

# **Code of Discipline**

## **Introductory Statement**

This policy document was initially discussed at staff meetings and formulated at in-service in the school on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2011. All teachers and Special Needs Assistant Staff were involved with later involvement of children, parents and Board of Management.

The document is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, section 23 (1) and is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in developing a code of Behaviour: Guidelines for schools, NEWB, 2008.

## **Mission and Ethos**

St. Anne's Code of Behaviour is designed to create a safe, secure teaching and learning environment where mutual respect is expressed in ways which show consideration for others and where children, staff, parents and Board of Management work in partnership.

The Code will seek to foster and reinforce positive social values. It will seek to promote self control and will also seek to foster a sense of responsibility in our students and staff. The code will outline the sanctions in place in the school in the event of negative behaviours but it will also highlight the positive strategies that are in use to promote and reward appropriate behaviour.

## **Aims**

The Code will set down the procedures that will allow desired positive values to flourish.

The Code will allow for the effective day to day running of the school.

The Code aims to create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration of others.

The code will endeavour to ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions in place are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

The Code will assist parents, pupils and teachers in understanding the procedures in place and will aid their co-operation in the application of those procedures.

## **Code of Behaviour in the Classroom**

Our code of behaviour has been formulated to endeavour to create an environment that is calm and rewarding so as to facilitate active learning throughout the school.

The following school rules have been drawn up to promote such an environment:

- 1. Show courtesy and respect for fellow pupils and member of staff.**  
*‘I will be kind, helpful and polite. I will not hurt people or their feelings.’*
- 2. Be honest and truthful.**  
*‘I will be honest. I will not hide the truth.’*
- 3. Follow instructions given by members of staff.**  
*‘I will work hard. I will not waste time.’*
- 4. No interrupting or distracting during work time.**  
*‘I will listen. I will put up my hand for attention.’*
- 5. Show respect for school property.**  
*‘I will look after property. I will not waste or damage it.’*

The following are examples of the minor misbehaviours that are covered by the above school rules and which will not be tolerated by any teacher.

1. Chewing gum in class.
2. Swinging on chairs.
3. Interruptions – speaking out in class / shouting out in class.
4. Leaving place without permission
5. Bad language.
6. The use of disrespectful responses.
7. Running on corridors.
8. Mobile phones.
9. Littering classroom or yard areas or the use of graffiti.
10. Upsetting others by teasing.

Examples of more serious behaviours that will not be tolerated include the following:

1. The use of physical violence – hitting, kicking, spitting.
2. Verbal abuse towards other pupils or adults or the making of racist remarks.
3. Throwing of objects at other pupils or supervising adults.
4. Refusal to work or to move to a different area when instructed.
5. Telling lies.
6. Stealing.
7. Malicious damage to school/other pupil's property.
8. Bullying (See separate policy document).

## **Rules in the junior end of the school**

For the purpose of Junior Infants, Senior Infants and First Class the above rules can be presented in the following verse:

*We raise our hands to speak,  
We work quietly in our seats,  
We are helpful to our friends,  
And we keep our places nice and neat.*

The short verse can be displayed in each classroom in the school and it can be read out at the end of the school radio broadcast each Friday morning.

## **Code of Behaviour in the Yard**

For yard time to be an enjoyable and safe experience for both children and supervising adults the following routines must be followed.

- Pupils line up in the classroom before going to yard and exit the classroom in an orderly fashion once the bell has sounded.
- Pupils are reminded to take coats during cold weather as they will not be able to return to their classrooms during break time.
- Pupils will not engage in play which endangers themselves or others. No mess fighting, tripping, spitting, kicking, jockeying, wrestling or other dangerous play is acceptable.
- All instructions given by supervising adults have to be complied with.
- Pupils must stay within the assigned yard boundaries.
- Pupils will not disrupt the play of other pupils by interfering with their games.
- Neither should they provoke or annoy other pupils.

