



**St Catherine's National School**  
Donore Avenue  
Dublin 8

Tel: 01 4542679  
info@stcatherinesns.net  
www.stcatherinesns.net

## Code of Behaviour

### Introduction and Rationale

It was decided by the staff and Board of Management of St. Catherine's National School to review the school's Code of Behaviour in January 2019 as it was deemed unfit for purpose. St. Catherine's N.S. has grown considerably since the last Code of Behaviour was drawn up in 2008/09. The policy was developed and reviewed to ensure the school community of St. Catherine's N.S. understands and supports the school in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. This policy was developed in compliance with the legal requirements and the good practice standards as set out in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for schools (2008). This document can be accessed at [https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/guidelines\\_school\\_codes\\_eng.pdf](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf)

The following preliminary steps were undertaken :

1. A sub committee was set up.
2. Focus groups with children from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class were conducted.
3. All members of staff were consulted both via email communication and at staff meetings. 7 teachers gave written feedback at the time.
4. Parents were asked for their feedback in relation to the current Code of Behaviour and school rules. The Parents' Association class representatives gave feedback to the Principal. 20 parents responded with feedback.

### Feedback from parents and staff included the following points:

1. Currently there are too many school rules and these should be reduced and be concise.
2. It was felt that the current policy lacked clarity and the rules should be written from a positive view point.
3. Following the Code of Behaviour should be a simpler process.
4. Rewards – the child who listens attentively and gets on with work gets no reward but the child who misbehaves and corrects their behaviour gets rewarded time after time.
5. Golden time needs to be consistently used throughout the school.

6. The current Code states that it is for everyone in the school, however in reality it only applies to the students and not parents or staff.
7. A new Code of Behaviour should be based on the principles of Restorative Practice where the emphasis is on resolving conflict, poor behaviour and preventing harm.
8. The current practice of rewarding positive behaviour was welcomed
9. Like other similar sized schools, there should be clear steps outlined informing students, parents and staff of the steps taken when there is a dip in behaviour.
10. Sanctions should be clearly understood by all and outlined in the policy.
11. The playground rules should also be included in the Code of Behaviour.
12. The current Code of Behaviour is inadequate to deal with persistent disruption.
13. Group sanctions should not be used.

**The focus groups with the children raised the following points:**

1. Consistency – the same language/terminology should be used by all
2. Currently the pink cards are viewed negatively and can cause embarrassment to a child. Many children are unsure of the reasons why pink cards are used.
3. School rules should be displayed in the playground and around the school for greater clarity.
4. The school rules should be simple.

**Decisions:**

It was decided that the members of the sub-committee would redraft the school's Code of Behaviour taking into account the above feedback. This group viewed and researched Behaviour policies from similar sized schools. It was agreed by staff that emotional regulation programmes recommended by the NCSE, SESS and a behavioural consultant visiting from NBSS, would be used consistently throughout the school. It was believed that if children have the ability to name and understand their emotions that they will understand and be able to regulate them with tools taught and made available to them both inside and outside the classrooms. The programmes in use will be :

- **Lauren Brukner's** The Kids Guide to Staying Awesome
- **Zones of Regulation.**
- The use of the **Weaving Wellbeing** programme from 2<sup>nd</sup> class to 6<sup>th</sup> class and the promotion of its values throughout the whole school on a day to day basis will promote a collaborative environment for all stakeholders.
- The incorporation of techniques from the **Incredible Years** programme were also looked at. A general overview of the Incredible Years Programme was provided to the sub-committee with many suggestions for its implementation in the Junior end of the school.

- Strategies from **NCSE C-ABA** course would assist in the case of Individual behaviour plans
- **Restorative Practice** training was undertaken by one member of staff
- Involvement from NEPs Psychologist and use of **NEPs BESD A Continuum of Support book**.

Staff received CPD in Incredible Years training, supported financially by the Board of Management. CPD in Zones of Regulation and Brukner were provided by OT Jane Dunne as part of the school's involvement in the NCSE Demo Project.

