**ST JOSEPH’S PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

Aims

The aims of the Code of Behaviour of St Joseph’s Primary School are:

* To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
* To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
* To develop pupils’ self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
* To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance 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.

# Implementation

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Rules will be kept to a minimum, and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

# General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour

1. 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
2. Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
3. 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.
4. Pupils are expected to obey a teacher’s instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
5. Pupils are expected to attend school 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.

**Bullying**

Bullying is repeated verbal, psychological or physical aggression by an individual or group against others. The most common forms of bullying are aggressive physical contact, name-calling, intimidation, extortion, isolation and taunting. Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to cooperate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy.

Affirming Positive Behaviour

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions.

Strategies/Incentives

* A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
* A comment on a child’s exercise book.
* A visit to another class or Principal for commendation.
* Praise in front of class group.
* Individual Certificates
* Class Certificates
* Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
* Written or verbal communication with parent.

Discouraging Misbehaviour

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 age and emotional development. These may include

* Reasoning with pupil.
* Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
* Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class.
* Prescribing extra work.
* Detention during break.
* Communication with parents.
* Referral to Principal.
* Principal communicating with parents.
* 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).

These sanctions listed are not exhaustive and may be elaborated upon.

Examples of Minor Misbehaviour

* Bringing a mobile phone or electronic equipment to School and not handing it up to the class teacher (see Mobile Phone Policy).
* Chewing gum not permitted.
* Interrupting class work.
* Arriving consistently late for School.
* Leaving assigned seat without permission.
* Leaving litter around the School.
* Not wearing correct school uniform.
* Unmannerly behaviour including using bad language
* Not completing homework without good reason/ not having homework journal signed by parent/guardian.
* Not following teacher instruction.
* Inappropriate responses to teacher correction (eg. ignoring, back answering, etc.)

This list is not exhaustive and may be elaborated upon.

Examples of Serious Misbehaviour

* Behaviour that is hurtful (inc. bullying, harassment, racism, discrimination, victimisation and/or violence).
* Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning.
* Verbal abuse of a pupil or staff member.
* Threats or physical hurt to another person.
* Damage to property.
* Spitting
* Theft.
* Leaving the School without permission.
* Bringing dangerous items to School.
* Continued and repetitive inappropriate responses to teacher correction.
* Repeated and continual cases of minor misbehaviour.

This list is not exhaustive and may be elaborated upon.

Examples of Gross Misbehaviour

* Physical assault on a pupil or staff member.
* Serious damage to school property.
* Engaging in behaviour which puts fellow pupils and teachers in danger, including throwing chairs/tables in classroom.
* Throwing items around the classroom in an aggressive manner.
* Serious unacceptable personal conduct (inc. shouting/roaring in class, failure to follow teacher instruction and/or insulting and aggressive behaviour towards staff and/or pupils).
* Failure to follow all Covid Guidelines.
* Spitting at someone.
* Serious theft.
* Serious bullying.
* Carrying or taking drugs, alcohol and/or cigarettes.
* Aggressive, threatening and/or violent behaviour towards a teacher and/or pupil will be regarded as gross misbehaviour.

This list is not exhaustive and may be elaborated upon.

Suspension/Expulsion

The decision to suspend/expel a pupil will follow from serious/gross misbehaviour where

* The pupil’s behaviour has a serious and/or detrimental effect on the education of other pupils.
* The pupil’s continued presence in School constitutes a threat to the safety of pupils and/or staff.
* The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents/guardians will be utilised. Communication with parents/guardians may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension and expulsion may be considered. Parents/Guardians concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child’s case.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents/guardians will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the principal. If the parents/guardians 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/guardians.

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, expulsion may be considered 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 Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

**Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)**

Following or during a period of suspension, the parents/guardians may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parents/guardians 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.

# School Rules

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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 a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly.

Before/After School

Parents/Guardians are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening time of 8.40am or after the official closing time of 2.30pm except where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management. Pupils involved in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with school behaviour policy during these times.

