



MINISTRY
OF
EDUCATION
GUYANA

MANUAL OF GUIDELINES
FOR THE
MAINTENANCE OF ORDER
AND DISCIPLINE
IN SCHOOLS

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**MANUAL OF GUIDELINES FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF ORDER
AND DISCIPLINE**

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The Right Of The School To Maintain Order And Discipline

It is the responsibility of the Administrative and Non-Administrative staff of the school to ensure that its climate is one in which order and discipline prevail. All members of staff must consistently and impartially enforce the rules and code of conduct which govern the institution.

The school has the right to institute measures or take appropriate action to ensure that order and discipline are not compromised by learners – be it within or outside the school. One such measure is corporal punishment. However, it must be pointed out that corporal punishment must be administered to a learner only by the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, or Senior Master/Mistress.

No school has the authority to expel any learner; it may recommend expulsion for consideration by the Head of Education Department and the Chief Education Officer. The school however may suspend a learner based on the guidelines stated herein.

Learners are expected to respect and follow the directives of the Administrative and Non-Administrative staff of their school; their failure to so do will subject them to disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action should be determined by the

- age of the learner
- nature of the offence
- frequency of the misdemeanor
- learner's attitude
- potential effect of the misdemeanor on the climate of the school.

The right of the school to enforce order and discipline applies:

- To any learner who is enrolled at in school which comes under the purview of the Ministry of Education.
- During the regular school day – regardless of time.
- While the learner is participation in any activity within the school compound.
- During the luncheon interval – be it on or off the school compound.
- While the learner is in attendance at any school related activity – regardless of time and location.

- For any school-related misconduct-regardless of time and location.
- When the learner retaliates or threatens to retaliate against any member of the school staff-regardless of time and location.
- When a learner commits a criminal offense on the school premises or at a school related activity.

Benefits That Accure From The Maintenance Of Order And Discipline

- Prevalence of desired/acceptable behaviours.
- Healthy and supportive school climate of the teaching-learning process.
- Spirit of teamwork and group cohesion among the school population.
- Safe school environment.
- Respect for those in authority – teaching staff, prefects, class monitors, members of the student government.
- Strong home – school community links.
- Meaningful use of instructional time.
- Child-friendly school environments.
- Respect for peers and schoolmates.
- Avoidance of negative labelling learners.
- Demonstration of self-discipline by school staff and learners.
- Sense of security, acceptance and belonging by parents, teachers and learners.
- Timely and appropriate and corrective action for unacceptable behaviours of learners.
- Opportunities for the acquisition and application of coping, decision-making, and conflict resolution skills on the part learners and teachers.
- Balanced school programme with emphasis on skills, attitudes, values, and excellence.
- Enhanced parent involvement/participation.
- Improved interpersonal relationships: teacher-parent, teacher-learner, learner-learner.
- Emphasis on preventative approaches to unacceptable behaviours.
- Timely offering of rewards, commendation, praise and acknowledgement of acceptable behaviours.
- Positive school image.

The Maintenance of Order And Discipline – The Role Of The Head Teacher

- Lead in the formulation and implementation of a Code of Conduct and a Disciplinary Policy for the school.
- Play a lead role in the articulation and implementation of the Code of conduct and Disciplinary Policy for the School.
- Ensure that all teachers have written classroom rules and access to the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy.
- Establish partnership between home, school and community by encouraging active participation in the formulation and implementation of the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy.
- Establish a **Misdemeanours Book** to record instances of disciplinary actions being administered.
- Monitor order and discipline both within and out of the school.
- Keep learners, teachers and parents au fait with activities and decisions in relation to school discipline.
- Ensure that Peace Education, Conflict Resolution and Social Skills are taught to learners.
- Draft and monitor the implementation of plan of co-curricular activities to keep learners constructively occupied; religious clubs/societies, debating clubs, organized games – indoor and outdoor, etc.
- Control access to and use of the school compound.
- Screen all visitors to the school. Visitors to the school must report to the Head-Teacher.
- Administer corporal punishment to learners who warrant such.
- Report promptly any serious case (Category 2) of unacceptable behaviour to the relevant authorities.
- Reviews disciplinary strategies on a regular basis – include parents, learners and teachers.
- Expect support from officers of the Ministry of Education, Department of Education, teachers and parents in the implementation of disciplinary strategies.
- Model desirable/acceptable social and professional behaviours.