- Pupils will be informed when grassed areas are out of bounds and must comply with the directions to stay off those areas.
- Any child wishing to re-enter the school to go to the toilet must get permission from a teacher on the yard.
- On the junior yard a child must be accompanied as far as the classroom door when going to the toilet.
- When the bell sounds pupils must go immediately to their assigned lining up areas.
- Pupils must line up quietly with their own class group and wait for their teacher to bring them back to their classroom.

### **Indoor Supervision**

During wet weather pupils remain in their classrooms and must comply with their teacher's instructions regarding indoor games.

### **Classroom Sanctions**

The following is the sequence of events that will occur when undesired behaviour takes place in the classroom.

1. Teacher gives verbal warning to pupil with explanation.
2. If undesired behaviour persists teacher gives second warning.
3. If undesired behaviour still persists pupil is now given supervised Time Out for ten minutes in quiet area.
4. Pupil returns to seat and is asked to resume work. If instructions are not complied with then pupil is given a Time Out note that must be taken home and signed by parent to show that they are aware of Time Out incident. Teacher keeps sheet in

- incident book. If time Out not is not returned then a telephone call is made to parents to seek explanation.
5. If undesired behaviour persists then pupil is given a longer time Out in different classroom for an hour and a half. A long time Out form is given to the pupil with work to be signed by the parents. If this sheet does not return then once more a phone call will be made to seek an explanation. If a pupil gets two such Long Time Out forms then the parents will be called up to meet the principal and the teacher and the parent will be advised that one more time out of class will mean a days suspension.  
Teacher keeps all Time Out forms in their incident book.
  6. On the day after a suspension a parent will accompany pupil back to the school and report to the office for talk with principal before pupil is allowed back into class.

## **Yard Sanctions**

Pupils may be asked to stand in time Out areas in the yard.

Pupils may be removed to a different yard for a short period of time.

For aggressive behaviour pupils will be placed on indoor detention for an initial period of two breaks where they will sit in silence and be supervised by the principal.

Teachers on the middle and senior yards will use clip boards to record the names of those pupils who engage in spoiling or dangerous play. The principal and or deputy principal will speak to those listed and warn them of future consequences for their undesired behaviours.

## **Programme of intervention for children with ongoing difficulty.**

### **An agreed ladder of support.**

**Care Team:** Teacher will inform care team members (Principal, Deputy Principal, Teacher Support, Home School Liaison Coordinator, Resource Teacher, School Completion Project Coordinator) of their concerns regarding pupil. Care Team discuss these concerns with teacher.

Behaviour plan drawn up by teacher.

HSCL meets with parent to get more information regarding pupil and to outline concerns and discuss possible solutions.

Referral to in school support – period with Teacher Support, period with School completion group.

Referral to play therapist if applicable.

Referral to psychologist for educational or other assessment.

Involvement of NEPS.

## **Suspension**

The Board of Management and staff of St. Anne's Primary School will follow the procedures for suspension and expulsion outlined in the guidelines for Schools on Developing a code of Behaviour. Fair procedures (i.e. the right to be heard and the right to impartiality) will be applied at all times. In this regard, no person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.

In determining the appropriateness of suspending a pupil the staff and Board of Management will refer to the factors to consider before proposing suspending a pupil. These factors include, the nature and seriousness of the behaviour, the context of the behaviour, the impact of the behaviour, the interventions tried to date, whether suspension is a proportionate response and the possible impact of suspension.

The Board of Management has delegated responsibility for suspension to the principal in the event that immediate suspension of a pupil is warranted.

**Immediate Suspension:**

In exceptional circumstances, the principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary when following a preliminary investigation, the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff of the school or any other person. The suspension may be for a period of three school days depending on the severity of the misbehaviour. If a suspension longer than three days is proposed by the principal, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval. However, the Board has also authorised the principal to impose a suspension of up to five days with the approval of the chairperson of the board in the event that a meeting of the board cannot be convened in a timely fashion.

**Procedures in relation to suspension**

Parents will be informed of an immediate suspension by telephone and arrangements made for the pupil to be collected. In no circumstances will a pupil be sent home from school prior to his/her parents being notified.

A formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension and parents will also be sent written notification.

The principal and/or the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parents to a meeting to discuss the circumstances surrounding the suspension and any interventions necessary to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.



