



St Catherine's National School
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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

The following preliminary steps were undertaken :

1. A sub committee was set up.
2. Focus groups with children from 3rd to 6th 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 2nd class to 6th 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"> • To be educated in a safe, happy and respectful environment • To grow intellectually, emotionally, morally, spiritually and physically • To be listened to • To be free from all forms of abuse, whether physical, emotional, mental or sexual. • To receive information about topics and concerns affecting their lives including information on the Code of Behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be fair • Comply with school and class rules • Attend school regularly and punctually (age appropriate) • Bring correct materials and resources to school • Listen to teachers and act on instructions/advice • Respect all school property and the property of others • Behave in a safe manner that does not harm others • Include others in games and activities • Be courteous and mannerly • Inform a trusted adult if they have a concern or worry • Behave in accordance with the Code of Behaviour even when those around you aren’t

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

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

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.

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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inappropriate displaying of body parts (age appropriate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Misuse of wifi enabled devices <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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Due to the current evidence suggesting that Covid -19 spreads through air born droplets, deliberate coughing or spitting may result in suspension for a period of up to three days in the academic year 2020-21.

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

Gross Misbehaviour	<p><i>* Gross Misconduct may be defined as extremely serious behaviour. Gross misconduct may warrant immediate suspension and/or expulsion from the school.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal informed • White card issued (See Appendix 3) • Meeting with Parents • Board of Management informed • Suspension • Expulsion
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Pink Cards

If a child has had to complete a Reflection Sheet on more than 5 occasions within a month a pink card will be issued – See Appendix 2. The parents/ guardians must arrange a meeting with the class teacher to discuss the pink card. This card will have to be signed by the parents/guardians, class teacher and Principal.

White Card

Following the pink card, if the child has 5 more occasions where they lose Golden Time and are asked to complete a Reflection Sheet a white card will be issued. See Appendix 3.

If 2 white cards are issued in an academic year the child will be suspended.

Where an incident is particularly serious, it will be the decision of the Principal, following discussions with the class teacher to issue a white card for that incident alone.

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal has the authority, in consultation with members of the Board of Management to immediately suspend a child

In accordance with the school’s Data Protection Policy and Retention of Records Policy, these pink and white behaviour cards will be kept indefinitely.

Every academic year, all records are wiped clean – the pink and white cards won’t accumulate from year to year.

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

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

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 after a Covid 19 update by the Board of Management meeting in August 2020. 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 : _____

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 : _____