### **Relationship to the characteristic spirit/ethos of the school**

St. Catherine's National School a primary school locate in Dublin 8 and is under the patronage and ethos of the Church of Ireland. Our school aims to provide a happy, secure and friendly learning environment where children, teachers, SNAs, ancillary staff, parents, the Parents' Association and the Board of Management work in partnership. Each individual is valued, encouraged, celebrated and respected for their uniqueness and facilitated to reach their full potential in a positive atmosphere.

Our ethos statement states that in our school, the Golden Rule is paramount: ***Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.*** Our school rules are grounded in this philosophy and our Code of Behaviour is intended to help all members of the school community to live up to this ideal.

We also aspire to enabling all students attending our school to realise their potential. The Code of Behaviour aims to ensure that an atmosphere of calm, order, positivity, respect, inclusivity and friendship pervades the school so that both students and staff can focus on the primary tasks of learning and teaching.

### **Aims and objectives**

- To create an atmosphere of respect and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by the Golden Rule as stated in our Ethos Statement
- To ensure that the high standards of behaviour we expect from students, members of staff and parents are clearly understood by the whole school community
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community
- To help our students take personal responsibility for their behaviour and learning

- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the Code of Behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school

**Rights & Responsibilities of the School Community**

Central to the implementation of the school’s Code of Behaviour is the expectation that all members of the school community behave in ways that show respect for others and that they have an understanding of their rights and responsibilities.

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with all the stakeholders in our school.

Pupils’ rights	Pupils’ Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be educated in a safe, happy and respectful environment</li> <li>• To grow intellectually, emotionally, morally, spiritually and physically</li> <li>• To be listened to</li> <li>• To be free from all forms of abuse, whether physical, emotional, mental or sexual.</li> <li>• To receive information about topics and concerns affecting their lives including information on the Code of Behaviour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be fair</li> <li>• Comply with school and class rules</li> <li>• Attend school regularly and punctually (age appropriate)</li> <li>• Bring correct materials and resources to school</li> <li>• Listen to teachers and act on instructions/advice</li> <li>• Respect all school property and the property of others</li> <li>• Behave in a safe manner that does not harm others</li> <li>• Include others in games and activities</li> <li>• Be courteous and mannerly</li> <li>• Inform a trusted adult if they have a concern or worry</li> <li>• Behave in accordance with the Code of Behaviour even when those around you aren’t</li> </ul>

Staff Rights	Staff Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To work in a respectful and safe environment</li> <li>• To work in an environment free from constant disruptions</li> <li>• To be able to express themselves and be listened to.</li> <li>• To appeal to a higher authority e.g. Board of Management, Department of Education &amp; Skills, INTO Union.</li> <li>• To receive adequate facilities and resources appropriate to their duties</li> <li>• To confidentiality</li> <li>• To relevant information on pupils in their class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be fair</li> <li>• Support and implement the Code of Behaviour</li> <li>• Promote a culture and practice of equality</li> <li>• Deal appropriately and consistently with misbehaviour and implement Continuum of Support Guidelines where necessary</li> <li>• Keep an accurate record of instances of misbehaviour on Aladdin</li> <li>• Provide support to colleagues</li> <li>• Report matters of serious concern to Principal, Deputy Principal or APII</li> <li>• Engage with in-school reviews of behaviour</li> <li>• Ensure that the class teacher is made aware of all incidents in relation to children in their class</li> <li>• Promote positive behaviour through effective teaching, an inclusive and engaging curriculum and positive, well managed classrooms</li> <li>• Use a variety of classroom management techniques and curricular methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation and maximise positive behaviour</li> </ul>
Parents' Rights	Parents' Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To respect, understanding and confidentiality</li> <li>• To informative communication with and access to their child's teacher and the Principal at appropriate times</li> <li>• To updates on the progress of the pupil/pupils in the form of annual Parent Teacher Meetings</li> <li>• To be consulted about disciplinary action at an early stage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be fair</li> <li>• Be respectful towards staff</li> <li>• Familiarise themselves with the Code of Behaviour and other relevant policies</li> <li>• Ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually</li> <li>• Be interested in, support and encourage their children's schoolwork</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To appeal to a higher authority e.g. Board of Management, Department of Education and Skills</li> <li>• To have access to the Code of Behaviour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that children are well prepared to attend school and have the correct materials/resources and lunch</li> <li>• Cooperate with staff if their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others</li> <li>• Communicate appropriately with the school regarding any problems that may affect their child's progress and behaviour</li> <li>• Attend meetings if required</li> <li>• Be positive role models to pupils</li> <li>• Support behaviour interventions that are put in place</li> </ul>
Board of Management Rights	Board of Management Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uphold the characteristic spirit of the school</li> <li>• Support the Principal in the application of the Code of Behaviour</li> <li>• Ensure that staff consistently and fairly implement and uphold the school's Code of Behaviour</li> <li>• Regularly review the school's Code of Behaviour</li> <li>• Be informed of any children at risk of suspension or whose behaviour regularly breaches the school's Code of Behaviour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be fair and equitable</li> <li>• Ensure that all students enrolled and their parents, agree to the school's Code of Behaviour</li> <li>• Ensure that the entire school community has a safe environment</li> <li>• Provision to support the Principal and staff with the implementation of the Code of Behaviour</li> </ul>

