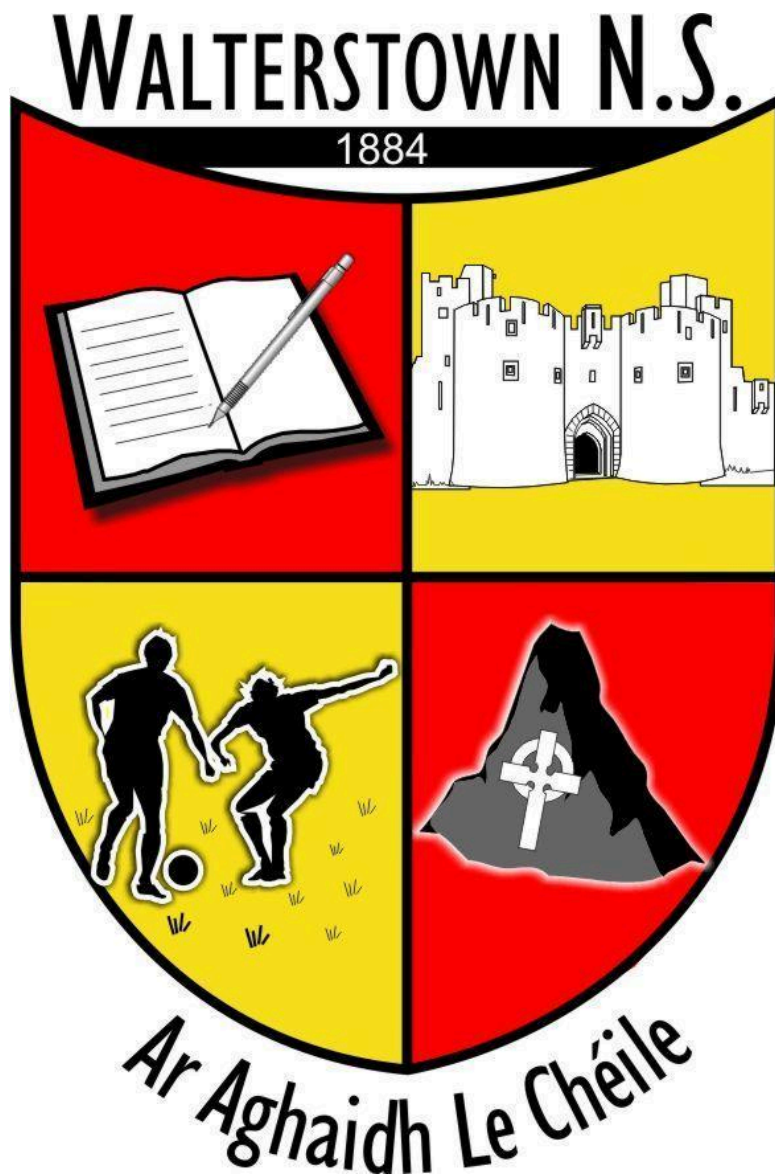


# Code of Behaviour and Discipline



This document is intended to provide details of the main policies of Walterstown National School. It is intended to help the school community to understand the environment and approach of the school. This document is regularly reviewed. All feedback is encouraged and welcome.

<b>Version</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Authors</b>
September 2024	Review of existing policy & format	Board of Management

#### **School Contact Details**

**Principal:** Mr. Rory O' Sullivan

**Board of Management Chairperson:** Mr. Damian Ahern

**School Roll No:** 12281D

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**Address:** Walterstown N.S., Walterstown, Cobh, Co. Cork.

## **Introductory Statement**

Walterstown N.S. is a Roman Catholic School, under the patronage of the Bishop of Cloyne. We aim to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of our pupils: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and other people. Our school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

## **Vision**

Our school also strives to accommodate individuality, while acknowledging the right of each pupil to education in a disruption free environment. We also promote a sense of responsibility towards the wider community. Parents are recognised as the primary educators of their children. Teachers are recognised as professionals in education and work in partnership with parents.

## **Principles of Discipline Policy**

Our school's aim is to achieve a happy, secure atmosphere, a place in which children can develop to their full potential. To achieve this we have to provide a framework, which promotes constructive behaviour and discourages unacceptable behaviour. The ideal is that pupils will acquire skills of self-discipline. There are times when it may be necessary to impose sanctions to maintain good order and to discourage offenders. Our school rules have been drawn up by all our staff in consultation with the Parents Association and approved by the Board of Management. They are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of our school community.

## **Rationale**

It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) which refers to the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in Section 23(2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:

- The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
- The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
- The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
- The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student;
- and The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school

## **Aims of Code of Discipline**

- The efficient operation of the school and the structuring of in-class management structures so that a stimulating learning environment will exist for all.
- To promote self esteem and positive relationships.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and the environment.
- The maintenance of good order throughout the school and respect for our school environment.
- To enable the highest standards of teaching and learning without disruption.
- Development of self-discipline in pupils based on consideration, respect and tolerance for others.

- To promote a secure and positive environment.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

## School Rules

For pupils, the school rules are kept to a minimum and positively stated.

- We show respect for myself and others
- We show respect for our own property and the property of others
- We are kind and willing to help others
- We follow instructions of all staff when asked
- We walk quietly in the school building
- We keep our school tidy
- We play safely
- We show courtesy and good manners

In order to keep these rules we:

- Ask ourselves, “Is our school a better place because I am here?”

## Respect and Courtesy

Pupils are expected to treat staff, fellow pupils and visitors with respect and courtesy at all times.

## Behaviour in class

- Have all books and required materials
- Work to the best of their ability and present work neatly
- Show respect for all staff and class mates

Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others is unacceptable.

