

Foreword: In accordance with the Education Welfare Act (2000) and remaining cognisant of the rights of every child, we have developed our Code of Behaviour. We want St. Andrew's National School to be a place where our pupils can feel safe to learn, to play, to be themselves and to be unique during their formative years of primary education. We want them to grow in the knowledge of themselves and of others, of God and of the world around them.

## **Code of Behaviour**

### **Introduction**

In St. Andrew's National School, we adopt a positive approach to teaching, learning and discipline. We aim to work together in a respectful and caring community, in which the care of the individual student is the concern of all staff members. We strive to foster an atmosphere that is characterised by respect for all. We aim to achieve this by encouraging such qualities as good behaviour, kindness, tolerance, courtesy, respect for self and others and a good relationship among all members of the school community.

One of the rights of every child is the right to an education in a safe environment. It is essential that each child appreciates and understands that with this right, come certain, personal responsibilities. Time is spent in class discussing the expectations of the school with regard to each child's behaviour, both inside and outside the classroom.

The school acknowledges that parents/guardians are the primary educators of their children and it appreciates the important role parents play in supporting standards of good behaviour in school.

Therefore, in accordance with Section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 parents wishing to enrol their child in St. Andrew's National School shall be provided with a copy of this Code of Behaviour. It is also available on our school website. The code acts as a framework for good behaviour in our school. We would greatly appreciate if parents/guardians would read this document carefully in order to familiarise themselves with the school's policy in relation to good behaviour.

We hope that, thus informed, parents will:

A. Co-operate with the school with regard to the implementation of its policy on discipline and encourage pupils to abide by the school rules.

B. Co-operate with the school by visiting when requested to do so by the principal or other members of staff and communicate regularly with the school about circumstances that might affect the behaviour of their children in school.

## **Mission Statement**

St. Andrew's is a co-educational Catholic primary school which strives to provide a well-ordered caring, happy and secure environment for all of our pupils in which they are encouraged and supported to reach their full potential.

While St. Andrew's N.S. is a school with a Catholic ethos, it also has due recognition for all other religions.

We promote an atmosphere where each student enjoys coming to school, is happy working here and feels that they belong to a caring school community.

We foster a love of education in a disciplined and safe atmosphere where the children are enthusiastic and active in their approach to learning for life.

We endeavour to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community, to imbue in the pupils respect for themselves, for other people, and to encourage the development of personal responsibility and personal growth.

St Andrew's N.S. encourages the involvement of parents/guardians in their children's education through home/school contacts and through their involvement in the Parents' Association.

## **Aims of this policy**

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To promote positive self-esteem.
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions is implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child guided by our mission statement.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.
- To ensure good and open communication of the school's expectation in this code of behaviour.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

## **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 emphasising 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.
- Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded.
- Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.
- The code of behaviour is applied at all times when pupils are in charge and care of the school and where pupils are identifiable members of the school community. e.g. school games, school tours, concerts.

### **Core set of Expectations and Values**

Our core set of expectations and values for all of our school community are outlined in the following sections

### **Board of Management's Responsibilities**

The BoM is expected:

- to provide a comfortable and safe learning and working environment.
- to support the Principal and staff in implementing the Code of Behaviour.
- to ratify the Code of Behaviour

### **Principal's Responsibilities**

The Principal is expected to:

- to promote a positive climate in the school to ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- to provide support for teachers and pupils
- to arrange for review of the Code of Behaviour as required.

### **Teachers' Responsibilities**

Teachers are expected to:

- support and implement the Code of Behaviour.
- create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- recognise and affirm good work.
- recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- be courteous, consistent and fair.
- keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum by being in attendance to supervise directly
- deal appropriately with misbehavior in accordance with the code

- communicate with the principal and other staff members in accordance with the code.
- communicate with parents in accordance with the code.
- provide support for colleagues.

