

# Our Lady of Victories Infant School

Ballymun Road,  
Dublin 9, DO9YC99.  
E-mail: office@olvinfants.com  
Telephone: (01) 837 2372  
Web: www.olvinfants.com



## Our Lady of Victories Infant School Code of Positive Behaviour

### Introductory Statement

This policy followed from a review of the existing Code of Behaviour Policy in 2020. In Our Lady of Victories Infant School, we hope to foster harmonious relations between parents/guardians, children and school personnel. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with the emphasis on encouragement and positive strategies so that positive behaviour will prevail in our school.

### Rationale

Our Lady of Victories Infant School decided to review its Code of Behaviour in because

- It was felt that in previous policies, the voice of the infant child was not significantly articulated; having established a pupil **Wellbeing Committee in 2019**, the **Wellbeing Anthem**, composed by our pupils, will be intrinsically core to the school's newly revised Code of Conduct. The BOM has agreed that a **Wellbeing Committee** will be established annually with a view to **hearing the voice of the children in the context of wellbeing for all**.



- The existing policy was due for review and amendment
- Parent/s' signature to abide by the Code of Behaviour
- It is a requirement under DES Circular 20/90 on School Discipline

**Teachers and parents share a common goal:**

- The collective voice of the pupils as articulated in our Wellbeing Anthem will form the basis of the Positive Code of Conduct.
- Children attending this school will be encouraged and given the opportunity to reach their maximum potential, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually. All efforts will be made to match the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and interests of each pupil.
- The school will endeavour to create a safe and friendly environment in the belief that this allows children to thrive.
- Every effort will be made by all members of staff to encourage positive behaviour in the school, within a framework of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- The school places greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the long run, give the best results.
- It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of cooperation amongst staff and between staff, pupils and parents. The school encourages communication between all parties: staff, parents and children.
- The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the principal teacher.
- Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises and grounds.
- A pupil will be referred to the principal teacher for serious / gross breaches of discipline and for repeated incidents of minor misbehaviour.
- All serious or gross breaches of the behaviour code will be recorded and referred to the principal.

**Each student is expected to:**

- Be well behaved and to show respect and consideration for other children and adults

- Show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own belongings
- Take pride in his/her appearance and wear our school uniform
- Be on time for school and to strive to attend every day
- Do his/her best both in school and for homework

#### **Strategies to Promote Positive Behaviour May Include:**

- A word or gesture to show approval
- A comment on homework sheet/certificate/ sticker
- A commendation from the principal or another member of staff
- A merit system
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parent, written or verbal
- Golden Time (Treat or reward earned by the class or group)
- A visit to the "Treasure Chest"

#### **Strategies in Dealing with Unacceptable Behaviour-General Principles**

The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross will be judged by the teachers and/or principal. A common sense approach will be taken. The following strategies may be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour:

- Reasoning with the pupil
- Reminder of agreed school and classroom rules/behaviour contract
- Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or other
- In-school suspension
- Loss of privileges
- Prescribing additional work
- Communication with parents by class teacher
- Teachers shall keep a written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour as well as a record of improvements in the behaviour of disruptive pupils
- Referral to Principal teacher.
- Communication with parents will be verbal or by letter, depending on circumstances. The parents concerned will be invited to discuss their child's case.

### **Examples of Level 1 Minor Misdemeanours:-**

Level 1 Behaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and of common areas. Generally, students learn through their mistakes and to this extent, responses to the daily behaviours, which occur in school will be developmentally appropriate, instructive and positive. Children will be taught what is expected and how they should behave. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 1. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Interrupting class work
- Arriving late for school
- Running in school building
- Leaving seat without permission at lunch time
- Leaving litter around school
- Being mildly discourteous/unmannerly (in language, tone, manner)
- Not working to full potential
- Ignoring staff requests

### ***Disciplinary Actions***

Consequences for Level 1 behaviour are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Teachers will discipline pupils at level 1. Some examples of Level 1 responses are:

- Verbal reprimand/reminders
- Inviting child to reflect
- Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
- Loss of privileges
- Parent contact by teacher
- Positive behaviour contract

