

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR
St Lachteen's National School
Review 2015, Review 2019

The aim of this code is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated as far as possible, while acknowledging each child's right to be educated in a relatively disruptive free environment. St. Lachteens National School works to promote an atmosphere of kindness and mutual respect at all times amongst school staff, pupils and parents. We believe that by creating an environment where there is tolerance and consideration for others, we will create the atmosphere of good behaviour.

The aims of Code of Behaviour 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, will emphasise positive behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. The school recognizes the various differences that exist between children and endeavours to accommodate such diversity whenever possible. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted.

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 every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed upon return in writing, stating the reason for absence.

Bullying

Bullying is repeated verbal, psychological or physical aggression by an individual or group against others. Examples of bullying include teasing, jeering, cyber bullying 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. Therefore we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions.

Strategies/Incentives

These may include

- 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 class merit awards, points awards or award stamps.
- 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 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.
- Loss of privileges.
- Detention during break.
- Communication with parents (School White Card system/phone call/ meeting etc.)
- Referral to Principal.
- Teacher/Principal communicating with parents.
- 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).

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health/safety and in exceptional circumstances.

Examples of serious negative behaviour

- Disrespect for staff
- Swearing and/or use of foul language
- Acts of deliberate aggression/confrontational behaviour.
- Incidents of serious defiance
- Theft
- Threat to safety of self or others
- Engaging in behaviour that has a detrimental effect on teaching and learning
- Engaging in behaviour that is hurtful to others e.g. bullying, harassment, discrimination, victimisation.

Procedures for Suspension/Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as detention, suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Where it is proposed to detain a pupil after school hours, the parents or guardians will be notified. 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 any member of staff 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 Local Welfare Education Officer/TUSLA in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

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. Teachers in coordination with 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

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.

All members of the school community will be expected to display the following behaviours:

- Respect for others
- Kindness & willingness to help others
- Courtesy and good manners
- Fairness
- Readiness to use respectful way of resolving difficulties and conflict
- Forgiveness

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 are reminded that the staff of the school cannot accept responsibility for pupils before 9.15a.m. (Official opening time of 9.20 a.m.) or after the official closing time of 2.00 p.m. (infants) 3.00 p.m. (other classes) 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.

PUPIL SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Safety

For my own safety and the safety of others I should:

- Enter and exit through designated doors in an orderly fashion
- Not leave during the school day without being collect by a parent/designated adult who will sign the sign out book near the school office
- Walk quietly around the school to avoid causing a disturbance
- Remain seated at all appropriate times in my classroom
- Always behave well in the yard and never do anything that would put my safety or the safety of others at risk
- Understand that school rules apply also for out of school premises events and activities
- Abide by school rules in relation to jewellery (one pair of small studs only) ,the use of mobile phone (not allowed) and the schools ICT acceptable use policy

Caring for myself

I should:

- Attend school regularly and not miss days without good reason. When returning from absence I should present a written explanation
- Be in school for the start time
- Wear the complete school uniform every day
- Wear the school tracksuit on P.E. days only, unless otherwise instructed.
- Do my best always, and behave well in class so that my fellow pupils and I can learn
- Always complete my homework to the best of my ability
- Participate in school activities and have all the necessary books and materials

- Follow the schools healthy eating policy and remember that fizzy drinks, crisps, popcorn and chewing gum are never allowed. Remember for safety hot drinks/foods are not allowed.
- Be hygienic

Caring for Others

I should:

- Respect the school property and the property of my fellow pupils
- Show respect, for myself and others by being kind, mannerly and polite to all
- Keep the school tidy and litter free and bring home unfinished food, drinks, cartons, wrappers etc.
- I should never bully others, I should never allow others to bully me and if it happens I should tell my parents and my teacher. Bullying is never acceptable

Classroom

'Ground Rules' in each class are consistent with the ethos of the school and set out a positive atmosphere for learning. They are generally created by the class teacher in tandem with the pupils at the start of the school year.

- Teachers ensure that pupils understand and are reminded of how they are expected to behave
- Teachers use a range of management techniques in their classrooms
- A clear system of acknowledging and rewarding good behaviours e.g. Kind Kid and Merit Cards and sanctions for misbehaviour e.g. ticks on a white card will be communicated to the pupils by their class teacher.