The vision of St. Catherine's NS is that everyone has a right to be happy, safe and able to learn. This includes children, staff, parents and the wider community. Anyone entering our building should feel safe to do so. While the behaviour of children in our school is of vital importance, all adults in the school community also have a responsibility to ensure their own behaviour models the types of behaviour expected of children.

The Department of Education outline the roles and responsibilities of teachers and other staff through the Education Act and relevant circulars, and they are answerable to the school's Board of Management for any form of unacceptable behaviour through the relevant legislation and circulars. Staff of the school who feel that the behaviour of their colleagues towards them is undesirable should follow the Working Together Guidelines as found on the INTO website:

<http://www.into.ie/ROI/InformationforTeachers/StaffRelations/WorkingTogether/Downloads/WorkingTogether.pdf>

- All stakeholders should speak to each other with respect. Shouting or other aggressive tones are not acceptable. If a stakeholder displays aggression in the school, they may be asked to remove themselves from the building. In certain cases, the Gardaí must be called.
- In line with the Child Protection Policy, stakeholders should never approach a child in an aggressive manner. Incidents like these are taken very seriously. No matter how justified someone feels about approaching a child in this manner, the child will instantly be removed from the situation for his/her own safety.
- All meetings with teachers and other staff members should be conducted with a view to resolving a particular situation in line with the school's Complaints Procedure. Shouting, walking out of the room, passive aggressive behaviour or other forms of antagonistic behaviour are unacceptable.
- Violence, physical or emotional, will not be tolerated. The Gardaí may become involved in any incident of violence between two parties.
- Staff will only speak about a child to his/her parent/guardian. A common experience for schools occurs when a parent asks a teacher about a punishment to a child who may have affected their own child. The staff of the school will respect your child's right to privacy so it is asked that parents respect other children's rights to privacy.
- When stakeholders meet, it is important to respect that the time of meetings should be kept to a reasonable length of time. Times of meetings should be agreed beforehand and these should be respected.
- Stakeholders should not interrupt class time. Should a parent need to have a discussion or meeting, an appointment should be made in the office or with the teacher. This ensures that issues can be resolved in a planned way. Classes begin at 8:40am and finish at 2:20pm (1:20pm for infants) and this time should not be interrupted.
- Stakeholders should not isolate or attempt to influence others against particular individuals or groups in the school.
- At all times, adults in the school should model the school's own behaviour system for children.

Stakeholders who fail to respect the rules above will be subject to action from the Board of Management. In some cases, stakeholders may be asked to leave the building and in serious cases, the Board may take legal action and/or ban a stakeholder from the school grounds.

As part of the whole school approach to behaviour, the following simple courtesies are expected from all members of the school community.

- a. Greeting others with a smile and saying please and thank you, más é do thoil é agus go raibh maith agat and dia duit/hello and slán/goodbye in the afternoons.