### **Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities**

Parents are expected to:

- encourage their child to have a sense of respect for themselves and for school and others' property.
- ensure that their child attends regularly and punctually.
- ensure that their child has his/her homework complete and signed and brings the necessary materials/books to school.
- be interested in, support and encourage their child'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.
- communicate with the school in relation to any problems, which may affect child's progress/behaviour.
- ensure their child's safe arrival and collection from school.

*Parents are reminded that the Board of Management does not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening time of 9.00am or after the official closing time of 1.40pm (infants) 2.40pm (other classes). There will be no direct provision of supervision before 9:00am and after dismissal time.*

### **Pupils' Responsibilities**

These are the core expectations of every child in our school:

The pupils of St. Andrew's are expected to:

- show respect for all members of the school community.
- attend school regularly and punctually.
- wear full correct school uniform/school tracksuit on correct days.
- bring correct materials/books to school.
- complete homework to the best of their ability.
- listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- avoid behaving in any way which would endanger themselves or others.
- follow school and class rules.

## **Golden Rules underpinning our Code of Behaviour**

Our system is based on '**Golden Rules**' is being taught to all class levels, and a general principle where staff focus on the positive and endeavour to '**Catch pupils being good!**' This system is based on Jenny Mosley's Circle Time model. (Ref: <https://www.circle-time.co.uk/>)

**Golden Rules**

**We are gentle**  
*We don't hurt others*

**We are kind and helpful**  
*We don't hurt anybody's feelings*

**We listen**  
*We don't interrupt*

**We are honest**  
*We don't cover up the truth*

**We work hard**  
*We don't waste our own or others' time*

**We look after property**  
*We don't waste or damage things*

## **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 and to protect the right of every child to receive an education in a secure and disruption-free environment. It is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly.

### **Pupil Promises/Rules:**

- I promise to co-operate with the school staff and my fellow students.
- I promise at all times, to avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling either oral or written or any form of rough physical contact.

- I promise to walk inside the school building (no running in corridors).
- I promise to only ever move around the school with the teachers' permission.
- I promise to leave mobile phones and electronic devices at home.

#### **Yard Promises:**

- I promise to only leave the play area with permission from teacher/supervisor.
- I promise not to behave in any way that puts myself or others in danger.
- I promise to include other pupils in games and activities.
- I promise to line up correctly in the yard as soon as the bell goes.

#### **Implementation of School Rules**

- At start of year, classroom procedures and rules are established to help implementation of school rules.
- Rules are clearly displayed.
- Rules, procedures and expectations are regularly discussed in class and at assembly.
- Rules are implemented consistently.
- Reward Notice Board – A reward noticeboard will be designed, celebrating these successes
- An assembly is held each week for the whole school at which good behaviour and achievement is encouraged, acknowledged and celebrated. (Student of the week/ Dalta na Seachtaine)

#### **Implementing the Yard Rules**

- Yard Lines: Merit System. Best behaviour line receives merit from the teacher on yard duty. This is recorded in yard notebook.
- The Yard Reward System is discussed and taught in class.
- The Reward Chart is displayed on the noticeboard at exit point to yard.
- The reward is indicated immediately by presenting a green card to the class who show best behaviour when the bell ring

#### **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**

Each teacher uses age appropriate incentives for example:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.

- A comment on a child's exercise book.
- A visit to another class or the Principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group.
- Stickers and/or class applause.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Written or verbal communication with parent.
- Dalta na seachtaine in assembly

### **Sanctions: Responding to Unacceptable Behaviour**

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

- helping pupils to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- helping pupils to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others.
- helping pupils, appropriate to their age and development, to understand that they have choices about their behaviour and that all choices have consequences.
- helping pupils to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in this Code of Behaviour.
- signal to other pupils 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.

