



## **School Code of Behaviour Policy**

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school. In St. Patrick's 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 the 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.

### **Aims of Code of Behaviour**

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages rewards and reinforces good behaviour
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- 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 to one another and to 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 availability of policies and an ethos of open communication
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy

### **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'.

### **Pupils in St Patrick's National School will expect to-**

- Be treated fairly, consistently and with respect.
- Learn and to be educated in a relatively disruption free environment.
- Be safe from bullying and abuse.
- Have positive behaviour affirmed.
- Have their individual differences recognised and catered for.
- Be listened to.
- Have misbehaviour dealt with promptly and appropriately.



### **Pupils in St Patrick's National School are expected to-**

- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Work quietly, safely and to the best of their ability.
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- Listen to other people and await their turn to speak
- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Respect the right of other pupils to learn.
- Care for their own property.
- Respect all school property and that of other children.
- Avoid behaving in any way that would endanger others.
- Remain seated at all times if the teacher is not in the room.
- Avoid all nasty remarks - swearing or name-calling.
- Avoid speaking unkindly about other children behind their backs.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Walk quietly around the school.
- Be gentle to all.
- Keep the school clean and tidy.
- Try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- Bring the correct materials and books to school.
- Stay on school premises and within designated areas during school times
- Follow school rules.

The Principal and staff are responsible for ensuring that the school's Code of Behaviour is administered in a consistent and fair manner.

#### **Class Rules**

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children, based closely on the rules of the school. 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' and not, '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.

#### **Implementation of the Code of Behaviour**

School Rules are discussed and explained in age appropriate language. All children are required to know the school rules.

The basic school rules are circulated to all parents and to the staff.

#### **School Rules**

- 1. Silence, whispering and normal talking: -Know when, know where, Know why.**  
(This means you are silent when the teacher is talking to the class or to another teacher or when he/she leaves the classroom. Pupils put up their hand when they wish to speak and wait until they are asked, children listen to each other, children work quietly.)
- 2. In the line, in class and school, quiet orderly walking is the rule.**  
(Children walk in an orderly line when moving throughout the school. No rambling about the classroom. No running anywhere inside the building).
- 3. Have homework done, be tidy, be on time.**  
(All homework should be completed by pupils to the best of their ability. Full uniform (or tracksuit as appropriate) is to be worn every day. Do not be late. Have all materials and books necessary.)
- 4. Show respect - Expect respect**  
("Sir", "Miss", "Mrs" "Fr" when addressing an adult. Be polite, mannerly and truthful. Consider the feelings of others. Treat others as you would wish them to treat you. *Keep hand and feet to*



*yourself at all times.* Expect to be treated in a similar fashion. Respect all property; yours, others and the school's.)

**5. Bully not,  
Share a lot,  
Speak kindly and truthfully  
And return what you got.**

(No bullying: Do not take things that do not belong to you. Share and take turns. Include others. Don't insult or criticise other children or talk about others behind their back.)

**Discipline for Learning (DFL)**

In our school, we have a positive approach to teaching and learning. Positive rules for behaviour in class and out of class are learned by pupils (as stated above) at the beginning of their school year. Discipline for learning is fostered through pupil's on-going knowledge, awareness and experience of the Code of Discipline and the respect for the school ethos and are thus motivated to keep these rules. We have many ways of recognizing good behaviour and effect including awards, stamps, smiles, positive comments, rewards and notes in the journal. Good behaviour and achievement will be recognised. Consistent positive influences and relationships are the key to success in our school.

**Rewards**

The school code places a greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions, and the ideal is that pupils will achieve their personal best in all areas of school life. We affirm positive behaviour in all aspects of school life. We try to 'catch' children being good and praise them accordingly.

- Every child who complies with the school rules will be rewarded on a daily basis in their Stamp Book.
- Accumulation of stamps results in a 'Lucky Dip'.
- Lucky dips may be treats, library/activity/computer time/ homework pass.
- On completion of their stamp book, children receive a Principal's Award and a letter of commendation is sent home.

The following are some other examples of how praise can be given in our school;

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in the pupil's copy or homework journal
- A visit to another staff member or to the principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of the group or class
- Delegating a special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to the parent, written or verbal communication

**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.

Minor Unacceptable behaviour include:

- Talking out of turn, interrupting class, not following instructions.
- Not wearing school uniform, incomplete homework, chewing gum,

Serious misbehaviour includes;

- Defacing or destroying other pupil's belongings or school property.
- Disruption to teaching and learning.
- Theft
- Refusal to co-operate with instructions of school staff.