- b. Allowing others to go ahead of you through a door or gate.
- c. Holding the door/gate open for others, in particular visitors, parents, someone carrying something or for someone younger than you.
- d. If you need to get someone's attention, say 'excuse me' or 'gabh mo leithscéal' and then wait until the person is ready unless it is urgent, in which case say 'excuse me, it's urgent'.
- e. Knocking on a door before entering the classroom or office.
- f. Being patient.

### **School Rules**

St Catherine's NS has chosen to follow Jenny Mosley's Golden Rules programme in order to enhance the learning environment where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.

St. Catherine's NS follows six "golden rules" to ensure that standards of behaviour are observed by each student.



### **Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour**

- All children that keep the Golden Rules will be rewarded with "Golden Time", where pupils can individually decide on an activity they would like to do.
- House Points can be awarded for random acts of Kindness, by any member of staff.
- Children who display their Character Strengths are rewarded by a comment or call out in our Good News assembly twice a month.
- When possible, it is encouraged that parents and staff are made aware of good behaviour from a child, by phone or email.
- Other reward systems can be used by staff to encourage positive behaviour in the class to supplement the Golden Rules. Examples of this include group rewards or whole class



rewards.

### **3.1 Playground Rules**

We will :

- Include others
- Respect play equipment
- Play safely and fairly
- Dress appropriately for the weather

We will not :

- Use bad language
- Play on ramps
- Swing on railings
- Hit or kick anyone
- Use bikes, scooters etc in the yard

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 23, states that a school must outline *'the measures that may be taken if a student fails to observe the standards of behaviour that the school has outlined'*.

Behaviour can be divided into Minor, Serious and Gross Misconduct. In all cases, the teacher (and/or principal) will have the right to define a behaviour based on their own professional judgement.

<b>Minor Misbehaviour</b>	<b>Serious Misbehaviour</b>	<b>Gross Misbehaviour</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Breaking Golden Rules</li><li>• Interrupting classwork which prevents others from learning</li><li>• Leaving seat without permission</li><li>• Telling lies (age appropriate)</li><li>• Running in the school building</li><li>• Derogatory remarks to staff or students – eg name calling</li><li>• Failing to line up</li><li>• Not completing homework, without good reason</li><li>• Disrespect to staff</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regularly breaking Golden Rules</li><li>• Regularly preventing others from learning</li><li>• Using a phone or any internet enabled mobile device whilst on the school premises</li><li>• Consistently not completing homework</li><li>• Derogatory remarks to students or staff that cause hurt or upset</li><li>• Stealing</li><li>• Deliberate damage to school property eg furniture and resources</li><li>• Shouting at staff</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards any staff member, pupil, parent or visitor</li><li>• Verbal abuse or derogatory remarks, of a gross nature, to staff or students</li><li>• Bringing weapons to school</li><li>• Any act of assault against staff member, pupil, parent, visitor</li><li>• Deliberate damage to the fabric of the school property</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inappropriate displaying of body parts (age appropriate)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Misuse of wifi enabled devices</li> </ul> <p><i>* This list is not exhaustive and other incidents may be considered as gross misconducts at the discretion of the principal and Board of Management.</i></p>
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The above lists of behaviours are meant to be examples but are in no way exhaustive.

### Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour

We always communicate consistent and/or serious misbehaviour to parents/guardians. We strive to work collaboratively with parents/guardians and their child. We balance the needs of every child. We will use restorative practice to deal with situations that arise which will help the children to understand why the incident happened and how they can begin to solve it in a no-blame situation. Specialised behaviour management approaches for individual children, especially if there is an additional need, will be used.

Sanctions will be used as part of a plan to change the behaviour and will be used consistently by all staff.

