

**St. Senan’s N.S.**

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR POLICY

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**School Ethos and Aims of Code of Behaviour**

The ethos of the school is a major factor in establishing and maintaining high standards of behaviour. This points to the importance of a strong sense of community within the school and the existence of a high level of cooperation among teachers, ancillary staff, pupils, parents, parents' Committee and the Board of Management. This school places a great emphasis on the need to give the children every possible opportunity to develop patterns of good behaviour. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

**Aims of Code of Behaviour**

The code of discipline aims to achieve three things:

1. The efficient operation of the school and structuring of in-class discipline so that there exists an efficient and stimulating learning environment.
2. The maintenance of good order throughout the school and respect for school environment.
3. The development of self-discipline in pupils based on consideration, respect and tolerance for others.

**Principles of Behaviour Policy**

If the school is to achieve a happy, secure environment in which children can develop to their full potential, it is necessary to provide a framework that promotes constructive behaviour and discourages unacceptable behaviour. The school code places a greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions, and the ideal is that pupils will acquire the skills of self-discipline. There are times however when it may be necessary to impose sanctions in order to maintain good order, and to discourage unacceptable and/or unsociable behaviour. The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children, and the need to accommodate these differences. 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.

**School Rules**

If a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and wisely.

1. Respect and Courtesy: All pupils are expected to treat staff, their fellow pupils and visitors with respect and courtesy at all time. The use of foul language and any form of bullying are unacceptable.
2. Punctuality: The official opening time is 9.20am. Classes for infants end at 2pm. Classes for other pupils end at 3pm. No responsibility is accepted for the pupils outside of these times.
3. Absences: Parents/Guardians will notify the school, in writing, the reason for the non-attendance of their son/daughter on the day he/she returns after that absence. If a child wishes to leave school early he/she must be collected from the school building.
4. Illness: Any infectious illness, including head lice, should be notified to the school immediately.
5. Personal Property: Children should have their names on their coats, all items of uniform and other personal property such as school books, copies, etc.
6. School Uniform: The school uniform is as follows- Bottle Green Jumper, White Shirt, School Tie, and Grey Trousers/Pinafore/Skirt. School Tracksuit is to be worn on PE days only unless other events require same.
7. School Property and the School Environment: Pupils must respect all school property, and keep the school environment clean and litter free. All wrappers etc. from children’s lunch is to be brought home by the pupils. Any uneaten lunch is also brought home.
8. Healthy Lunches: Healthy lunches are encouraged within the school. A list of allowed foods are in the school’s Healthy Eating policy.
9. Mobile Phones: Pupils are not permitted to bring mobile phones to school.
10. Haircuts: Hair should be kept neat and tidy. Extreme hairstyles are not permitted.
11. Piercings: Piercings are limited to one per ear. For safety reasons only stud earrings are permitted.
12. Makeup, including nail polish and false nails, are not allowed.

**Behaviour in Class.**

1. Pupils must have all books and required materials.
2. Pupils are expected to work to the best of their ability, and to present written exercises neatly.
3. Pupils are expected to show respect for their classmates and to follow their teacher's instructions.
4. Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others is unacceptable.

**Behaviour Out of Class.**

1. Pupils must not behave in any way which endangers themselves or others.
2. Any instructions or directions given by the supervising teacher are to be complied with.
3. Any form of threatening behaviour is unacceptable. The following on-going intentional behaviours are regarded as bullying; physical or verbal aggression, damage to property, extortion, intimidation, isolation and name-calling. Pupils are encouraged to report serious and/or on-going bullying incidents. The school’s Anti-Bullying policy will deal with any bullying related matters.

**Homework**

1. It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis. Teachers shall make every effort to match the curriculum with the aptitude of the pupils. It follows, therefore, that homework assignments may vary from pupil to pupil.
2. Parents are strongly encouraged to take an active interest in their child's homework. If homework causes worry for the pupil, parents are asked to contact the teacher.

**Children with Special Needs**

All children that attend St. Senan’s NS are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Teachers are informed of pupils with specific needs and specialised behaviour plans may be put in place in consultation with parents, the class teacher(s) and support teachers. The Principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development along with professional advice and appropriate psychological assessments will be taken into account at all times.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

**Strategies**

Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given:

* A quiet word or gesture to show approval
* A comment in a pupil’s copy or homework journal
* A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
* A word of praise in front of a group or class
* Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
* A mention to parent, written or verbal communication

Field trips and school tours will be reserved for those who have consistently strived to behave well.

**Sanctions.**

The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupils devise strategies to achieve this.

The use of sanctions will be characterised by certain features, such as:

* It must be clear why the sanction is being applied
* The consequence must relate as closely as possible to the behaviour
* It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions
* There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences
* It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus

May include some or all of the following:

* Encouragement/Rewards for good Behaviour.
* Reasoning with pupil.
* Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
* Rearrangement of class seating.
* Temporary separation from peers, friends and others.
* Loss of extra privileges.
* Prescribing extra work.
* Detention during breaks.
* Referral to Principal.
* Communication with parents.
* Persistent instances of serious misbehaviour or gross misbehaviour will lead to the Board of Management being notified and suspension will be considered

**Suspension and Expulsion**

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.

In the case of a very serious breach of discipline the Principal will first notify the parent(s) and invite them to come to the school to discuss their child’s case. If the matter is not resolved, the Chairperson is notified and the Chairperson/Principal will sanction immediate suspension in line with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act.

Where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the health and safety of pupils and teachers, the Board has deferred responsibility to the Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days. Any period of suspension in excess of three days will require the formal approval of the Board of Management

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.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with the Education Welfare Act.

When a student is suspended, the parents/guardians will be requested to remove the student from the school. The Principal will meet with the parents to outline the decision to implement the suspension and will present the parents with a written statement of the terms, duration and date of the termination of the suspension.

Any decision to suspend or exclude a pupil from St. Senan’s NS shall only be taken after other sanctions have been fully explored and have been found not to have been effective.

**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 of Behaviour 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.

**Appeals**

Section 29 of the 1998 Education Act allows an appeal to be made to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills in respect of a decision by a Board of Management, or by a person acting on behalf of the Board of Management

1. to refuse to enrol a student in the school
2. to permanently exclude a student from the school
3. to suspend a student from the school for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days in any one school year

All communication with parents regarding suspension/expulsion shall advise of their right of appeal.

**Role of Parents/Guardians.**

The support and cooperation of parents are essential to the effective operation of the Code of Behaviour. If teachers and parents are not working in harmony, inevitably, the pupils will suffer. Parents will be informed at an early stage if problems occur and not simply at the point where possible suspensions are involved. Parents are invited to keep in close contact with the school with regard to all aspects of the child's progress. Formal Parent/Teacher meeting will be arranged toward the end of the first term.

* Ensure their children attend school and are punctual.
* Equip pupils with appropriate school materials, a sufficient healthy lunch and full uniform.
* Make an appointment to meet with a teacher/the Principal through the office.
* Be courteous in all dealings with pupils and staff including face to face conversations, on the telephone and on social media.
* Respect school property and encourage their children to do the same.
* Label pupils coats and other personal property.

As the Board of Management is responsible for the Health & Safety of all staff and students, parents are requested not to approach or reprimand another person’s child on the school premises.

**Ratification and Communication**

This policy document was ratified at a meeting of the Board of Management of St. Senan’s National School, which was held on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Signed ........................................................ Date ........................

Chairperson of St. Senan’s Board of Management