

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR
St Lachteens National School

Review 2015

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 (SchoolWhite 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. 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 does not accept responsibility for pupils before 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.

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.
- 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.

Pupils' Responsibilities

- Attend school regularly and punctually.

- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Refrain from behaving in any way which would endanger others.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow school and class rules.
- Wear school uniform.
- Be responsible for their own personal property in the school
- Keep the school tidy and litter free.

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 especially 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 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.

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.

Reviewed by Board of Management on March 19th 2015