Misbehaviour	Sanction
Minor	<p><b><i>*These behaviours are dealt with by staff in the school and parents are generally not informed of these sanctions.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A verbal warning</li> <li>Time out/removal from the activity</li> <li>Loss of a maximum of 5 minutes of Golden Time and Reflection Sheet completed (See Appendix 1)</li> <li>Loss of all of Golden time and Reflection Sheet to be completed</li> </ul>
Serious Misbehaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principal informed</li> <li>Reflection sheet completed</li> <li>Parents informed</li> <li>Pink Card issued (See Appendix 2)</li> <li>Meeting with parents arranged</li> <li>Loss of privileges - change of yard, etc</li> <li>Board of Management informed</li> </ul>
Gross Misbehaviour	<p><b><i>* Gross Misconduct may be defined as extremely serious behaviour. Gross misconduct may warrant immediate suspension and/or expulsion from the school.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principal informed</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White card issued (See Appendix 3)</li> <li>• Meeting with Parents</li> <li>• Board of Management informed</li> <li>• Suspension</li> <li>• Expulsion</li> </ul>
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### Reflection Sheets

- A copy of the reflection sheet is located at Appendix 1.
- For Minor and Serious misbehaviour a reflection sheet must be completed

### Pink Card

**A pink card is issued for a 2 week period. We see the pink card as a positive step where parents/guardians and school staff can see the strengths and also the needs of the child throughout the day, clearly written on the card.**

- A copy of the pink card is located at Appendix 2.
- A Pink card is issued if a child completes 5 Reflection Sheets in a calendar month.
- Parents / guardians must
  - arrange to meet the class teacher to discuss each pink card.
  - sign each pink card (as will the class teacher & Principal).
- When a Pink Card is issued the process of counting Reflection Sheets re-starts. That is;
  - Reflection Sheets 1- 5 in a calendar month results in Pink Card 1
  - Reflection Sheets 6-10 in a calendar month results in Pink Card 2
  - Reflection Sheets 11-15 in a calendar month results in Pink Card 3
- If 3 pink cards are issued in a 2-month period a white card is automatically issued.

### White Card

- A copy of the White card is located at Appendix 3.
- When a particularly serious incident occurs, the principal will consult the class teacher and may decide to issue a white card for that single incident.
- When a second white card is issued in an academic year the child is suspended.

### Suspension

- Two white cards in an academic year result in suspension of the child.
- In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may in consultation with members of the Board of Management, immediately suspend a child.

## **Card Retention Policy**

- Pink and white cards do not accumulate from year to year. That is, each academic year a pupil starts with no accumulated cards.
- In accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy and Retention of Records Policy, pink and white behaviour cards are kept indefinitely.

## **Managing aggressive or violent misbehaviour**

- Some children may display aggressive or violent behaviour, which exceeds the Golden Rule of "being gentle".
- Serious emotional and behavioural problems will be dealt with in conjunction with parents. A supplemented behaviour plan will be made with parents, class teacher and Special Education Team so that consequences for good and bad behaviour are replicated at home and at school. Children may be referred for psychological assessment.
- Support may be sought from outside agencies e.g. HSE, NEPs, Barnardos.
- Professional development is made available to staff, e.g. SESS, NCSE, Education Centres.
- If the school proposes to include physical restraint as a strategy for dealing with violent or threatening behaviour, Managing Challenging Behaviour - Guidelines for Teachers, INTO 2004: 11 will be read and competent legal advice will be sought.
- In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil himself/herself or the safety of other pupils or staff, the school must take extra steps e.g.
  - The child is sent home for the rest of the day
  - Restricted day - while consultation with SENO and/or EWO takes place about appropriate resourcing, alternative placement

## **Children with Additional Needs**

All children are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour, however the school recognises that children with additional needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. The school will ensure that expectations match pupils' capabilities, especially their understanding of same. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place, where deemed necessary. These will involve consultation with parents and relevant school and outside personnel, including the NEPs psychologist or other professionals, if deemed appropriate. Peer support to assist the students with additional needs is very important, therefore the children may be taught strategies to assist students with additional needs to adhere to the school rules.

Continua of Support are necessary to support the progress and development of the pupils, often outlining individual approaches to some behaviours. These will require frequent review and adaptations.

