the pupil is sent to the Head of Junior School.
- Class teacher meets with parents. Communication with parents sooner rather than later.
- Head and class teacher meet parents/guardians.

### **Examples of Serious Misbehaviour:**

Constantly disruptive in class/ telling lies /stealing, damaging or interfering with another person's property/ bullying /answering back/ using or writing inappropriate language/deliberately injuring a fellow pupil or partaking in any activity which puts themselves or others in danger.

### **Steps to be taken when dealing with serious misbehaviour**

- A record of all serious misbehaviour is kept in the Incident Book.
- Pupils may be removed from activity if endangering self or others
- Pupil sent to JS Head accompanied by class teacher and made aware that suspension could be a possibility.
- Parents are contacted by the Head of Junior School.
- Child completes a Student Reflection Sheet to be signed by student, teacher and parents.
- Detention – this step will be exercised as necessary.

- Suspension procedures may follow if deemed necessary by the school authorities in the case of repeated instances of serious misbehaviour

### **Examples of Gross Misbehaviour**

Deliberately vandalizing school property/ aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil(s).

Bullying

Bringing alcohol, drugs, cigarettes or matches into school.

### **Steps to be taken when dealing with gross misbehaviour**

- A record is kept in the Incident Book
- JS Head contacts parents/guardians
- Suspension or expulsion may be considered (Appendix 4).

## Appendix 4 Suspension and Expulsion

### **Suspension/Expulsion**

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parent/guardians will be utilised. Communication with parent/guardians will be verbal initially followed by letter.

Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school will be applied (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000). Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, suspension may be considered. Parent/guardians concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards anyone involved in the issue will be recorded in the Incident Book.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parent/guardians will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the principal. If the parents/guardians do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Notwithstanding the provision of an undertaking from the parents/guardians that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the school reserves the right to suspend the pupil. Prior to suspension, where possible, the JS Head may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes, any relevant medical information and any information advanced by the parents/guardians. Suspension will be in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or JS Head to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents/guardians

**Bullying is considered gross misbehaviour.** Bullying is defined in the as "unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time. The most common forms of bullying are aggressive physical contact, name-calling, intimidation, extortion, isolation and taunting. Bullying

will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to cooperate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

**Expulsion** may be considered in extreme cases, in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

### **Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)**

Following or during a period of suspension, the parents/guardians may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parents/guardians must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the JS Head must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The JS Head will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

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**This policy was reviewed by the JS Committee in September 2019**

**Next review date: September 2022**

**This policy was ratified by the BOM on \_\_\_\_\_**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Junior School Head

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

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