The Maintenance Of Order And Discipline – The Role of The Teacher

- Participate in the drafting of the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy.
- Develop, in collaboration with learners, written classroom rules and sanctions.
- Accept responsibility for maintaining discipline and order within and outside of the school.
- Implement class, and school rules and regulations in a firm, consistent and prompt manner.
- Adhere to the guidelines adumbrated in the Disciplinary Policy.
- Include Peace Education, Self Concept, Conflict Resolution, and Social Skills in the regular instructional programme.
- Respond to learners in a caring and respectful manner.
- Display impartial behaviour to all learners – regardless of ethnicity, religion, social or economic standing.
- Use rewards for acceptable behaviours demonstrated by learners and punishment for unacceptable ones.
- Impartially dispense punishment and reward.
- Keep accurate misdemeanour records and always inform the Head Teacher of discipline problems.
- Expect support from parents, Head Teacher and learners in the implementation of disciplinary strategies.
- Model desirable/acceptable social and professional behaviours.

The Maintenance Of Order And Discipline – The Role Of the Learner

- Treat each other and members of the school staff with respect and courtesy.
- Follow established Class Rules and School Rules.
- Report contravention of Class Rules, School Rules and Code of Conduct to the class teacher or Head Teacher.
- Avoid acting in a manner which will expose others to danger, harm or injury.
- Avoid use of threats and intimidation against others.
- Respect the rights and property of others.
- Protect the school property and facilities.
- Avoid engaging in immoral activities.
- Obey legitimate instruction of teacher, prefects, class monitors and student government members.
- Participate in co-curricular activities - religious, debating clubs, organized indoor and outdoor games, etc.
- Use principles of peace education and conflict resolution skills to resolve conflict.
- Refrain from carrying, using or being in possession of any weapon, illegal drug or prohibited electronic device in the school or on the school compound.
- Maintain high academic and non-academic standards.
- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Maintain personal hygiene and practice good grooming.
- Accept responsibility for his/her own behaviour.

The Maintenance Of Order And Discipline – The Role Of The Parent/Guardian

- Participate in drafting and reviewing the Class Rules, School Rules, Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy.
- Study the Class Rules, School Rules, Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy with your child/ward.
- Control and correct the behaviour of your child/ward.
- Request and participate in training that will assist you in better understanding and education your child/ward.
- Keep the school informed of the needs, peculiarities and health status of your child/ward
- Request information on your child's/ward's performance and behaviour at least once each term.
- Encourage your child/ward to adhere to the Class Rules, School Rules, and Code of Conduct.
- Visit the school to discuss your child's/ward's performance and behaviour with his/her teacher. Arrangements must be made in advance, or notify the Head Teacher of your presence and intention.
- Be involved in school activities.
- Encourage your child/ward to participate in school sponsored activities.
- Ensure that the school can make contact with you during the day in case of an emergency – by phone at home or work, by electronic mail, or at your residence.
- Report promptly to the head Teacher any unacceptable behaviour demonstrated by your child/ward or any other learner away from the school premises.
- Treat your child/ward with love and respect.
- Model desirable/acceptable social behaviours.
- Seek assistance of the school or a relevant agency if you experience difficulties in your attempts to discipline you child/ward.

Categorization Of Unacceptable Behaviour

Offences/Unacceptable behaviours are classified into two main sub-categories

➤ *Category 1 Type 1 Offences/Unacceptable Behaviours*

These are unacceptable behaviours to be addressed by the teacher under whose supervision the learners were when the behaviour occurs. Disciplinary action for these is optional.