## **Bullying**

"Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, which should not be

condoned, can scarcely be described as bullying. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing it is bullying.” (Department of Education, 1990)

In summary, bullying is **sustained**, **prolonged** and **targeted** behaviour towards an individual or group. Bullying has a pattern and isolated incidents over a long period of time do not constitute the term “bullying.” Bullying is a very strong term to use and should not be confused with inappropriate behaviour.

When a child feels they are being bullied, the school will investigate this. If the school defines the behaviours as bullying, the Anti-bullying policy will be implemented. In other cases, this policy will be implemented.

### **Suspension and Expulsion**

The NEWB Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools Chapters 10, 11 & 12 dealing with suspensions and expulsions will be followed accurately by school staff.

[https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/guidelines\\_school\\_codes\\_eng.pdf](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf)

**Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern.**

Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- the student’s behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- the student’s continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

### **Appeals**

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education against decisions of the Board of Management. An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of the student. Accordingly, schools should advise parents of this right of appeal and associated timeframe if it has been decided to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil.

### **Behaviour Support**

The school has set up a behaviour team consisting of four staff members. They meet monthly to review the behaviour needs and supports required by staff and students and to discuss initiatives. They are also available to meet with teachers and other staff for advice and support.

### **Keeping records**

In line with the school's policy on record keeping, and data protection legislation, all records of serious behaviour are kept in relation to pupils' behaviour in their permanent file. Records are written in a factual and impartial manner.

Records of children who do not keep the Golden Rules need not be permanently stored but it is recommended that the individual teacher keeps note of any behavioural issue in the classroom or playground.

### **Implementation Date**

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management meeting in May 2023. It will be reviewed bi-annually and all members of the school community will be informed of any changes. The policy is available publicly on the school web site. Any changes will be ratified by the Board of Management and dated.

Signed : *David Thomas*  
Chairperson Board of Management

Date : 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023

# St. Catherine's N.S.

## Daily Behaviour Report Card (Pink Card)

Time	Activities & Behaviour	Staff Signature
8.40 – 10.45		
10.45 - 11	Break Time	
11 – 12.45		
1.20 – 12.50	Lunch Time	
12.50 – 2.20		
Parents' Comments :		

Teacher's Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

## White Card

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

White Card # : \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent/ Guardian(s),

The performance of your child \_\_\_\_\_

Is causing concern with regard to the following :

	Class behaviour		Bad Language
	Playground behaviour		Disrespect for Property
	Rudeness		Dangerous Play
	Bullying		Other
	Fighting		

A description of the incident which has lead to this white card being issued.

Please sign and return this immediately to the school office.

Class Teacher : \_\_\_\_\_

Principal : \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian(s) : \_\_\_\_\_



Appendix 1

## **BEHAVIOURS OF CONCERN 2023**

School: St Catherine's National School

Roll No.: 15625B

Principal: Karen Jordan

### **What are Behaviours of Concern?**

Behaviours of concern can be defined as “behaviours that indicate a risk to the safety or wellbeing of the people who exhibit them or to others”.

### **What is a crisis situation?**

A crisis situation can occur when behaviours of concern present serious risk of imminent physical harm to the student concerned and/or others within the school environment.

### **Our Rationale**

Sometimes students may have such highly complex and challenging behaviour, social or education needs that they need extra help and support. This policy aims to support the student exhibiting Behaviours of Concern, other students, staff, and the relevant parents.

This policy is complimentary to the school Child Safeguarding Statement, Code of Behaviour, and Health & Safety Statement.

### **Code of Behaviour**

Our school Code of Behaviour aims to positively support students in the first instance but reserves the right to impose sanctions particularly when the health and safety of students and staff are a concern.

### **Child Safeguarding Statement**

Our school Child Safeguarding Statement places a statutory responsibility on registered teachers to report child protection concerns that are at or above a threshold of harm. An accompanying Risk Assessment identifies possible situations where students may be at risk and the control measures that our school puts in place to address such concerns.

### **Health & Safety Statement**

Our school Health & Safety Statement underpins the entitlement of all students and staff to coexist in a safe environment.