### **Minor Misdemeanours**

**Examples of Minor Misdemeanours** (*This list includes examples and is not exhaustive*):

- Lack of courtesy or respect by deliberate word or action
- Incorrect uniform
- Incomplete homework (frequent)
- Class disruption (frequent)
- Running in corridors
- Name calling, rough play
- Disruption in yard (frequent)

### **Procedures for dealing with Minor Misdemeanours:**

**Step 1:** Two oral reminders. The oral reminder will involve reasoning, reprimanding & advice on how to improve behaviour.

**Step 2:** Third oral reminder & name noted in teacher's diary

**Step 3:** Temporary separation within the classroom.

**Step 4:** Pupil may be moved temporarily to another classroom with classwork given. A Behaviour Reflection Form will be given from Principal to be completed at home and signed by parents and returned to Principal the next day.

**Step 5:** If no improvement in the behaviour of the pupil, a meeting will be organised with pupil, parents, class teacher and Principal in attendance, to discuss the behaviour of the pupil.

**Step 6:** A behaviour plan will be put in place to monitor the pupil's behaviour and signed by teacher and parents until behaviour improves.

### **Serious Misdemeanours**

**Examples of Serious Misdemeanours** (*This list includes examples and is not exhaustive*):

- Frequent disruption of class work
- Property interference – stealing, damage defacing.
- Cheeky/insolent behaviour
- Leaving school without permission
- Unacceptable language (frequent)
- Injuring fellow pupil (deliberate/through deliberate action)
- Regular disregard for homework
- Bullying behaviour (as defined below)
- Deliberately spitting at or biting at another person
- Entering school areas without permission
- Threatening behaviour towards a staff member or pupil

### **Bullying**

Bullying is repeated verbal, written, 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 co-operate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy. Cyber bullying is regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour and includes all platforms and electronic devices.



### **Procedures for dealing with Serious Misdemeanours:**

**Step 1:** Temporary separation in another classroom with classwork given. Parents will be advised verbally of this action. A note will be written in the pupil's homework diary. A behaviour reflection form will be filled out at home and returned next day to the Principal. (Appendix A)

**Step 2:** The pupil will discuss their behaviour with the Principal and make a plan to move forward from the incident including a behaviour reflection sheet for 3 days and an apology to parties involved. The reflection sheet will be signed by teacher and parents daily.

**Step 3:** If the pupil's 3 day behaviour sheet shows no improvement, parents will be called to meet with Principal, class teacher and the pupil to discuss the pupil's behaviour and agree a resolution and review date (2 weeks after this meeting).

**Step 4:** Should the misbehaviour continue, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the Parents/Guardians will be requested to attend the school to meet with the Chairperson and the Principal. Suspension of up to 3 days may be considered at this stage.

**Step 5:** Suspension/Expulsion in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by Circular 7/88.

**Step 6:** An appeal procedure will always be available to a parent/guardian prior to a suspension from school being implemented.

Depending on the nature of the misdemeanour, sanctions may begin on a higher step or may be a combination of steps.

### **Gross Misbehaviour**

A single incident of Gross Misbehaviour may incur automatic suspension. The following are considered examples of Gross Misbehaviour:

- Serious Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a pupil or staff member.
- Assaults on staff members.
- Serious deliberate damage to school property.

### **Procedures for dealing with Gross Misbehaviour:**

- If deemed necessary for the safety of the child and/or other children, the parent/guardian may be requested to immediately remove their child from the school.
- Following the establishment of facts and circumstances, the Principal/Chairperson of BOM may sanction immediate suspension up to a maximum of two school days, pending discussion with parent/guardian.

- The principal may involve relevant outside agencies (NEPS, TUSLA) to seek support for pupil, family or school.

### **Suspension**

For gross misbehavior or repeated instances of serious misbehavior, suspension may be considered. The parents/guardians concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehavior, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents/guardians will be requested to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and 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 of time. 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 two school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents/guardians.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Applying fair procedure, up to and including suspension or expulsion, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer (TUSLA) in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

### **Authority to Suspend**

The Principal in consultation with the Chairperson of the Board of Management may suspend a pupil for two days pending a meeting of the Board of Management and parents of pupil.