➤ *Category 1 Type 11 Offences/Unacceptable Behaviours*

These are unacceptable behaviours to be addressed by the Head Teacher. Suspension and further disciplinary action is optional.

➤ *Category 2 Type 1 Offences/Unacceptable Behaviours*

These are unacceptable behaviours to be addressed by the Head Teacher. Suspension is mandatory and further disciplinary action inclusive of recommendation of expulsion is optional.

➤ *Category 2 Type 11 Offences/Unacceptable Behaviours*

These are unacceptable behaviours to be addressed by the Head Teacher, Head of Education Department, and the Chief Education Officer. Expulsion is mandatory for these.

Unacceptable Behaviours and Sanctions

➤ *Category 1 Type 1 Offences/Unacceptable Behaviours*

1. Loud talking in class
2. Repeated lateness
3. Littering
4. Cursing and arguing
5. Chewing gum in class
6. Eating in class
7. Cheating at examinations
8. Superimposing/altering figures on report booklets/cumulative record cards.
9. Making fun of other persons (teasing, name calling)
10. Bullying
11. Being out of school uniform without permission
12. Hitting
13. Inappropriate touching
14. Failing to do homework
15. Destroying and/or defacing textbooks
16. Pelting other persons
17. Obscene gestures
18. Playing rough
19. Stealing
20. Unexcused absences
21. Disrespect for teachers
22. Possessing and making use of pagers, cellular phones, and computer games in class/school
23. Copying (writing other learners work to use as your own)
24. Banging objects in class
25. Spitting on one another
26. Pinching
27. Malicious scratching of face and body parts of other learners
28. Punching
29. Making faces
30. Stretching out of tongue
31. Telling untruths
32. Urinating and defecating around school building and compound
33. Indecent exposure
34. Kicking other persons
35. Biting other persons

➤ Category 1 Type 1 Disciplinary Actions/Sanctions

1. Parental contract
2. Detention before and/or after school
3. In-school suspension
4. Withdrawal of privileges
5. Cleaning of part of premises where infraction occurred
6. Referral to Counsellor/School Welfare Officer
7. Reprimand by supervising teacher
8. Writing/reciting lines

➤ Category 1 Type 11 Unacceptable Behaviour

1. Category 1 Type 1 offenses which continue after three attempts to correct them
2. Fighting
3. Biting other persons
4. Leaving school or school sponsored activities without permission
5. Skipping classes
6. Using rude, vulgar language
7. Possessing or using matches or lighters without teacher supervision
8. Smoking
9. Refusing to wear school uniform
10. Stealing from other learners and causing bodily harm
11. Possessing or using tobacco products or non-prescription drugs on the school premises or at school sponsored activities
12. Gambling
13. Refusal to be disciplined by teachers
14. Continuous outbursts of anger or continuous verbal disruption of any school activity
15. Failure to complete/serve disciplinary assignment/sanction meted out
16. Willful destruction or defacing of school property
17. Behaviour on or off the school premises that is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other learners or school staff
18. Continued willful disobedience or open and persistent defiance of proper authority

➤ Category 1 Type 11 Disciplinary Actions/Sanctions

1. File charges with relevant law enforcement authorities
2. Cleaning part of school premises where infraction occurred.
3. In-school suspension
4. Head Teacher/Parent/Learner conference
5. Parental Contact
6. Billing of parent for damages to school property
7. Referral to Counsellor/School Welfare Officer
8. Referral to Head of Department of Education for frequent and habitual infractions
9. Suspension by the Head Teacher