## Behaviour out of class and on school activities

**Early morning 8:45– 9:00am:** Children can enter the school property from 8:45. Children should walk to their classroom and sit in their assigned seat. Supervision of all classes is in operation from 8:45-9:00. At 9:00 teachers enter their classrooms & teaching instruction begins. Pupils who arrive after 9.00a.m. must be signed into the school office by an adult. This is a safety measure to ensure the safe arrival of all children.

**Morning break and lunch break:** Junior/ Senior Infants/1st class - community hall side of the school. Second – Sixth classes: Basketball court and astro.

**Small break: 11:00-11:15**

**Big break: 1:00-1:20.**

Pupils must not behave in any way that endangers themselves or others. Any form of threatening behaviour, disrespect or bad language is unacceptable. If children are being bullied, parents/teachers should be informed immediately, so that the matter can be dealt with as a team

effort. Any instructions or directions given by the supervising teacher are to be complied with. When the bell rings for assemblies at 9.00am, 11.00am and 1.00pm pupils must;

- Stop playing
- Walk in an orderly fashion to their class line
- Line up properly
- Once the 2nd bell has been rung pupils should stop talking.

At 1.40pm a teacher escorts Infants to the yard where parents collect and accompany them to the school gate in order to minimise disruption to remaining classes. On wet days pupils are collected from the halla. At 2.40pm pupils are escorted to the school gate by the teacher on duty. The school can accept no responsibility for pupils once they have left school grounds, unless they are on a school – organised activity.

## **Good Behaviour Incentives and Reward structures**

Good behaviour is encouraged, recognised and rewarded. During the school year the school will have themed months similar to Manners' Month, Friendship February in line with our Anti-bullying policy to promote positive behaviour. Rewards for good behaviour can include:

- Student of the Week- sticker plus certificate sent home along with pupil's name entered in the 'Good Book'.
- Points scheme in class or teacher designed reward system.
- Individual or group rewards
- Parties (to celebrate achievements of individuals or groups)
- Oral praise
- Written praise- homework notebooks, reports etc.
- Small prizes, stars, stickers etc.
- Extra privileges- jobs etc.

## **Strategies and Sanctions**

Sanctions will be applied according to the seriousness of the offence and can include:

- Reasoning
- If on yard- name and behaviour recorded in yard book
- Reprimand including advice on how to improve
- Temporary separation from peers
- On yard- separation from peers by standing at the wall.
- Loss of privileges- golden time, games, competitions etc
- Prescribing extra work or completion of unfinished work at lunch time.
- Referral to other teacher for unacceptable behaviour.
- Referral to Principal.
- Suspension – See below
- Expulsion – See below

If a pupil repeatedly fails to obey lunchtime rules, his/her parents will be notified. They will be advised that if the misconduct continues, their child will be suspended from taking breaks in our school.

## **Communication with Parents**

Parents will be involved at an early stage rather than as a last resort. This may be done verbally or by letter, depending on circumstances.

- You will be informed when your child performs particularly well
- When there is a serious misdemeanour, a note will be sent to parents to be signed and returned
- Habitual misdemeanours – parents will be requested to visit the school
- Major misdemeanours – parents to meet Principal and class teacher; matter may be referred to the Board of Management.

## **Suspension and Expulsion**

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour – meaning aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of our school community – the Board of Management shall authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction the immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with parent(s)/guardians. Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with Rule 130(6) of Rules for National Schools.

## **Unacceptable Behaviour**

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher, or the supervising teacher at break-times. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour. Examples of minor misbehaviour include:

- Bringing electronic equipment or mobile-phones to school
- Not wearing appropriate uniform; bringing in chewing-gum
- Not following instructions.

Examples of serious misbehaviour include:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying (See anti-bullying policy), harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Bringing dangerous equipment to school
- Leaving school/school activities without permission.

Examples of gross misbehaviour include:

- Assault on a member of staff or pupil with intent to cause serious harm
- Serious Theft
- Serious Damage to property
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes

Bullying is repeated aggression – physical, verbal or emotional - conducted by an individual or group against another or others.

- PHYSICAL: includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping, etc.
- VERBAL: name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates.
- EMOTIONAL: threats or persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Threats to extort money or possessions. “Cyber/text” bullying.

The school takes particular care to intervene early in responding to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner. Issues in relation to Bullying are explored continually during SPHE lessons and using Circle Time, Drama etc. The school also has in place an Anti-Bullying Policy. Every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed child referred for psychological assessment, without delay. Help will also be sought from support services within the wider community. It is school policy to keep a record of misbehaviour, as well as a record of improvement, in the behaviour of disruptive pupils. Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour or any instance of gross misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parent(s)/guardians will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet with the Chairperson and designated school staff. If the parent(s)/guardians do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the pupil may have to be suspended for a temporary period. Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130(5) of the rules for National Schools.

## **Roles and Responsibility**

All members of the school community, under the positive and supportive leadership of the Board of Management and Principal, have both a role and a responsibility in successfully implementing this policy. The policy will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis by the policy committee through feedback from members of the school community.

## **Implementation Date**

This policy was implemented 25/09/2024. Amendments will be implemented immediately.

## **Timetable for Review**

This policy is to be reviewed during the school year 2025/26

## **Ratification and Communication**

The amended policy will be communicated to members of the Board of Management prior to the meeting of the BOM on 24/09/2024. Parents will be made aware in the next school communication that the policy is available for viewing on the school website.

Date of ratification: 03/10/2023

Signed: Damien Ahern                      CHAIRPERSON OF BOM

Date: 24/09/2024

Signed: Rory O’Sullivan                      PRINCIPAL

Date: 24/09/2024