### **Applying fair procedures in school**

In St. Andrew's, fair procedures apply to:

- the investigation of alleged misbehaviour that may lead to suspension or expulsion and
- the process of decision-making as to (a) whether the student did engage in the misbehaviour and (b) what sanction to impose.

The way in which fair procedures are applied will take account of the seriousness of the alleged misbehaviour and will have regard to what is reasonable in the context of a particular school. The principles of fair procedures always apply, but the degree of formality required in implementing fair procedures will depend on the gravity of the alleged misbehaviour and on the seriousness of the possible sanction. In the event of a suspension or expulsion, the parent/guardian will have a right of appeal to the Board of Management.

The principles of ensuring the right to be heard and the right to impartiality apply in all cases will be adhered to. The **right to be heard** means that a student and their parents are fully informed about an allegation and the processes that will be used to investigate and decide

the matter; and that they must be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation **before** a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed.

### **Determining the appropriateness of suspending a student**

Where the purpose of a proposed suspension is clearly identified, and that purpose cannot be achieved in any other way, suspension can have value. Suspensions can provide a respite for staff and the student, give the student time to reflect on the link between their action and its consequences and give staff time to plan ways of helping the student to change unacceptable behaviour.

### **Suspension as part of a Behaviour Management Plan**

Suspension should be part of an agreed plan to address the student's behaviour. The suspension should:

- enable the school to set behavioural goals with the student and their parents.
- give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions.
- impress on a student and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour.

### **Procedures in respect of Suspension**

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will observe the following procedures:

- Inform the parents/guardians about the complaint
- Give parents and student an opportunity to respond or appeal (Does not apply to a request from Principal/Chairperson to remove the pupil from the school on Health and Safety grounds.)

### **Informing Parents/Guardians**

- Parents will be informed about the complaint, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension.
- Parents may be informed by phone or in writing, depending on the seriousness of the matter.

### **An opportunity to respond**

- Parents/Guardians will be given an opportunity to respond before any sanction is imposed. (Does not apply to a request from Principal/Chairperson to remove the pupil from the school on Health and Safety grounds.)
- Where parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of
- the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour.

### **The period of Suspension**

A student should not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Board considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed in order to achieve a particular objective.

### **Implementing the Suspension**

The Principal should notify the parents/guardians in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm:

- the period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents (for example, parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998, section 29).

### **Grounds for Removal of Suspension**

A suspension may be removed if the Board of Management decides to remove the suspension for any reason or if the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science directs that it be removed following an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

### **After the Suspension ends**

A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents about the suspension.

### **Re-integrating the student**

- Pupil may be afforded an opportunity to catch up on curricular matters covered in his/her absence
- When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a student should be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. Although a record of the behaviour and any sanction imposed is kept for one year, once the sanction has been completed the school should expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/guardian must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school Code of Behaviour 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.

### **Records and reports - Records of investigation and decision-making**

Formal written records will be kept of:

- the investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- the decision-making process
- the decision and the rationale for the decision
- the duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

Report to TUSLA: The Principal will report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines (Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, section 21(4) (a)).

### **Review of use of suspension**

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school and to ensure that use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

### **Expulsion**

A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. As part of the code of behaviour, the Board of Management will ensure that the school has a policy on, and procedures for, expulsion which are in line with these Guidelines and with any additional requirements set down by the Patron.

### **Authority to expel**

The Board of Management solely has the authority to expel a student.

### **Grounds for Expulsion**

Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour. Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that should only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- the student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- the student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference is that, where expulsion is considered, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions, and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

### **Procedures in respect of Expulsion**

The Board of Management will follow the TUSLA Guidelines and procedures prescribed under the Education Welfare Act 2000 when proposing to expel a student.

This Code of Behaviour was reviewed by Board of Management in

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Board of Management

This Code will be next reviewed no later than: