

St. Joseph's School

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Code of Behaviour – April 2015.

1. Introduction.

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB in 2008, the Board of Management of St Joseph's School has adopted the following policy. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the **Guidelines for Schools** which was published in 2008.

- **Developing a Code of Behaviour :Guidelines for Schools.**

This book was used extensively in the drawing up of the code.

A hard copy of the book is available from the school office. It can also be downloaded from this website. www.newb.ie

2. Aims and Objectives of the Code.

- To create a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To create a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning.
- To encourage pupils to take personal responsibility for their learning and for their behaviour.
- To help young people to mature into responsible participating citizens.
- To build positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support among pupils, staff and parents
- To ensure that the school's high expectations for the behaviour of all the members of the school community are widely known and understood.

3. Key Principles underpinning the Code of Behaviour .

Providing clarity

The code of behaviour describes the school's expectations about how each member of the school community (pupils, staff and parents) will help to make the school an excellent place for teaching and learning.

The code also describes how the school will respond to behaviour that interrupts, diminishes or prevents teaching and learning in the school.

Affirming that everyone's behaviour matters

The school's atmosphere is created by the actions and behaviour of everyone in the school community. The behaviour of the adults in a child's life, especially the behaviour of parents and teachers, is a significant influence on how a child acts.

Focusing on promoting good behaviour

The code gives priority to promoting good behaviour. The tone and emphasis of the code is focused on setting high expectations and affirming good positive behaviour.

Recognising that relationships are crucial

The quality of relationships between teachers and pupils is a powerful influence on the standards of behaviour in a school. The school code fosters relationships of trust between pupils, teachers and other school staff. Adults have more responsibility than students for building these relationships.

Focusing on personal responsibility

The code helps young people to experience the value of being responsible, participating members of the school community.

Ensuring fairness and equity

The code is informed by the principle of fairness. It respects the principles of natural justice, and ensures a consistent approach to behaviour on the part of all school personnel.

Promoting equality

The code promotes equality for all members of the school community. The code prevents discrimination and allows for appropriate accommodation of difference, in accordance with Equal Status legislation.

Recognising educational vulnerability

The code of behaviour reflects the school's commitment to provide positive support, including active teaching of relevant skills, for those students who are more vulnerable to behaviour problems.

Attending to the welfare of students

The code of behaviour is based on a commitment to the welfare of every pupil, including the right to participate in, and benefit from, education.

Attending to the welfare of staff

The code helps to promote a positive and safe working environment for all staff.

4. Expected standards of behaviour.

Very high standards of behaviour are expected from every pupil in the school. Pupils will be taught how to achieve these high standards. Every adult in our school community is expected to model a very high standard of behaviour to set a good example for the pupils.

Our standards of behaviour will reflect the following values:

- respect for oneself and for others.
- kindness and willingness to help others.
- courtesy and good manners.
- fairness.
- readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict.
- forgiveness.
- respect for rules and a recognition of the need for rules.

5. School Rules

5a. General School Rules.

1. Pupils are expected to be on time for school, which commences at 8.50 a.m., every morning.
2. At all times, pupils are expected to enter, leave and move within the school, on the school grounds and on the avenue leading to the school, in an orderly manner.
3. Running, eating or drinking on the stairs and corridors are not allowed. Chewing gum is also not allowed.
4. The use of bad language is unacceptable at all times and is not allowed in the school, on school grounds or on the avenue leading to the school.
5. Riding bikes, scooters and using skateboards is not allowed in the school building, on the grounds or on the avenue leading to the school.
6. Each individual pupil is expected to do his/her best in class and to take responsibility for his/her work. Each individual pupil is also expected to participate in school activities to the best of his/her ability
7. Each individual pupil is expected , at all times, to respect staff, other pupils and visitors to the school .
8. Bullying in any of its forms is not tolerated. An Anti-Bullying Policy is held in the school.

5b. Classroom Rules

1. At the start of every new school year individual class teachers will draw up a set of rules for their class. The pupils in the class will be consulted , and will have input, in an age appropriate way , into the drawing up of the rules. The pupils in the class will be able to claim ownership of the particular set of rules.
2. Every effort will be made to word the rules as simply and as positively as possible.
3. The rules will be discussed in class on a regular basis and may be amended from time to time.
4. Emphasis will be based on praising and/or rewarding good positive behaviour. Appropriate rewards and sanctions will be discussed in class.

5c. Playtime Rules

1. The location for pupils' playtime is the school playground,
2. A set of Playground Rules have been drawn up. These rules are displayed in every classroom .The rules are discussed regularly, in class, in an age appropriate way .
3. The grass areas within the school playground are out of bounds when necessary and pupils are informed accordingly.
4. Teachers may record incidents of misbehaviour , that happen in the playground , in the **Playground Book**.

5d. School Uniform

In keeping with the school's tradition, the school uniform is expected to be worn every day, except on P.E. days when the school tracksuit is worn. On certain days (eg for school tours) the class teacher may decide that it would be more appropriate to wear the school tracksuit. Parents and pupils will be informed accordingly.

5e. Homework

School homework is allocated by the teachers. It is expected that homework will be completed neatly and overseen by a parent or guardian. When homework is not completed, it is expected that the class teacher will receive a written note from parent or guardian.

Homework is not assigned on Friday.

Homework will be differentiated, by teachers, in order to take into consideration an individual pupils educational strengths or needs.

Pupils in first to sixth classes are given a homework journal in which the pupil can record his/her homework. The journal must be signed every evening by a parent or guardian.

Guidelines on homework will be given to parents and pupils by individual class teachers at the start of the school year and at times during the school year.

5f Absences.

A written note for the class teacher is required from parent or guardian when a pupil returns to school after being absent. Parents/Guardians should keep records of their child's/children's visits to the doctor, dentist, etc.

The Principal will inform an educational welfare officer about school attendance and absences in accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

6.Children with special educational needs.

The Code of Behaviour applies to every pupil in the school. Children who have special educational needs sometimes have a difficulty understanding and interpreting rules. Support teachers and SNAs will assist these pupils and will support the class teachers in their explanation of rules etc.

7.Responding to inappropriate behaviour.

Inappropriate behaviour is divided into three categories;

Minor incidents of misbehaviour. Examples - Running in the school building; Talking in class; being disrespectful towards others.

Serious incidents of misbehaviour. Examples - Being continuously disruptive in class; back answering ; being very disrespectful towards others; any behaviour that interferes considerably with teaching and learning.

Gross incidents of misbehaviour. Examples - any behaviour that has a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students; where the continued presence of the pupil in the school constitutes a possible threat to the safety of others; where the pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.

Responsibility for dealing with incidents of misbehaviour

The principal and teachers have responsibility for dealing with incidents of misbehaviour in the school , on the school premises and on the avenue leading to the school. Every teacher is responsible for maintaining and encouraging appropriate high standards of behaviour in his / her classroom and also shares a common responsibility for safe order in the school .Other school staff, particularly SNAs also share a common responsibility for safe order .

In seeking to address the inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour of any pupil, the pupil's age and the circumstances of the particular behaviour will be taken into consideration.

An important element of the approach to a student's inappropriate behaviour is a problem-solving approach , where the teacher and the school respond to the unwanted behaviour using these steps.

1. Gather information. Understand the context and the factors that may be affecting behaviour.
2. Generate ideas about possible solutions that take account of the reasons why it may be happening.
3. Decide and agree on specific strategies.
4. Implement the agreed strategy consistently.
5. Review progress: evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the intervention.
6. Throughout the process, the relationship with the pupil will be kept as positive as possible.

The use of sanctions .

When advice and the promotion of positive behaviour is not accepted by the pupil, the teacher may decide to impose a sanction on the pupil.

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by;

- helping children to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others.
- helping children (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences.
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour.
- signal to other pupils and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning.
- keep the pupil, or other pupils, or adults, safe.

Steps that will be followed to deal with inappropriate behaviour

1. For minor incidents of misbehaviour the teacher will communicate with the pupil and will inform him/her that the behaviour in question is unacceptable. The teacher will also help the pupil to understand why this is so.
2. If the minor incidents persist, parents will be informed .For pupils in first to sixth classes the teacher will inform the parents in writing in the child's homework journal. If there is no improvement following the writing in the journal, the teacher will organise a meeting with parents and pupil. In the infant classes the teacher will communicate with parents in face to face meetings.
3. For repeated unacceptable behaviour , or for serious incidents of misbehaviour , the matter may be referred to the Principal. He/she may engage with the pupil and/or teacher to seek a satisfactory solution. Advice on how the behaviour may be improved will be offered. Support teachers may be asked to offer support to the pupil. The class teacher will keep a written record of the behaviour and the steps taken to help improvement at this stage. At all times the pupil will be supported to help him/her to self regulate his/her behaviour.
4. In the event of serious, unacceptable behaviour continuing to persist, or for gross incidents of misbehaviour the Principal will contact parents/guardians and arrange a meeting with all involved to discuss the difficulties and to find possible solutions. All decisions made at this meeting will be recorded in writing.
5. Suspension .The Board of Management has authorised the principal to sanction a suspension of up to three school days. The principal may impose a suspension for any incident of gross misbehaviour or for persistant serious misbehaviour.

If the principal intends to suspend a pupil he/she will contact parents/guardians and will invite them to meet with him/her to discuss the matter .If the parents are unable to attend this meeting they will be informed in writing about the suspension .Parents /pupil will then be invited to meet with the principal before the term of suspension ends. It is essential that the reasons for the suspension are discussed and that assurance, from parents/pupil, that the pupil's behaviour will improve on return to school, is given. If this assurance is not received or if the parents and pupil do not meet with the principal then the matter will be referred to the Board of Management.

If the principal suspends a pupil the Board of Management will be informed about the suspension at their next meeting.

6. Suspensions for any period longer than three school days is a matter for the Board of Management to decide on.
7. Expulsion: Only in extreme circumstances and when all other avenues of resolution have been explored and exhausted will a pupil be expelled from the school. The expulsion will be carried out in accordance with Part 3, Section 22, of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Rules for National Schools.

8. Formulating and adopting this Code of Behaviour

All Teachers ,SNAs, ancillary school staff and parents have been involved in planning this Code of Behaviour.

This Code of Behaviour was adopted by the Board of Management on 20/04/2015

9. Circulating the Code of Behaviour

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to all parents .A copy of this policy is given to all parents when their child is enrolled in the school. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

10. Review of the Code of Behaviour.

This Code of Behaviour and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel . A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department. **Date of next review: June 2016**

Signed: Maire D'Garra
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Pádraig Fay
(Principal)

Date: 24/4/2014.

Date: 23/04/2015