



Athleague N.S., Athleague, Co. Roscommon, F42 VF95  
Principal: Avril Hickey  
Email: [info@athleaguenationalschool.ie](mailto:info@athleaguenationalschool.ie)

Phone: 090-6663420 / 085-8388694  
Roll Number: 15308M / Reg. No.: 20133474  
Website: [www.athleaguenationalschool.ie](http://www.athleaguenationalschool.ie)

## **Code of Behaviour**

### **Introduction**

- This policy was drafted following meetings with parents and staff in January 2017. This policy was reviewed in December 2020 following a staff meeting and consultation with the parent body (via email) and the Board of Management. This policy was then revised in June 2023. The revised policy will be implemented from June 2023 with feedback sought on an on-going basis from all staff and parents and changes made if deemed necessary by the Board of Management.
- Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school. In Athleague National School, we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school.
- The Board of Management of Athleague National School has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.
- Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school.
- The ethos of our school is a major factor in establishing and maintaining high standards of behaviour. These points to the importance of a strong sense of community within the school and the existence of a high level of co-operation among teachers, pupils, parents, and the Board of Management. Athleague National School places great emphasis on the need to give children every possible opportunity to develop patterns of good behaviour. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

### **Aims of the code of discipline**

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- To uphold each pupil's right to a safe and productive learning environment
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others
- To facilitate the education and development of every child
- To foster caring attitudes towards one another and the environment
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the parent's information handbook, availability of policies and an ethos of open communication
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.



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## **Responsibility of Adults**

- 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
  - Promote positive behaviour, through example, honesty and courtesy
  - Provide a caring and effective learning environment
  - Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others
  - Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability
  - Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all
  - To discourage physical aggression and encourage *'Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet'*

## **School Rules**

1. We show respect for self and others
  2. We show respect for our property and the property of others
  3. We show respect for other pupils and their learning
  4. We are kind and willing to help others
  5. We follow instructions from staff immediately
  6. We walk appropriately in the school building
  7. We show courtesy and good manners
  8. We try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
  9. We ask permission to leave the classroom/school
  10. We do our best in class
  11. We take responsibility for our work
  12. We wear the appropriate uniform
  13. We follow our Healthy Eating Policy
- Children cannot remember long lists of rules. The expectations in this policy provide clear guidelines for members of our school community and pupils as to what type of behaviour is expected of pupils and adults within our school. These rules synopses for the children what is expected of them, in a language they understand and incorporated our school motto 'Give Respect, Get Respect'. Children from junior infants- 6<sup>th</sup> classes will be reminded of these rules and will recite them and discuss them regularly. It is expected that the children will know them 'by rote' by the time they reach second class.

## **Class Rules**

- At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children. Class rules will be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Where possible, they emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. 'Walk' instead of 'Don't run'). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.



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## **General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour**

- Pupils are expected to 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.
- Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
- Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to have all books and required materials, and to be in the right place at the right time.
- Pupils are expected to obey a teacher's instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
- Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing, stating the reason for absence.

## **Incentives/Reward System**

- Part of the vision of Athleague National School is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and similarly that children use a variety of approaches to solving problems. Our reward system seeks to encourage all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.
- The following are some examples of how praise might be given:
  - A quiet word or gesture to show approval
  - A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal
  - A visit to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation
  - A word of praise in front of a group or class
  - Certificates-Act of Kindness, Principal's Gaisce Award
  - Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
  - A mention to parent, written or verbal communication
  - 'Bualadh Bos' in class
  - Class Dojo program

## **Unacceptable Behaviour**

- Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised:
  1. Minor
  2. Serious
  3. 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, without informing a staff



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- member
  - Not wearing appropriate uniform
  - Bringing in chewing gum
  - Not following adult's instructions
- Examples of serious misbehaviour include:
  - Behavioural that is hurtful (including bullying, 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 teacher or pupil
  - Serious theft
  - Serious damage to property
  - Carrying and/or misusing drugs, alcohol or cigarettes in school
  - Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a staff member or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour

