

Code of Behaviour

St. Patrick's Infants School

Gardiner's Hill, Cork.

Think

Kind Hands, Kind Feet, Kind Words.

Introductory Statement

The Board of Management, Principal, teaching staff, ancillary staff and parents of St. Patrick's Infants School, has compiled this document.

The Board of Management ratified this policy on the _____ of **May** 2017.
The B.O.M reserve the right to amend, update and revise the Code of Behaviour as required.

Rationale

The school is a community consisting of pupils, parents, teachers, ancillary staff and Board of Management. It is necessary to provide a framework, which promotes constructive behaviour and discourages unacceptable behaviour for the well being of our school as a community. From this will come a strong sense of civic awareness and care for the environment, the happy, safe, secure and well-ordered environment, which is conducive to the academic, personal, social and emotional development of each child.

In keeping with our school ethos we aim to ensure that children are educated in a caring, nurturing and challenging environment free from disruption.

Aims

1. To provide a happy, safe, secure environment where each child can achieve his/her full potential in all areas of their development.
2. To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
3. To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
4. To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others.
5. To facilitate the education and development of every child and enable teachers to teach without disruption.
6. To foster caring attitudes to one another.
7. To foster a sense of pride in our school, our community and our environment.

Implementation

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. We will place a strong emphasise on positive behaviour with good behaviour being encouraged and rewarded. Rules will be kept to a minimum and will be applied in a

fair and consistent manner with due regard to the pupils age and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour

1. Pupils are encouraged and 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.
2. Pupils are encouraged and expected to take pride in their appearance, to have all books and required materials for class.
3. Pupils are encouraged and expected to attend school every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which the school must be informed (in writing when requested), of the reason for the absence. The school will then record this information.
4. Pupils are encouraged and expected to wear a correct uniform
5. Pupils are encouraged and expected to obey a staff instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
6. Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to co-operate with the school at all times in dealing with incidents of alleged bullying in accordance with the school policy.
7. Pupils are encouraged and expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.

Our School Rules

1. Kindness to others and good manners are encouraged and expected at all times in the classroom, on the corridor and in the schoolyard.
2. The use of inappropriate language and any form of bullying are unacceptable.
3. Attentiveness and full co-operation with staff both in and out of class is encouraged and expected.
4. All those in our school must respect their own property, school property and the property of others. Please keep our school and school grounds free from litter.
5. To ensure the children's safety and avoid anxiety, punctuality is encouraged and expected at all times. School starts for pupil contact at 8.35am and finishes at 1.15pm.
6. We are a health promoting school and encourage healthy lunches. Junk food and fizzy drinks are not allowed.
7. The school must be notified in writing or directly to class teacher to explain absences or if there is a change in the normal routine e.g. collection by another/early collection.
8. The school must be notified if a child will be late for school.
9. Homework is completed as arranged.
10. Class and yard rules as laid down by the Board of Management and staff are complied with at all times.
11. Pupils are required to remain in classrooms, school building or school grounds at all times, under supervision and cannot leave without prior permission.

It is the policy of Saint Patrick's Infants School to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. The following strategies are in use:

Strategies/Incentives to promote positive behaviour

"Catch them being good".

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment/smiley face/sticker on a child's workbook/exercise book/copy
- Praise in front of peers/whole school at assemblies
- Individual/class merit awards/stamps/stickers etc
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- Written or verbal communication with parents. As we are infant school we are in the fortunate position to meet regularly with parents. These meetings are invaluable in promoting positive behaviour
- A visit to another member of staff or to the principal for commendation
- Golden moments, children are allowed choose their own activity
- Effort is always recognised, appreciated and rewarded e.g. A pat on the back, take a bow, bualadh bos
- A school assembly will be held at 8.35am each Friday to promote and encourage positive behaviour.

Discouraging Misbehaviour

Our school uses elements of the '**Big Toe First**' Technique, which include the following:

- ✓ Acknowledge appropriate behaviour
- ✓ Increase physical proximity while using positive cuing
- ✓ Ask a brief private question to clarify any misunderstanding
- ✓ Give a brief, simple and private direction followed by wait time to watch, wait and observe the response
- ✓ Acknowledge and redirect instead of arguing
- ✓ Wait, watch and observe the response
- ✓ Private assertive rule reminder, reward reminder
- ✓ Offer a choice: quiet time – choice – response
- ✓ Cool off
- ✓ Exit plan

SANCTIONS

The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross has been judged by the Principal, staff, parents' representatives and B.O.M or a common sense approach with regards to the gravity/frequency of such misbehaviour as follows:

Examples of minor misdemeanours:

- Being discourteous/unmannerly/unkind
- Running in school classrooms or corridors
- Interrupting class work
- Littering school environs
- Repeatedly leaving seat without permission

Examples of serious misdemeanours:

- Repeated minor misdemeanours
- Constantly disruptive in class
- Telling lies repeatedly
- Using unacceptable language repeatedly
- Back answering a teacher or special needs assistant
- Damaging school or other children's property
- Stealing

Examples of gross misdemeanours:

- Repeated serious misdemeanours
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards other children or staff members
- Bullying
- Vandalising school property
- Bringing potentially dangerous items to school

Aggression will be defined as any incident of intentional hitting, slapping, kicking, biting, pinching, spitting, head butting, use of weapons or throwing missiles. The school has a policy of *zero tolerance* towards aggressive behaviour. Class teachers will deal with one of incidents. Following repeated incidents of aggression parents/guardians will be called immediately to the school.