➤ Category 2 Type 1 Unacceptable Behaviours

1. Repeated Category 1 Type 11 Unacceptable Behaviours
2. Sexual harassment
3. Knowingly, purposefully or recklessly carrying, bringing or possessing a pellet gun air powered rifle, toy gun, can openers, box cutters, clubs, cutlass, screwdrivers, sling shot, stunt guns, car aerials or any other instrument that can be used as weapons.
4. Possessing look-alike drugs and items which could be passed off as drugs
5. Possession, purchase or use of marijuana, cocaine, aerosol spray, paint, glue or any un-prescribed or dangerous drugs.
6. Possession and use of fireworks or any other explosive device
7. Damage to the property of teachers and other learners (puncturing of tires, breaking windows, marking paint)
8. Retaliation against school staff through threats, bringing in groups, family members, friends, etc. to argue with or assault school staff or student.
9. Production or dissemination of pornographic material
10. Continued willful disobedience or open and persistent defiance of proper authority.
11. Willful destruction or defacing of school property
12. Behaviour on or off school premises which is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other learners or of school staff including behaviour which causes threat of physical harm to the learner or other learners.
13. Serious violations in the school or on its premises
14. Repeated interference in the school's ability to provide educational opportunities to other learners

➤ Category 2 Type 1 Disciplinary Actions/Sanctions

1. Suspension by the Head Teacher
2. Charges filed with proper law enforcement authorities
3. Cleaning part of school premise
4. In-class suspension
5. Head Teacher/Parent/Learner conference
6. Parental contract
7. Parental contact and billing of parent for damages to school property
8. Referral for counseling
9. Referral to the Head of Education Department for frequent infractions to policy
10. Parent meeting following suspension for the purpose of discussing re-entry, transfer or expulsion
11. Exclusion from ceremonies and other activities
12. For possession or use of marijuana or for repeated offenses as regards possession purchase or sale of drug paraphernalia, the learner shall be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency/authority.

➤ Category 2 Type 11 Unacceptable Behaviours

1. Making a terroristic threat
2. Carrying, bringing, using or possessing dangerous weapons or firearms
3. Committing extortion, blackmail or forcing a teacher or learner to act through the use or threat of force.
4. Committing an act that would be robbery or assault under the law if committed by an adult.
5. Performing or orchestrating any sexual act
6. Repeated suspension during the school year for causing or initiating willful disruption in the classroom, on school grounds or at school activities/events.

➤ Category 2 Type 11 Disciplinary Actions/Sanctions

1. Charges filed with proper law enforcement authorities
2. Head Teacher/ Parent/Learner meeting
3. Parental contact and billing of parent for damages to school property
4. Recommendation for expulsion'
5. Denial of certificates or letters of recommendation
6. Mandatory suspension by Head Teacher followed by referral to the Head of Education Department and Chief Education Officer for expulsion.

Detention of Learners

- This is a form of punishment that may be administered to a learner. The learner is detained in school, especially after school hours.
- Time in detention should be spent in a way that will help the learner to develop responsible behaviour.
- When repeated detention fails, then the learner should be referred to the Head Teacher for other disciplinary action (s).
- Learners at the nursery level must not be kept in after school dismisses to serve detention.
- Nursery children and pupils of levels 1 and 11 must not be made to serve detention
- Any detention of any learner for more than 15 minutes must have the approval of the Head Teacher.
- Detention must not exceed one (1) hour.
- Detention can be served before school, during recess, after dismissal, or any other time than classroom or instructional time.
- Detention may be served in a classroom or, ideally, in a detention room where learners are supervised by teachers.
- The classroom in which detention will be served, or detention room, must be well lit and ventilated.
- A roster must be established for teachers who supervise the detention room.
- The learner to be discipline must be assigned a specific amount of time to be spent in the detention room. This must be communicated to the learner and the supervisor of the detention room.
- A list of all learners to serve detention must be provided to the supervising teacher of the detention room.
- The supervising teacher must make a record of all those who served, or did not serve, detention.
- Learners who did not turn up to serve detention, or who, while serving detention, behaved in any unacceptable manner must be further sanctioned by the Head Teacher.
- Parents must be notified when detention is to be served before and after school hours.

Withdrawal of Privileges

This is the debarring of a learner from participating in any co-curricular activity,

- This form of disciplinary action is best suited for Category 1 Type 1 offenses/unacceptable behaviours.
- The teacher is responsible for deciding from which particular activity the learner will be debarred.
- The learner must be debarred from only one particular activity at any time.
- Withdrawal of a privilege may include non-permission of a learner to participate in outdoor activities, field trips, tours, serve as class monitor etc.