## **Bullying**

- Bullying is repeated aggression-physical, verbal or emotional conducted by an individual or group against another or others.
- Physical: 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.
- *Should a parent/guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed, teachers are more than willing to facilitate a meeting, made through the proper channels, i.e. a phone call to the office, or a note to the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties. The first person to be informed should be the class teacher.*
- This arrangement ensures that all concerns are dealt with in a dignified, meaningful manner, without infringing on valuable teaching time.
- Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying.
- Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same manner as unacceptable behaviour already outlined in our Code of Behaviour.
- *In the case where a parent reports a bullying incident, the school reserves the right to inform the*



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*relevant parties of the identity of the person making the complaint, when this is deemed necessary.*

## **Sanctions**

- The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:
  - Helping pupils to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
  - Helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
  - Helping pupils (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their behaviour and that all choices have consequences
  - Helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour
- A sanction may also:
  - Reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour
  - Signal to other pupils and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected
- In instances of more serious unacceptable behaviour sanctions may be needed to :
  - Prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
  - Keep the pupil or other pupils or adults safe
- The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The list is by no means exhaustive or in any particular order. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the circumstances involved. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupil devise strategies for this.
  1. Reasoning with pupil
  2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
  3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class
  4. Prescribing extra work/writing out the story of what happened
  5. Loss of privileges
  6. Detention during break
  7. Communication with parents
  8. Referral to Principal
  9. Principal communicating with parents
  10. 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)
- Usually sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.
- Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health/safety.

## **Suspension and Expulsion**

- Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal, letter or by email depending on the circumstances.
- For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious gross misbehaviour.



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- Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal 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 and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.
- Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. If the parents 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.
- 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, suspension will be considered at the Principal's discretion.
- The Board of Management has authorised the Principal to sanction an immediate suspension if senior management deem it fit.

### **Procedure for Suspension:**

- Parents are invited to meet with class teacher, Principal and/or Chairperson to discuss the misbehaviour.
- Communication to parents regarding the suspension of a pupil or the possibility of suspension will be made by phone and/or in writing.
- A written statement of the terms and date of termination of a suspension will be given to the parents.
- If the suspension of a pupil is for six days, the Principal informs the Education Welfare Officer in writing.
- When a period of suspension ends, the pupil should be re-admitted formally to class by the Principal/Deputy Principal.
- Where a satisfactory resolution of a problem is achieved, a pupil may be re-admitted to school within a suspension period at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Board and Principal.

### **Expulsion**

- Every effort will be made to manage a child's behaviour so that he/she and his/her fellow pupils can learn in school and be equipped with skills for later life. A continuum of support detailed in a specific Behaviour Learning Plan will be implemented and support from parents sought. Notes will be kept on all incidents of misbehaviour and subsequent actions taken. Advice and guidance from external agencies such as NEPS, HSE, Túsla, CAMHs, SESS, Gardaí, etc. will inform actions. If despite our best efforts and interventions, the child continues to misbehave showing disrespect for people and/or property, interfering with the learning of other pupils and refusing to engage with staff, genuinely trying to support him/her, the Board of Management may decide to expel a child.

### **Procedure for Expulsion:**

- The above procedures for suspension are followed in the case of expelling a pupil from the school.
- Prior to the expulsion of a pupil the Education Welfare Officer must be notified in writing of the school's intention twenty days in advance.



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## **Children with Special Needs**

- All children are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, SET teacher and/or Principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable.
- The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

## **Communicating with Parents**

- Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.
- A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor in encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.
- Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life (in the past or present) which may affect the child's behaviour.
- The following methods of communication are to be used within the school:
  - Informal/formal parent teacher meetings
  - Through children's homework journal (Infants do not have a homework journal, please check bags for notes)
  - Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
  - Messaging via Class Dojo program
  - School notice board
  - Newsletters/school website/emails
  - Aladdin emails or text
  - Social media

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **1. Board of Management Responsibilities**

- Provide a positive climate in the school.
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- Ratify the Code of Behaviour.

### **2. Teachers' Responsibilities**

- Support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- Recognise and affirm good work.
- Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.



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- 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.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

### 3. Pupils' Responsibilities

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- All absences should be explained and acknowledged by parent.
- Listen to their teacher and act on instruction/advice.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Rough or boisterous behaviour, giving cheek, use of bad language is strictly forbidden in the school and on the premises.
- Pupils are expected to finish any assigned homework.
- Pupils are encouraged, with the support of parents to eat healthy lunches and avoid 'junk' food. Chewing gum is not allowed in the school or on the premises. Eating during class is not allowed.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct books/materials to school.
- Not to wear make-up. Not to wear long dangly earrings. (studs only permitted)
- To keep their hair neat and in its natural colour, for hygiene purposes hair must be tied back.
- Not to cycle in school grounds unless taking part in safety training organised by the school.
- Not to bring a mobile phone to school unless need as a case of emergency and is to be handed to the class teacher before class starts and to remember to get their mobile phone back from the teacher after school. If a child is found with a mobile phone it will be confiscated.
- Glass bottles for lunch time drinks are not allowed.
- All pupils' property—coats, bags, books etc. should be marked with pupils' name.
- To treat all staff members, themselves and each other with due respect and courtesy
- To stand back for an adult, to welcome and to show respect to their elders
- Pupils should walk inside school building.
- Pupils should enter/leave school premises via gates.
- Pupils are not allowed over walls or on the roof of the shelter.
- Misuse of internet will be considered a serious breach of discipline.
- At all times during the school day, pupils are subject to the discipline of the school, must be obedient to the staff and keep the school rules.
- Follow school and class rules.

### 4. Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities



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- To nurture in their children a positive attitude towards school and try not to pass on any negative experiences parents may have had themselves while at school.
- Ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually in full school uniform with appropriate clothing for the weather so that their child will be warm and dry playing outside during breaks.
- To send a written note to the class teacher explaining their child's absence from school.
- To ensure the school has up-to-date phone numbers of family/friends to be contacted in case of an emergency.
- To arrange and ensure that a family member/friend is contactable and available to attend the school in the event of an emergency.
- To ensure their child attends school clean and with a good level of hygiene, to check their child's head regularly for head lice and treat as necessary.
- To ensure their child a healthy lunch in school every day in line with the schools 'Healthy Eating Policy'.
- To be interested in, support and encourage their child's school work.
- To ensure that their child has the correct books and materials.
- To arrange meetings with the class teacher/Principal when they are concerned about any issue relating to their child.
- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
- Be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and support its implementation.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- To follow the school's complaints procedure if they have a complaint about a staff member.

**Success Criteria:** (by which the policy will be judged)

- Atmosphere of discipline within the school
- Children are aware of school rules
- Children apply school rules
- Growth in self-discipline
- Co-operation between parents, teachers and pupils in maintaining the code
- Comments or compliments on behaviour
- Children working to the best of their ability
- Class working to the best of their ability
- Improvements in behaviour

**Monitoring and Review**

- To follow the school's complaints procedure if they have a complaint about a staff member.
- 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. All teachers are responsible for the behaviour of children within sight or sound of them and respond to any



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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 has ultimate responsibility for discipline in the school under its management and a duty to ensure that a fair code of disciplines applies therein. The Board of Management will ensure the Code of Behaviour is reviewed yearly or more often if the need arises.
- In registering children in Athleague National School the Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy is accepted and signed by parents of pupils attending the school. In this way the Board of Management, teachers and parents are all promoting positive behavioural patterns in our pupils.

### **Ratification and Communication**

- This policy was compiled with teachers, SNAs, pupils and parents/guardians (email).
- This policy is available to view at the school by the parents.
- This policy was ratified by the Board on \_\_\_\_\_ and is due to be reviewed in June 2025 or earlier if the need arises.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson  
For and on behalf of Board of  
Management

Principal

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

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

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## Appendix 1

### 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 Athleague National School is to function efficiently, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly.

### Absences

- Pupils must not leave the school premises during school hours without permission. If children wish to leave early they must provide a signed note and be collected by parent/guardian who will sign the absence log book in the school before the child can be removed.

### Electronic Games/Mobile Phones

- Children are not allowed to bring electronic games or mobile phones to school. If a child is found to be in possession of a mobile phone/electronic game these sanctions will be put in place:
  - The class teacher will take the mobile phone/electronic game and return it to the child at the end of the school day-with a caution that the child does not bring them to school again.
  - If a child brings them to school again the teacher will take possession of them for a week and will inform the parents/guardians.
  - If a child persists in bringing them to school he/she will be subject to suspension.