When a behaviour problem arises the following shall apply:

1. The class teacher on duty deals with it and may impose a sanction.
2. If the problem is not solved, the class teacher shall consult the Principal and/or the parents/ guardians of the child with a view to helping the child overcome the difficulty.
3. If the problem persists or in the case of serious and gross misbehaviour it may be necessary to have on-going discussions between the parents/guardians, teacher and Principal to monitor the situation, always with the objective of helping the child and being mindful of the health and safety of the child and others. A behaviour plan shall be put in place if necessary.
4. Where there are repeated incidents of serious misdemeanours or in the case of gross misdemeanours, the board of management will meet to consider the situation and make the necessary decisions.
5. All incidents of serious /gross misdemeanours should be recorded in class behaviour record book. Inform child and parents that this is being recorded. Details should include advice and/or warnings given, consequences of its repetition.
6. Teacher/staff member should complete an incident form.
7. The process will involve fair procedures based on the principles of natural justice including:
 - Advising parents/guardians effected by proposed decision a fair opportunity to present their case including advising them on appeals procedures.
 - Reach a decision in an unbiased manner.

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour with due regard to the age and emotional development of the pupils. Individual circumstances may be taken into account when applying sanctions i.e. to be

reflected in child's behaviour plan or IEP. In the case of a child who has special educational needs, the strategies used and sanctions given should be based on the causes of the behaviour.

Sanctions:

Sanctions may include

- Time out to reason with pupil, use of the "thinking chair".
- Verbal reprimand, including advice on how to improve
- Temporary separation from peers/friends with in class and /or temporary removal to another class
- Loss of privileges
- Standing quietly on calm down time, thinking time
- Removal from play in the yard
- Miss part or all of break
- Referral to Principal communicating with parents
- Exclusion (suspension or exclusion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for national Schools as amended by curricular and Education and Welfare Act 2000). Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in curricular area, except on the grounds of health/safety.

Staff may not restrain a child unless their behaviour poses an immediate threat to themselves or others. It is not recommended that a staff member will move/lift a child to a safer location unless it poses an immediate threat to the child. Restraint may only be used as a last resort. Under no circumstances should staff lift a child without proper training. The Board of Management will arrange this training for Health and Safety reasons.

Suspension/Expulsion:

Before serious sanctions such as partial suspension (restricted day)/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 on repeated incidents 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 another pupil/staff member/adult 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 by the Principal and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. 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 or information from consultation with other support agencies. Suspension will be in accordance with the rules for National Schools Education Welfare Act 2000 and 2002.

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 and staff, the board may authorise the chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion with the parents.

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

Where suspension/expulsion is being considered the process will involve fair procedures based on the principles of natural justice including:

- Advising parents/guardians effected by proposed decision a fair opportunity to present their case including advising them on appeals procedures.
- Reach a decision in an unbiased manner.

In exceptional circumstances, for Health and Safety reasons, it may be necessary to send a child with disruptive behaviour home. Any decision in this regard will be taken by the Principal/Senior Management in consultation with the class teacher. The child's parent/guardian is required to come immediately to the school.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parents 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 pupils reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupils 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 in consultation with the Board of Management.

NOTIFICATION OF PUPIL ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL

Parent(s) / guardian(s) are expected to communicate the reasons for the non-attendance of their child by:

- Notifying the school of the cause of absence not later than the third day of absence (Notifying the school office by phone)
- Sending a note to class teacher following an absence. This note should clearly state the child's full name and address, date, duration and reason for absence.

All absence notes are kept by the class teacher.

Timetable for Review

The operation of this policy will be reviewed and, if necessary, amended on an annual basis.

Review

The policy was reviewed in **May** 2017 by the Board of Management.

Ratification & Communication

Parents were notified of its existence and were invited to look and comment on the policy, which was displayed in the school's Reception and on the school's website.

This policy will be distributed to all BOM members at meeting level. A copy will be given to Parents' Association representatives. It will be available to parents on the school website and as a hard copy in reception. It will be communicated to teachers via the school's server and to Special Needs Assistants via a hard copy in reception and in the Principal's Office.