- Abusive language, aggression or physical hurt towards any member of school community.
- Abusive or hurtful language about any pupil or staff member.
- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Bringing a mobile phone or electronic devices to school
- Leaving school/school activities without permission.
- Bullying Behaviour (See Anti-Bullying Policy)
- Bringing dangerous equipment to school

Examples of gross misbehaviour include:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil
- Serious Theft
- Serious Damage to property
- Serious bullying
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes

### Sanctions

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- Helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- Helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- Helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- Helping them learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

Restorative Practice

Restorative Practice in our school provides a focus on developing positive relationships between all members of the school community. It gives opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and learning. Restorative Practice is a process whereby children are given the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and how they and others have been affected by it so as to help heal broken relationships and prevent reoccurrence.

Restorative Questions to respond to Challenging Behaviour

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking about at the time?
3. What have your thoughts been since?
4. Who has been affected by what you did?
5. In what way have they been affected?
6. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

A sanction may also:

- Reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour
- Signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- Prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
- Keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The list is by no means exhaustive. 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 to devise strategies for this.



1. Reasoning with the pupil.
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve the behaviour.
3. Temporary separation from peers within class or on yard, and/or temporary removal to another classroom or to another area of the yard.(eg bench)
4. Loss of privileges eg. responsibilities/golden time. Prescribing extra work.
5. Communication with parents; eg. a note in the homework journal for parents to sign, a phone call or if necessary parents will be invited to the school to discuss the problem.
6. Referral to principal.
7. Pupils may be asked to complete a "Behaviour Reflection Form". The pupil documents the unacceptable behaviour and how they can improve in the future. The form is signed by the pupil, teacher, principal and parents and is retained in the school.
8. Principal communicating with parents via telephone or meeting in school to discuss the behaviour.
9. 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) – This sanction is a last resort when all other avenues have been explored and exhausted.

Usually sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour in question. Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a curricular area except on grounds of Health and Safety.

### **Suspension and Expulsion**

Before serious sanctions such as detention, suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter 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 or gross misbehaviour.

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. 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.

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 Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

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

### **Suspension**

This procedure is used in the case of gross misbehaviour and or health & safety grounds:

- a) If there is a single incident of gross misbehaviour the Principal requests a meeting with the parents. If considered warranted the Principal reserves the right to suspend the pupil for 3 days initially. This power of suspension is delegated to the principal by the school Board of Management.



- b) In certain circumstances the Principal with the approval of their Chairperson of the BoM may suspend a pupil for 5 school days
- c) A meeting of the BoM may authorise further suspension up to a maximum of 10 days. Suspension will be in accordance with Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

### **Appeal**

Parents of a pupil who has been suspended for 20 school days or more are entitled under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 to appeal such a suspension.

### **Expulsion**

This procedure may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

#### Grounds for Expulsion

- Behaviour is persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- Continued presence of pupil constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- Pupil responsible for serious damage to property.

#### Automatic Expulsion

BoM may sanction automatic expulsion for certain prescribed behaviours:

1. Sexual Assault
2. Possession of illegal drugs
3. Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
4. Actual violence or physical assault
5. Serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff.

#### Procedures in Respect to Expulsion

1. Detail investigation by school principal with cooperation of school staff.
2. Recommendation by principal to BoM.
3. BoM considers Principals recommendation and holds hearing
4. BoM decision, is expulsion appropriate? If BoM recommends expulsion, the BoM will propose a date which will allow a 20-day cooling off period
5. Education Welfare Officer is informed of proposal to expel pupil and effective date of that proposal
6. Parents of the pupil are informed of rights to invoke a Section 29 appeal under the Education Act 1998
7. Education Welfare Officer arranges consultations
8. Confirmation of decision.

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

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal 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 Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.





### **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 may be put in place in consultation with parents, the class teacher, learning support/resource teacher, the principal and where *possible* 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 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*
- *School notice board*
- *School web-site/e-mails*
- *TextaParent service.*

### **Attendance/ Education Welfare Act**

Under the Education Welfare Act 200, absences or lateness must be explained. Absences must be explained using the absence slips provided by the school. Lateness must be explained with a written note signed by parent. Absences of 20 days or more must be referred by the school to Education Welfare Services- TUSLA.