### Personal Property

- Children must respect their own property and the property of others. In this regard all pupils are encouraged to have their name on their clothing and other personal property such as books, copies, pencils, pencil cases, wellingtons etc.

### School Property and the Environment

- Pupils must respect all school property i.e. buildings, P.E. equipment, furniture, technical equipment, computers etc. If a pupil causes deliberate damage to any school property, or disregards the rule of not kicking a ball towards the school windows and damages the windows in the process, repair or replacement costs will have to be borne by the parent/guardian.
- It is essential that children keep the school grounds tidy. Children must not throw litter around. Bins are provided.
- Children must respect all books received on loan.

### Lunches/Food

- All children should bring a healthy lunch to school. Chewing gum, crisps, popcorn, fizzy drinks, lollipops and crisp type food are not permitted. Sweets, bars, etc. are not encouraged. Canned and glass-bottled drinks are also forbidden.

### School Uniform

- A school uniform helps children to feel that they belong to a certain school. It also helps to prevent undesirable competition in clothes, especially among older children. The school crest should be on



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all school jumpers. In general, the full uniform is to be worn at all times in the school, barring P.E. days when the school track-suit and runners must be worn. Children should have their names, clearly marked, on both.

### **Behaviour in Class**

- Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to education is unacceptable. A pupil must not behave in a manner likely to disrupt class work.
- Children are expected to listen carefully to instructions and obey them. This applies to the distribution of worksheets, copies, art materials and correction of homework.
- Children are expected to listen carefully to each other and to show respect for their classmates.
- Children are expected to work quietly and independently if any teacher is working with another pupil or dealing with a visitor to the school.

### **Behaviour out of Class**

- Teachers will supervise the playground in accordance with the latest ruling.
- All children should enjoy their time out of class and should not be bullied by others.
- Climbing trees, walls, or swinging from gates, goalposts, or basketball stands is not permitted.
- On dry days all children must leave the classroom at break-time and lunchtime. No child is permitted to enter the classrooms during break/lunchtime without permission from the teacher on supervision duty.
- On wet days children remain in their classrooms to do activities in class based on the teacher's instruction or supervising teacher's instructions. A teacher is on supervision duty at morning break and lunch time-breaks together with the SNA. Children are expected to stay in the classroom and not run around the room and never use sharp implements.

### **Behaviour at swimming lessons**

- To never shout or run in the dressing rooms or pool area
- To listen and obey the instructor and life guard
- To wear a swimming cap
- To never leave the pool from the side-unless under the instructors directions or have asked to go to the toilet
- Never push or play roughly in the pool, pool area or dressing rooms
- To get out of the pool immediately when the whistle is blown
- To dress quickly after each session
- Not to bring shampoo, hairspray, gels, spray deodorants to the pool, roll on deodorants are allowed for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils.
- Not to buy drinks from the vending machine
- To enter/leave the bus in an orderly manner

### **When on school trips/tours, children are expected:**

- To enter/leave the bus in an orderly manner
- To arrive 10 minutes before departure time, parents are expected to contact the school 10 minutes



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before departure time if a contact the school 10 minutes before departure time if a child is sick or unable to attend.

- Not to bring mobile phones or electronic devices on school tours
- To sit in their seats with their seatbelts on and avoid loudness that would distract the driver
- To take drinks and sweets at the appointed lunch breaks
- To stay in their appointed groups at all times
- To return the parental/guardian permission slips allowing the child to go on tour.

### **Homework**

- Homework is an essential part of school life and it is necessary in order to reinforce what has been learned in class and to foster independent study and research. We recommend that parents do the following:
  - Assign a suitable time for homework.
  - Provide a quiet location free from TV and other distractions.
  - Show an interest in your child's work.
  - Check nightly that the homework has been completed and sign the homework journal.
  - Check that all books and copies are being kept neat and tidy.
  - An hour at homework is well spent. If your child is experiencing difficulty make an appointment to see the teacher promptly.