In-School Suspension Of Learners

- This occurs when a learner who behaves in an unacceptable manner is removed from the regular classroom activities, for one teaching period only, and is isolated in a closely supervised environment.
- A room that is well ventilated and lit must be used for in-class suspension.
- The in-class suspension room must be monitored by the Head Teacher, teacher, counselor, or a responsible adult.
- A maximum of one (1) teaching period in-school suspension must be administered to a learner at any time.
- In-class suspension must be administered to a learner only once per term.

A learner who is to serve in-school suspension must be assigned a specific assignment/task to be completed during that time.

- The teacher must decide what assignment will be given to a learner who is to serve in-school detention.
- Homework must not be given as one such assignment.
- Parents must be notified that a learner received in-class suspension.

Out-Of-School Suspension of Learners

Suspension is the prevention of a learner from attending school for a specified period of time.

- The period of suspension must range between one (1) day to five (5) days. It must never exceed five (5) days.
- Suspension is one of the disciplinary measures recommended to be administered for Category 2 Unacceptable Behaviours.
- Only the Head Teacher has the authority to suspend a learner. He/She issues a Suspension Order addressed to the learner's parent/guardian and signed by the learner as having seen the order.
- A learner who has allegedly committed a Category 2 offense may only be suspended when a thorough investigation into the allegation is conducted by the Head Teacher and he/she finds the learner guilty.
- Statements from all the parties concerned must be provided and evidence tendered at the investigation.
- The parent or guardian of the learner must be promptly notified of the learner's alleged misconduct/offense, the intention of the school to investigate the allegation, and subsequently the findings of the investigation.
- A report must be promptly dispatched to the Head of Department of Education.
- An entry must be made in the **Misdemeanours Book** and the Log Book.
- A learner who is under ten (10) years of age must not be suspended.
- A learner's parent or guardian must ensure that arrangements are in place for him/her to be properly supervised while serving suspension.
- A learner who is serving a period of suspension must not visit the school nor be on its premises until the specified period of suspension would have been served.

Corporal Punishment of Lecturers

The use of physical interventions by school staff

- Physical interventions must be appropriate and reasonable
- Physical interventions may be used to/for:
 - ✓ Restrain a learner from an act of wrong doing.
 - ✓ Quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to others.
 - ✓ Obtain possession of a weapon or dangerous object from a learner.
 - ✓ Self defense.
 - ✓ Protection of persons or property.
 - ✓ Preservation of order.

The Administering of Corporal Punishment

- This is the physical handling of a learner in any way to inflict punishment on him/her.
- Corporal punishment must only be administered by the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, or designated Senior Master/Mistress.
- It must be restricted to be used in circumstances such as fighting, use of indecent language, gross insubordination.
- Corporal punishment must only be used in cases of continued display of unacceptable behaviours or in grave circumstances.
- Learners must not be punished in the presence of other learners.
- Males should be punished in their hands or on their buttocks while females must be punished in their hands.
- In administering corporal punishment the Head Teacher must use either a cane or strap no longer than 24 inches.
- Cases of corporal punishment must be carefully documented in the **Misdemeanours Book** on the same day the punishment is administered.

The Conduct of Searches and Seizures – Locker, Bag, Body and School Premises

Search of Locker, Bag, School Premises and Seizures

- Locker searches should be routinely conducted by the school staff.
- Searches should be scheduled and unscheduled.
- Locker and bag searches must be conducted by at least two staff members in the presence of the learner whose bag or locker is searched.
- A learner whose locker or bag is to be searched must be informed of this intended action by the person who will conduct the search.
- It is the duty of the learner to open/unlock his/her locker or bag and take out the contents.
- Any prohibitive substance, object, weapon or electronic device found on a learner must be made in the ***Misdemeanour Book*** and ***Log Book***. A report must be forwarded promptly to the Head of Department of Education. The Parent/Guardian must be notified.
- Routine searches must also be conducted of washrooms, classrooms, laboratories, and school grounds.