\*\*As part of the School Covid Plan pupils will be able to arrive to School from 8.30am and will be supervised in their classroom. This practice will continue for as long as is necessary under the School Covid Plan.\*\*

Student Absences

The Education Welfare Act 2000 stipulates that parents must notify the school of a pupil’s absence and reason for this absence. Parents/Guardians are required to send in a signed, dated note informing the teacher of their child’s absence from school and the reason for this absence. This is to be sent in on the first day of return to school. In cases of serious absences (over 20 days) a letter is sent to the parents/guardians by the school. This may occur several times depending on the level of absence. All pupil absence are reported to the National Educational Welfare Board.

Management of Problem Behaviour

Children who repeatedly misbehave and/or children with special needs may be supported by a Behaviour Management Programme, whereby support from parents/guardians and from outside agencies may be sought. In specific circumstances and where appropriate the parent/guardian may be requested to attend for short periods during the school day, to support the child. Suitable areas will be provided.

At any time during the child’s education in St Joseph’s Primary School, the Board of Management may consult with the parents/guardians and decide, in exceptional circumstances, to review the participation in the school day, with a view to phasing in the participation of the child. This would be considered where a child’s behaviour is such as interferes with his/her right to education or that of other children or with his/her safety or that of other children and/or staff.

This phased participation would be reviewed on a regular basis, participation being increased, maintained or decreased in line with targets being achieved or not achieved and would continue until such time as the child ceases to present such challenging behaviour.

This intervention would form part of an Individual Learning Plan and be in consultation with the parents/guardians, National Education Welfare Board and National Educational Psychological Service and would involve the support of the School’s learning support teachers and other relevant agencies if necessary and in accordance with the School’s Code of Behaviour and other relevant Policies.

**Board of Management’s Responsibilities**

* Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
* Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
* Ratify the code.

# Principal’s Responsibilities

* Promote a positive climate in the school.
* Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
* Arrange for review of the Code, as required.

**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.
* 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/guardians when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

# Pupils’ Responsibilities

* Attend school regularly and punctually.
* Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/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.
* Include all pupils in games and activities.
* Bring correct materials/books to school.
* Follow school and class rules.

**Parents/Guardians’ Responsibilities**

* Ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually.
* Make sure your child wears their school uniform and encourage your child to participate in all school curricular and co-curricular activities.
* Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for all 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.
* Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect their child’s progress/behaviour.
* Send a note if requesting permission for your child to leave school early. The child must be collected from the office.
* Have clothing, books and other personal items clearly named. The school cannot accept responsibility for lost/stolen items.
* Encourage a positive attitude towards homework and sign homework journal each night.
* Leave lunches, sports gear, etc at the office for children during school hours.
* Remember you are always welcome to make an appointment through the office if you wish to speak to your child’s teacher regarding any concerns or issues you may have.

**SCHOOL RULES**

* 1. Pupils must wear their full school uniform or school tracksuit each day.
  2. Dyed hair is strictly forbidden.
  3. Leave valuable jewellery at home. No long or potentially dangerous jewellery to be worn at any time. No facial jewellery allowed.
  4. Wear sensible footwear, tightly closed. No high heels, backless shoes, or other unsafe footwear allowed.
  5. Mobile phones are forbidden. (see Mobile Phone Policy)
  6. Personal stereos, Gameboys, I-Pods, etc. are forbidden.
  7. Homework to be done every night and must be checked and signed by parent/guardian.
  8. Participate fully in all school curricular and co-curricular activities. Attend swimming.
  9. Punctuality is expected at all times. School starts at 8.50am. Late arrivals must register at the office.
  10. Pupils must never leave the school without permission.
  11. When a pupil is missing from School parents/guardians are required to send in a signed, dated note informing the teacher of their child’s absence from school and the reason for this absence. This is to be sent in on the first day of return to school.
  12. No running or unruly behaviour is allowed on the corridors.
  13. At break-time pupils must stay off the corridors and only designated toilets are to be used.
  14. Correct behaviour should be observed at all times in the toilets.
  15. Rough play in the yard is forbidden.
  16. Pupils must stay in their own yard at break time. Take care of yourself and others while playing. When the bell rings at end of break you line up immediately.
  17. Litter and milk cartons are to be placed in the bin. No food allowed in the yard at break time.
  18. Pupils must keep off the grass and out of the staff car park at all times.
  19. Chewing gum, glass bottles and any articles which may cause injury are forbidden.
  20. Pupils should show respect for school and other people’s property.
  21. Pupils should show good manners and respect towards all school staff, other pupils and visitors to the school at all times. Treat everyone with kindness, courtesy and respect.
  22. No inappropriate language.
  23. English and Irish are the spoken languages of the School – in class and in the yard. This is essential in order to ensure the development of all children in the School – both curricular and socially.
  24. Bullying is unacceptable. (see Anti-Bullying Policy)
  25. Obey all teachers’ instructions and school rules at all times.
  26. Adhere to the Code of Behaviour and all other relevant School Policies.