When a pupil has to leave school early (i.e. before 2pm/3pm) a note from parents must be brought to the class teacher stating the time at which the pupil is to leave. Children with hospital or dental appointments on an ongoing basis should give a copy of appointments to office secretary. Parents/Guardians must sign out pupils who are collected early from school. Sign out book is kept in the office.

Daily attendance and punctuality are required from pupils. School opens to receive pupils at 9.10am each morning.

Please refer to School Attendance Policy.

The Education Welfare Officer- TUSLA is available to support parents with attendance issues.

### **ROUTINES & GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### **School day:**

School starts at 9.20am. School finishes at 2.00pm for Junior and Senior Infants & 3.00pm for 1<sup>st</sup> –6<sup>th</sup> classes.

In order to prevent undue disturbance to the other classes it would be appreciated if those infants being collected would be collected promptly at 2.00pm.

There are two breaks of 20 minutes –from 11 until 11.20a.m. and from 12.40 until 1p.m.



### To keep the school in a good clean condition

1. Chewing gum is not allowed on the school premises
2. Food is only eaten in classroom only.
3. All litter should be disposed of in the bins provided.
4. Entrance and exit from the school is through the junior door for the juniors, middle door for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 3<sup>rd</sup> class and the senior door for 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> class
5. All children are encouraged to recycle.

### **Dress**

- Each pupil must wear a school uniform. The school uniform is a navy jumper with school crest, which is supplied through Faulkner's Shop, Athboy and light blue polo shirt and navy trousers or skirt. The trousers/skirt and polo shirt may be purchased from any shop. On P.E. days a navy fleece tracksuit must be worn. (Logo bottoms i.e. O'Neills are not permitted).
- During summer months' plain navy shorts may be worn.
- *In the interest of hygiene and safety a suitable change of clothing may be required for Physical Education. to include non-slip runners and socks for football. A change of socks is necessary after games.*
- For safety reasons no jewellery is allowed.
- Students may wear a watch and stud earrings.
- Children are not permitted to dye/highlight their hair.
- The use of make-up and nail varnish is prohibited.
- Tattoos or any body decoration are not permitted.

### **Playtime**

Safety and enjoyment of all are of the utmost importance during playtime.

Children play outside every day when the weather is dry. The playground is supervised by a teacher at all times. We have no facility to accommodate children during lunchtime except on the yard. On wet days, children are supervised in their classrooms. Some *Rainy Day* games are provided for the children to play with.

- In general during winter months' children play on the tarmac surface only. Groups take turns playing soccer and basketball. Usually off grass after Halloween and back on grass on dry days after Easter.
- The senior class children have the option of walking or running around the track.
- The junior children take turns to play in the Wendy house.
- When grassed area is used children stay inside the perimeter fence/wall.
- Inappropriate behaviour or rough play is not allowed. (kicking, pushing, spitting, punching, fighting, bullying etc)
- Bad language or swearing is not acceptable.
- Children are not allowed to leave the yard for any reason without permission.
- Children will be given "thinking time" for unsafe or inappropriate yard behaviour.

### **General**

1. The class teacher should be informed when someone other than a legal guardian is collecting his or her child.
2. In order to prevent disturbance of classes, we would appreciate if phone calls to school were kept to a minimum and if possible at break times. If your call is unanswered please leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as possible.
3. We welcome Parent/Teacher contact. On non-urgent business please make an appointment with the class Teacher.
4. In the event of your child being ill, please allow adequate recuperation time in order to limit the spread of ailments within the school population.
5. We have a healthy eating policy in the school. We recommend sandwiches, fruit and milk/water. We exclude sweets, bars and fizzy drinks. Children are allowed a small treat on a Friday.





The following policies relevant to our Code of Behaviour Policy are available on the school website

- Anti –Bullying Policy
- Anti- Cyber Bullying Policy
- Health and safety statement
- Child Protection Policy

We recognise the importance both of a strong sense of community within the school and the existence of a high level of co-operation among teachers, ancillary staff, pupils, parents and the Board of Management.

This policy was reviewed by the BOM every two years since 2014.

A review took place at a Zoom BOM meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2020

This policy was reviewed again as part of our engagement with SSE under the heading of “Well-Being in our School” in January 2022. It was ratified at a Board Meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2022

Reviewed March 2023.

Ratified by the Board of Management 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson BOM)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)

Date \_\_\_\_\_