## Training

28 <sup>th</sup> August 2023	Mason Hayes Curran Behaviours of Concern	All staff

### How we react to a Behaviour of Concern Incident?

Make sure everyone is safe.

Prevent the situation deteriorating further.

Put an immediate plan in place that will link to an effective and sustained behaviour plan. This plan will take into account the school's Health and Safety policy and will include a full risk assessment.

### Support Services

Here is a list of State Agencies (not exhaustive) that we consult for advice, assistance and additional supports.

- Túsła
- CAMHS: Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Department of Education
- Education Welfare Officer: (Attached to EWS)
- Education Welfare Service (Now part of Túsła)
- Gardaí
- NCSE National Council for Special Education
- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
- Special Schools National Behaviour Support Service (SESS now part of NCSE)
- Special Education Needs Organiser (member of NCSE staff)

We may also contact our relevant Management Body and or Principal's Association for advice and guidance.

### POSSIBLE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF BEHAVIOURS OF CONCERN

There is always a reason for, or purpose to behaviours of concern, such as:

**Anxiety and Stress:** Students may become anxious for a myriad of reasons. Worries about friendships, home situations etc. can be overwhelming for a student, leading to stress. While most children are able to identify the cause and put in place strategies to reduce their stress levels, some cannot.

**Communication difficulties:** These can range from not being able to speak at all, shyness, social inhibition to being very articulate but not understanding the social variations and conventions in a conversation. Behaviours of Concern are often a substitute means of communication for such students.

**Sensory issues:** Some students can be over- or under-sensitive to any of their senses. This is often referred to in the literature as hyper (over) or hypo (under) sensitivity.

**Social understanding:** Not all students have the same understanding of social rules. Not all students grow up in environments with social rules like those in most schools.

**Inflexible thinking:** We all adapt to routines and can find them comforting. Some students struggle with changes in routine.

### **Recording of Behaviours of Concern**

Where behaviours of concern are an issue, we ensure that the parents are aware of the school's policy and procedures on recording such behaviours. Parents should understand that the school seeks to record and analyse these behaviours to understand what the triggers are and to put in place a plan to support the student to develop more socially acceptable behaviours. Parents should be assured that they will be fully included in this process. It is important to emphasise that students who exhibit behaviours of concern make life difficult for themselves and inhibit social interaction with their class peers.

See Appendix A

### **Examples of Behaviours of Concern (not exhaustive):**

- Student with a weapon and intent on using violence
- Physically attacking another or about to
- Throwing furniture/school resources or breaking glass close to others
- Putting themselves in danger, running onto a road or trying to self-harm

### **When will our school use restraint?**

We will only use restraint when there is a crisis.

**A physical intervention:** is the use of a physical act or restraint to prevent, restrict or subdue the movement of a student's body or part of a student's body.

Examples of physical intervention:

1. Presence - Standing in front of a student.
2. Touching - Lead, guide, usher, block-door handle. Student retains a lot of mobility.
3. Holding - Student's hand held by one adult but retains a level of mobility
4. Restraint - Completely restrict mobility - 2 adults holding legs & arms (Am I using minimum force for the shortest time?)

**Restraint:**

1. Cannot be used in schools except in the case of a **crisis** where there is a **serious risk of imminent physical harm** to the pupils concerned/others.
2. Should not be the first option and if used should be timely, measured, and proportionate.
3. It should be carried out by appropriately trained persons if possible.
4. If used should be documented, reported to the board of management.

**Implementation Date**

This policy amendment was reviewed by the Board of Management meeting in September 2023 following staff training. It will reviewed bi-annually and all members of the school community will be informed of any changes. The policy is available publicly on the school web site. Any changes will be ratified by the Board of Management and dated.

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

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix A: Behaviour of Concern Incident Report / Risk Review

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

What happened? \_\_\_\_\_

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What triggered the incident? \_\_\_\_\_

Whom/what was at risk? \_\_\_\_\_

### Student WELFARE

List any de-escalation/ positive intervention strategies that you used to diffuse the incident (see over).

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Did you need to use a restrictive practice or physical intervention?