Each September the class teacher in consultation with the pupils draw up a set of classroom rules. These may be displayed in each classroom. Children are reminded regularly of these rules.

Parent/Guardian,

All concerned wish to foster a positive attitude towards St Joseph’s Primary School. Needless to say the vast majority of our pupils and their parents/guardians are supportive of and positive towards the school, and follow all procedures most carefully. The school in turn is most anxious to provide the best opportunity for our pupils to pursue their studies without hindrance from a tiny minority of pupils who can cause much disruption if allowed to go undisciplined.

Children are sensitive and appreciate positivity. Children are rewarded for positive behaviour. Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self discipline and we place greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions. The resulting loyalty of the pupils towards the school promotes both a positive attitude towards school activities and the best attitude towards discipline and full attention to study.

Discipline is not an end in itself. In St Joseph’s we see discipline as a means to an end, an ongoing process requiring constant evaluation and updating.

On occasions where behaviour falls short of that which is expected, then there should be a fair, just, appropriate and agreed response. Pupils are encouraged to acknowledge misdeeds, accept any appropriate response, learn from the experience and put the incident behind them.

The proper channels of communication with the school are an important aspect of our discipline procedure. The most effective schools tend to be those with best relationships with parents. Every effort will be made by the Principal and staff to ensure parents/guardians are kept well informed. Parents/Guardians will be told not only when their child is in trouble but also when they behave particularly well.

I would ask you to read carefully the accompanying Code of Behaviour. If you have any queries or questions please contact me.

Mise le meas,

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Padraig Cronin. (Principal)

**Appendix 1**

**Addendum to Policy During Covid**

During this unprecedented time, the Board of Management of St Joseph’s Primary School will endeavor to do all in its power to provide a safe and secure working/learning environment for all members of the school community. To this end, it is of vital importance that all members of the school community adhere to all safety measures that have been put in place. Failure to comply with all covid guidelines will be treated as gross misbehavior and sanctions will be put in place as per the Code of Behaviour.

These guidelines include but are not limited to –

* Sitting in designated seat in class and not moving around the classroom without the clear permission of the class teacher.
* Amended expectations about break times, including where children may or may not play.
* Clear rules about coughing at or towards any other person, including deliberately coughing or sneezing in the direction of another person.
* No spitting at any time.
* Following routines for arrival and departure.
* Following rules regards social distancing in classroom and yard.
* Refusing to wear a face mask or appropriate PPE equipment if requested by teacher/principal.
* Interfering with the mask worn by another pupil or member of staff.
* Misuse of sanitisers and any other sanitization equipment.
* Refusal to carry out any/all reasonable requests made by staff in order to prevent the spread of Covid-19 within the school community.
* Serious breaches of the School Covid Plan.

Should a student engage in behavior which compromises the health and safety of the school community they will be sanctioned under the School Code of Behaviour Policy and could be suspended or expelled depending on the seriousness of the incident.

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 15th September 2020 and will be reviewed by the Board in September 2021.