Body/Strip Search and Seizure

- A body search of a learner must be conducted only by a law enforcement officer.
- The Head Teacher is the channel through which the request for the law enforcement officer must be made.
- The parent/guardian of a learner who is to be body searched must be notified. The parent/guardian must also be informed of the findings of the search.
- A body search can be requested if the school believes or has reasonable suspicion that a learner has concealed on his person any prohibitive substance, object, weapon or electronic device which he/she has refused to hand over on request.
- Prohibitive substances, objects, weapon or electronic devices must be seized.
- The law enforcement officer wither gives instructions as to what should be done with the prohibitive article or he/she takes command of it.

- The proper entry should be made in the *Misdemeanours Book* and *Log Book*. A report must be promptly made to the Head of Department of Education.

Expulsion of Learners

- This is the permanent removal of a learner from a school, or from the formal school system.
- A school does not have the authority to expel a learner but it can recommend his/her expulsion.
- The recommendation for expulsion, accompanied by all relevant documents/statements, must be addressed to the Head of Department.
- Only a learner who is over 14 years 6 months can be expelled from the school system.
- A learner who has committed an expellable offense and who is under 14 years 6 months may be placed at a Special School or in the New Opportunity Corp.

Expulsion Procedures

- The Department of Education must arrange for a hearing to be conducted.
- The date, time, and venue for the hearing must be communicated to the school, the learner and his/her parents/guardians. It is the responsibility of the school to inform the learner and his/her parents of the hearing.
- Copies of statements and the report must be forwarded to the parents/guardian.
- All other parties to give evidence must be summoned to the hearing.
- The learner who has committed the expellable offense is entitled to produce witness or evidence and to testify on his/her behalf.
- The Department of Education may conduct the hearing even if a learner and/or his/her parent/guardian is/are absent despite being summoned.
- A learner who has committed an expellable offense, and is given a hearing and found guilty must then be expelled.
- The **Expulsion Order** must be issued by the Chief Education officer upon receipt of the decision of the hearing.

Special Education

- A learner who is under 14 years 6 months and has committed an expellable offence and has been given a hearing and found guilty must be expelled from the school at which the offense was committed and enrolled at a Special School.
- The Chief Education Officer upon receipt of the decision of the hearing, must issue the **Expulsion Order** and the **Approval Order** for the learner to be enrolled at a Special School.
- Only learners who are between the ages of 10 years and 14 years 6 months and who have committed an expellable offense and were given a hearing and found guilty could be expelled and placed in special schools.
- The Permission/Approval Order from the Chief Education Officer must be countersigned by the Head Teacher of the school at which the offense was committed and by the learner's parent or guardian.
- All records pertaining to the learner must be forwarded to the Chief Education Officer who signs and transmits them to the Head Teacher of the Special School.
- At the special school, the learner's behaviour and conduct must be monitored and a report submitted on a termly basis to his/her parent or guardian and to the Chief Schools Welfare Officer.
- Counselling must be provided to a learner who is at a Special School.
- The Special School must provide tuition Health and Family Life Education, Mathematics, Science, English Language, Social Studies, Social Skills and Etiquette and Pre-Vocational Education/Technology Education.
- At the end of each academic year, a learner at a Special School must be assessed to determine whether or not he/she has been sufficiently rehabilitated and could be returned to mainstream schooling.
- To return to mainstream schooling, a learner must demonstrate satisfactory progress in the academic and vocational areas and in behaviour management.

Interrogation of Learners

- A learner who commits a Category 2 Type 11 offence may have to be interrogated by a law enforcement officer.
- Before a law enforcement officer interrogates a learner, his/her parents must be notified.
- The learner must be interrogated in the presence of his/her parents/guardian and the Head Teacher.
- The interrogation must be conducted on the school premises.
- Whenever this kind of interrogation has been done, it must be recorded in the **Log Book** and a report forwarded promptly to the Head of Department of Education.

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