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Why was this in the best interests of the student? (See over)

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How effective was it?

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Was the student distressed? Yes / No

How was the student assisted to recover/ repair relationships with staff / other students?

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How can we reduce the risk of this happening again? (Consult with relevant staff/parents)

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#### STAFF WELFARE

How many staff were needed to manage this incident safely?

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Were you or another staff member hurt? Yes / No

Describe:

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Did you or another member of staff find this incident distressing? Yes / No

If yes, rate this on a scale of 1 to 5: (1 = little or no distress, 5 = very distressing)

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What other staff were present?

Signed:

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please review form and ensure all questions are answered before submitting to Principal/DP**

**Review by Principal / Deputy Principal**

Parents notified: Yes / No

Medical intervention needed/sought: Yes / No

If yes, please describe :

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Signed by Principal or Deputy Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

## **GUIDANCE NOTES on filling in Behaviour of Concern Incident Report / Risk Review**

There are three main reasons for filling out incident forms following a behavioural incident:

1. To provide a clear, factual account of what happened.
2. To reduce the risk of the incident occurring again.
3. To provide information for Positive Handling Plans and Behaviour Support Plans.

An incident form should be filled in following serious behavioural incidents but not during the reflection and recovery process for students or staff. If SNAs only are present during an incident it is good practice to fill the incident form out with the class teacher so that s/he is fully aware of to the incident. An element of professional judgment may be required to decide whether an incident merits the filling in of an incident form. It is better to err on the side of caution and fill out the form. If in doubt consult with the Principal or Deputy Principal.

The following are examples of incidents that require reporting:

- 'Near miss's – the situation had the potential to be a risk to safety.
- Someone received an injury from a kick, bite, thrown item, etc.
- A restraint/force was used.
- Liberty was restricted
- A student became significantly emotionally distressed.

A good incident form describes the incident briefly, factually, and honestly, identifies triggers (if known), suggests risk reduction measures and takes account of the welfare of both students and staff. Judgmental, 'blaming' language should be avoided. Examples are provided in the appendix below.

The information is reviewed by the Principal and/or Deputy who will check on the welfare of all involved and discuss/implement risk reduction measures if applicable.

It is good practice to inform parents of incidents, but the incident forms may not be given to parents without the consent of the Principal. This is necessary because the incident report may contain information relating to other students or staff and may need to be redacted.

**1. Helpful phrases for 'What happened?'** Asked for assistance - drew towards - eased away - encouraged - guided – used a help hug - led student to the support room/yard/sensory room where s/he could be monitored/observed - moved student away from the area of the incident – (see paragraph 3 below) used physical prompt - used visuals/schedules/timetables - reassured - secured the door - supported - talked student down - withdrew other students – cleared the area of items that could be thrown – moved other students away from danger – asked for help – cleared the area of other students – sent for a senior member of staff – asked other staff to withdraw from the area – withdrew myself to a safe distance – kept an eye out for members of the public who might be at risk – prevent emotional/psychological distress to other students.



**2. De-escalation techniques to try:** Move away; reduce requests; redirect to schedule; sensory/movement breaks; calm stance/voice; calming scripts; change of staff; 1:1 close to student; 1:1 supervision from afar; time out of class; distraction/diversion; facial expression; first/ then; humour; negotiate; offer choice; outline consequences; outline limits/ boundaries, positive reminders; planned ignoring; removal to support room using friendly hold (pupil comes willingly); reassure; short tasks only; time given to process; use of reward; verbal support/prompts; praise.

**3. Helpful phrases for 'How was this in the best interests of the Student:** Maintain dignity of the student - prevent negative social outcome for student - prevent distress - prevent pain – reduce risk of injury - reduce possibility of - unsafe situation for - welfare of students(s)/staff - prevent emotional/psychological distress.

# Code of Behaviour Agreement

## Parents and Students

We/ I have read through the Code of Behaviour and understand it.

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

We/ I have read through the Code of Behaviour with our son/daughter(s) and explained it to them.

Parent / Guardian Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name : \_\_\_\_\_

Class / Classes : \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_