### ***Supportive Interventions-Level 1***

- Classroom based interventions Circle Time, class meeting, informal consultation with parent/staff member
- Discussion of behaviour with the child
- Reflecting on Wellbeing Anthem
- Informal notes regarding incident/intervention; this information is useful should a problem persist

## **Examples of Level 2 Serious Misdemeanours**

Level 2 behaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff. Listed below are samples of Level 2 behaviours. Please note that this list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated instances of level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Bullying ( See Anti-bullying Policy)
- Behaviour which is dangerous to self or others in the school classroom or grounds e.g. hitting, punching, shoving, kicking, biting and other similar physical behaviours)
- Endangering self, staff or fellow pupils in the school
- Consistent and persistent disruption of class
- Stealing
- Possession or dangerous use of equipment, toy etc e.g bow and arrow, any kind of knife, using equipment/object as a weapon
- Throwing objects that may cause harm to pupils or staff
- Telling lies or making wrongful accusations
- Damaging pupil's or school property
- Being verbally disrespectful to a member of staff
- Behaving in a way the disrupts teaching and learning
- Using unacceptable, aggressive or offensive language
- Posting libellous or defamatory comments publically e.g. on social media sites and public places
- Threatening harm or the use of physical aggression towards another child or staff member

### ***Disciplinary Actions***

The disciplining of students for Level 2 Behaviour is dependent on the severity and/or frequency of specific behaviour and is developmentally appropriate. The disciplinary actions at level 3 are administered by the principal/Deputy principal and include notification of the parents. Some responses to level 2 responses include:-

- Temporary removal from class/yard
- Report submitted to the BOM
- Meeting parent/guardian
- Suspension depending on the severity of the behaviour
- Behaviour Management Plan

### ***Supportive Interventions***

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 Supportive Interventions:-

- Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, deputy principal, Assistant Principal or Principal
- Request for assistance from external agencies NEPS, HSE, NCSE etc
- Referral of child to HSE Services for psychological or other assessment with parental/guardian consent.

### **Level 3 Gross Misdemeanours**

Level 3 behaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal well being of the pupils and staff in the school. They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment. They contravene the central tenet of the pupil Wellbeing Anthem. Situations which include illegal activity may result in contact being made with An Garda Síochána. Listed below are some examples of behaviour that are included in level 3. Please note that the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 Behaviour which have not been modified significantly by intervention
- Leaving school building or yard, grounds, during the school day without appropriate permission
- Acts of Greivous Bodily Harm (GBH) to a staff member and/or pupil. It is important to note that the school will decide whether behaviour will come under this definition
- Destruction of or wilful interference with school property
- Violent fighting/behaviour causing physical harm to self or others
- Any use of cigarettes, alcohol or other drugs in school or on school grounds
- Aggressive or dangerous behaviour that puts child at risk of self-injury or of risk of injury to others
- Continuous disruption of learning & teaching
- Hitting, spitting, biting or kicking a staff member
- Being in possession of or use of any weapon readily capable of causing bodily harm

**This list is not exhaustive and other incidents may be considered as gross misdemeanours at the discretion of the Principal and the Board of Management.**

## ***Disciplinary Actions***

Behaviour at level 3 may involve suspension from school. Repeated incidents of level 3 behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled.

### **Suspension**

- Before resorting to serious sanctions, e.g. suspension, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Parents will be involved at an early stage rather than as a last resort.
- For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour a pupil may have to be suspended for a temporary period. Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130 of the *Rules for National Schools*.
- The Board of Management authorises the Principal to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents
- In the unlikely situation of a repeated need to exclude a student it will be done on a phased basis:-

**Stage 1** - Excluded for a single day x 3 times;

**Stage 2** - Excluded for 3 days x 3 times – this will be done in consultation with the chairperson of the BOM and the principal

**Stage 3** - Excluded for 5 days x 3 times- approval will be sought from the BOM

- The principal will notify the parent in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm
- The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- The reasons for the suspension
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents
- The provision for appeal to the Board of Management
- The provision for appeal to the Secretary General of the DES. (Only where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days.)
- Where the cumulative total of days reached 6, the NEWB/EWO will be notified.
- Every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed child referred for psychological assessment without delay.

