

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR
ST. FINIAN'S N.S.
DILLONSTOWN

A review of our school Code of Behaviour was undertaken in Feb 2013, and an Anti-bullying Policy has been included.

The aims of the Code of Behaviour of our school are:

- To provide guidance for pupils, parents and all school staff (permanent and part-time teachers, SNA's or classroom assistants) 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.
- To ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a disruption free environment i.e. to balance the educational needs of a pupil with unacceptable behaviour with the needs of other pupils.
- To promote a safe working environment with freedom from the threat of violence for both staff and pupils.

Our vision for relationships and behaviour in the school is one of collective responsibility and based on a strong sense of community within the school.

We seek to build positive relationships of mutual respect, mutual support and of trust between pupils and teachers. ***Our vision*** for behaviour focuses on personal responsibility with our pupils being valued as responsible, participating members of the school community.

Motivation, encouragement and rewards are central to the code. Good behaviour is positively promoted through the "Going For Gold" programme which acknowledges and affirms good behaviour, progress and effort. The "Going For Gold" achievement programme is a graded whole-school programme. Pupils keep a personal record of achievement which is shared with parents. The programme emphasises rewards rather than sanctions and accommodates the abilities, aptitudes and differences among all our pupils.

Implementation.

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Each teacher and staff member has a responsibility for discipline within the classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school. The overall responsibility lies with the principal. Rules are kept to a minimum and emphasise positive behaviour and are 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.

General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour (for parents and teachers)

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 and to work to the best of their ability.
5. Pupils are expected to attend 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.

Incentives to affirm good behaviour.

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- Achievement stickers or stamps
- Positive comments on a child's exercise book.
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group.
- Individual star awards, "Going for Gold" programme.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Written or verbal communication with parent.
- Work displayed
- Homework pass or reduced homework
- Class treat or prize

Whole-school strategies to promote good behaviour.

- "Going For Gold", pupil achievement programme.
- Positive everyday interactions between staff, parents, and pupils.
- Good school and class routines
- Clear boundaries and rules for pupils
- Involving pupils in the preparation of school and classroom rules.
- Giving positive feedback about behaviour.
- Adults modelling the behaviour expected from pupils. Senior pupils model behaviour for younger pupils.

Sanctions to deal with unacceptable behaviour.

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be proportionate to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to the age and emotional development of the pupil and also cultural background. Factors influencing the seriousness of the misbehaviour are:

- Frequency, duration, persistence of the behaviour
- If it is part of an escalating pattern of poor behaviour
- The context of the behaviour.

Sanctions will be used in a consistent way to remove subjectivity and ensure fairness.

Sanctions will 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.
- Carrying out a useful task in the school
- Prescribing extra work.
- Loss of privileges.
- Partial loss of breaktime
- Supervised detention during break.
- Communication with parents.
- Referral to Principal.
- Principal communicating with parents.
- Formal report to the Board Of Management.
- 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.

Whole- school strategies to deal with unacceptable behaviour.

- Use of an appropriate early warning system (usually three warnings) with clear indication that a sanction will follow and so allow time to amend behaviour.
- Teachers will keep a record of all serious misbehaviour as well as a record of all improvements in the behaviour of disruptive pupils.
- Before resorting to serious sanctions e.g. suspension, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised.
- Interventions will be timely
- Using links with local support services to support the school in responding to a pupil with behavioural difficulties. The school is cognisant of its obligations under the *Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004* to make reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities.
- Behaviour contracts and behaviour targets with monitoring in a supportive way.

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 of any form is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.*** Parents are expected to cooperate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy. This policy is reinforced by the school's implementation of the "Stay Safe" and "Walk Tall" programmes.

Before/After School

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening time of 9:10 a.m. or after the official closing time of 1:50 p.m. (infants) 2:50 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.

Pupil behaviour will be subject to this code on the school bus, school tours and trips, inter-school sporting events, School Sports Day, School masses (both in school and the local church) and any school –linked activity.

Parents can contact the class teacher or the Principal about behaviour matters.

Exclusion: Suspension/Expulsion from school

Before serious sanctions such as 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 will 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 **and will result in immediate suspension.**

Examples of gross misbehaviour which will result in *immediate suspension* are:

- Incidents of aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards pupils, teachers or any member of the school staff.
- Continued bullying, verbal abuse, offensive language towards pupils or a member of staff.
- Any act of deliberate violence.
- Supply or use, at school, of any inappropriate substance.
- Abuse of e-mail, internet, text bullying.
- Stealing.
- Persistently disruptive behaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, a pupil can and may be suspended, initially for three school days. The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing 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. 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. Following suspension, the pupil will be formally re-admitted to the class by the principal. A behaviour management plan may be necessary on re-admission. A pupil may be re-admitted during a suspension at the discretion of the chairperson/ principal. Parents must give a satisfactory undertaking that a re-instated pupil will behave in accordance with the code.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Expulsion will be utilized when all other sanctions e.g. repeated suspensions have been invoked. . Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board will notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act. The Board will also be guided by the procedures and recommendations outlined in the most recent NEWB guidelines for schools (2008)

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 schoolwork 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.

The principal and teachers are supported in the above by ***all school personnel***.

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 and all school personnel.
- 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 or any type of bullying behaviour
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow school and class rules.
- Set a good example for other pupils.
- Accept responsibility for their own personal behaviour and be aware of the consequences of behaviour.

Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities

Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves, others and for property.

- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's schoolwork.
- 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, or does not comply with the code.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect their child's progress/behaviour.
- Notify the principal or class teacher of a child's absence and the reason for an absence i.e. by a signed and dated note in the child's homework journal, or in a signed and dated written note, or by a phone call to the school. The NEWB require a reason for absences.

This review was ratified by Board of Management on

Date: _____

Signed _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Review:

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____