Playground

Playground rules will be communicated to staff and pupils regularly at staff meetings, assemblies and in the classroom. All pupils have the right to enjoy the time outside in the playground in a safe environment at break periods. Any action that puts the safety of self or others at risk is considered a misdemeanour.

- In the interest of safety pupils should move safely at all times in the playground. Running is allowed at a safe pace
- In the interests of safety, unless indicated by the teacher on yard that they can use the grass area, pupils should remain on the tarmac
- In the interests of safety pupils should refrain from climbing on school railings, gates and bars
- Any form of fighting or physical aggression is considered a misdemeanour
- In the interests of safety, when the first bell rings during playtime, pupils should stop playing and 'freeze' and then join their class line
- Supervision is provided by school staff and a rota is drawn up by in school management
- In general disciplinary issues are dealt with by the teacher on yard supervision
- In the interests of safety children in the various classes are allocated specific zones in the yard to play
- Pupils who are unable to go the playground due to illness or for other reasons will wait outside the staffroom

Wet days/Days when pupils cannot access the playground

- Pupils remain in their classrooms, unless directed otherwise by teaching staff
- Sharp implements, for example , scissors, compasses and tin whistles are to be used only when a teacher is present in the classroom
- Pupils will have access to activities such as reading, drawing , games and child friendly resources on the Interactive Whiteboard
- Pupils are not allowed to wander around their classrooms /hall etc. during break times
- Pupils are not allowed to use the internet unsupervised during break times

Swimming days

- Pupils are walked safely and quietly from the school to the bus and bus to pool under the supervision of a teacher
- Pupils must listen to and follow teacher and instructor instructions
- No shouting or playing in the dressing rooms
- Every pupils must listen to and obey the instructor
- No running in the pool area or in any area of the pool building
- Swimming caps are required
- Pupils do not leave the pool without the permission of the instructor/teacher
- No jumping into the pool unless under the instructors directions
- No pushing or rough play in the pool
- Pupils are expected to dress quickly after each session
- Shower gels/hairsprays /deodorant etc. are not allowed
- At all times pupils are expected to abide by the rules of the swimming pool

Tour/Out of School Events Rules

- Pupils enter/leave in an orderly fashion
- On the bus pupils must sit in their seats, with seatbelts fastened
- Pupils must follow the instructions of the teacher at all times
- Parental/Guardian permission slips allowing the child to attend the activity/event must be returned to the school prior to the activity/event

The standards and rules contained in the code apply to any situation where the pupils , although off the school premises, is still the responsibility of the school e.g. tours, trips, visits to the Church, Community Centre and Community Facilities, quizzes and matches. The code also applies to extracurricular activities outside school hours where the pupils is still the responsibility of the school e.g. training, matches etc.

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.

Teachers' Responsibilities

- 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.
- Implement the Code of Behaviour
- 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.

Pupils' Responsibilities

- Be aware of and follow the Pupil Safety Considerations as outlined in this Code of Behaviour

Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
- Be familiar with various policies to include the code of behaviour and support their 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 child's progress/behaviour, including changes in family circumstances by arranging an appointment through the school secretary.
- Provide written explanation for your child's absence
- Give a contact number where you can be reached in an emergency.
- Be aware that pupils absent from school for 20 days or more will be notified to TUSLA as is its legal requirement.

- Be aware that the school strives to encourage, support, affirm, be fair to, include and provide a safe and happy environment for children of all abilities and origins.

Be respectful towards teachers and other school personnel

In reviewing this code of Behaviour, the Board of Management has referred to 'Developing a Code of Behaviour, Guidelines for Schools – NEWB May 2009'. Consideration has also been given to the needs and circumstances of St. Lachteens National School.

This document will be reviewed and revised, parents/guardians and pupils will be expected to abide by the most updated Code of Behaviour which if revised will be available to view online. Parents/Guardians will be notified if such revisions occur.

Reviewed by Board of Management on March 19th 2015

Reviewed, amended and ratified by Board of Management February 28th 2019