- There is an expectation that the HSE/NEPS/EIT/AON/SADT or other appropriate state agency will engage appropriately and with expedience when support and advice is sought from school management/ BOM.

### **Expulsion**

- Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with Rule 130 (6).

### **Procedures in respect of expulsion.**

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
- A recommendation to the BOM by the principal
- Consideration by the BOM of the principal's recommendations and the holding of a hearing
- BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing.
- If BOM is of the opinion that the student will be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing, of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. The intention to expel a student does not take effect until 20 school days have elapsed after NEWB has received written notification. The NEWB will be notified using a **Notice of Intention to Expel form** which is available on [www.schoolreturn.ie](http://www.schoolreturn.ie) or from the helpline (1890 36 3666). This form will be completed and sent to the **School Return Section, National Educational Welfare Board, 16-22 Green St, Dublin 7.**
- Consultations arranged by the EWO.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

### **Appeals**

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills ( Education Act 1998 section 29)

### **Monitoring & Evaluation of Code:**

(Success by which the policy will be judged)

- Children will be consulted
- Atmosphere of discipline within the school
- Children learn and thrive in a safe environment
- Children are aware of school rules
- Staff apply school rules
- Growth in self- discipline, intrinsically positive behaviour
- Cooperation between parents, teachers and pupils in maintaining the code
- Comments or compliments on behaviour
- Regular feedback from teachers and awards presented by Principal at Assembly

- Children working to the best of their ability
- Class working to the best of their ability
- Improvements in behaviour
- Liaising with Parents' Group (Principal, HSCL) in discussion and feedback regarding behaviour
- Annual review at staff meeting and BOM

**Monitoring and Review:**

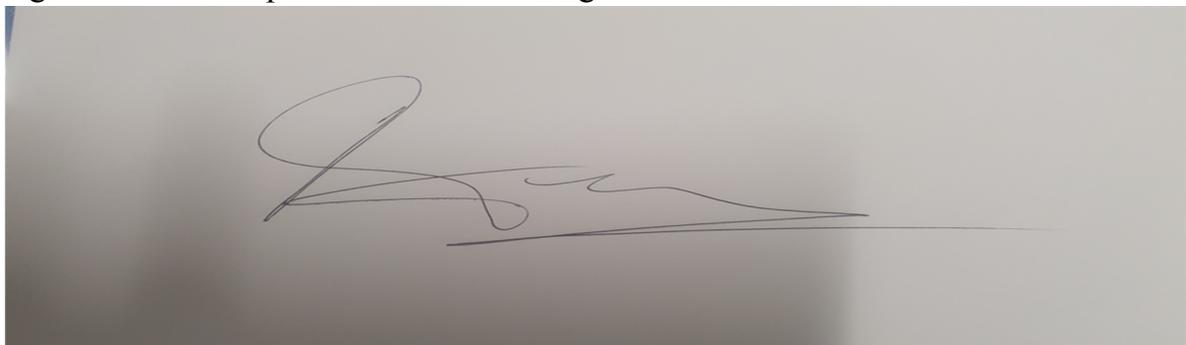
Each staff member is responsible for the implementation of the Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy. Within the classroom the teacher monitors his/her class. Teachers consider themselves responsible for the behaviour of children within sight or sound of them and respond to any instance of unacceptable behaviour. The principal is responsible for monitoring and reviewing Policy at staff level on a regular basis and reports any review the staff deem necessary to the Board of Management.

The Board of Management (BOM) has ultimate responsibility for discipline in the school under its management and a duty to ensure that a fair code of discipline applies therein in order that children learn and thrive in a safe environment. The BOM will ensure the Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policy is reviewed yearly or more often if the need arises.

In registering children in Our Lady of Victories Infant School, parents are expected to support teachers in following the policies and procedures of the school.

The Code of Positive Conduct Policy is reviewed annually and was ratified by the Board of Management of Our Lady of Victories Infant School on 2nd November, 2021.

Signature of Chairperson Board of Management

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