If parents fail to attend the meeting, the Principal/Chairperson will write to the parents inviting them to a rescheduled meeting and, failing that, the Board of Management will consider the proposed suspension and make a decision.

Where parents do not agree to meet the Principal, written notification will serve as notice too impose a suspension.

A written statement of the terms and date of the termination of a suspension will be given to Parents/Guardians. A suspension will not be for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is necessary in order to achieve a particular objective. The letter will confirm:-

The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.

The reason for the suspension.

Any programmes of study to be followed.

The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents (for example, the pupil and 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).

The suspension will be recorded on the Student Absence Report form (when applicable).

When a period of suspension ends, the pupil will be readmitted formally to the class by the teacher or principal. The school will help the pupil catch up on work missed and the pupil will be given the opportunity and support of a fresh start.

If a pupil continues to misbehave he/she may be suspended for a major fixed period (up to ten days) to allow for consultation with both the pupil and the pupil's parents to address the issues.

The Education Welfare Officer will be informed when a student has been suspended for six days or more cumulatively.

Section 29 appeal – when the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days the parents may appeal the suspension

under Section 29 of the Education Act and will be given information about how to appeal.

### **Procedures for Expulsion**

Subsequent to the above suspension procedures and meetings with parents/guardians, if serious/gross incidents of misbehaviour continue, the pupil will be recommended for permanent expulsion of the Board of Management. The grounds for expulsion include the following:

The pupil's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.

The pupil's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.

The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

Authority to expel is reserved to the Board of Management.

In determining the appropriateness of expelling a pupil the Board of Management will refer to the factors to consider before proposing to expel a pupil. These factors are similar to those mentioned in relation to suspension.

In exceptional circumstances, pupils may be expelled for a first offence. This may apply in the event of:-

A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff.

Actual violence or physical assault.

Supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school.

Sexual assault.

### **Procedures in respect of Expulsion – Six Steps.**

Step 1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.

Step 2. A recommendation to the Board of Management.

Step 3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing.

Step 4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.

Step 5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.

Step 6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

### **Section 29 Appeals.**

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the secretary general of the Department of Education and Science (DES). A form for such an appeal is available from the DES.

## **MOTIVATING AND AFFIRMING GOOD BEHAVIOUR**

### **STRATEGIES FOR AFFIRMING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**

Teachers will make themselves aware of the guidelines for teachers in the NEPS Booklet, 'Behavioural, Emotional and Social difficulties.'

Teachers will consult these guidelines in establishing good school and class routines.

They will establish the core routines necessary for the smooth running of classroom learning.

Pupils will know what routines they have to follow when they enter the school in the morning, how they enter after a break and how they will move about the school either individually or as a class.

Teachers will use the guidelines and consult their pupils in drawing up a list of five to seven rules that they will follow and which are stated in terms of observable behaviour.

Teachers will agree a reward system that is appropriate to their class or they will use a combination of systems.

Examples of positive behaviour modelling and motivation are as follows:

#### **In the classroom**

1. Star charts
2. Golden time
3. Sticker Chart
4. Rewards – pencils/rubbers/sweets
5. Marble Jar
6. Traffic Light system / Weather Chart – Sun and Rain System
7. Tokens for individual behaviour
8. Homework Vouchers
9. Classroom jobs and responsibilities given
10. Cookery time
11. Video time
12. 'Good Note' home to parents
13. Verbal / Non verbal praise.

Good behaviour on the part of one pupil alone, a group of pupils or a whole class should be affirmed at school level. Such examples of affirmations and positive behaviour modelling are as follows:

### **Whole-school level**

1. Homework Vouchers
2. Compliment Cards
3. Student of the Week
4. Trips out of school
5. In school activities /visiting teachers
6. Peer Mediation.

Each teacher in St. Anne's Primary School is expected to be aware of and use some or all of the following positive strategies when dealing with children:

1. Non-Verbal signals
2. Simple directions
3. Take up time
4. Proximity control
5. Rule reminders
6. Diversions
7. Warning of consequences
8. Giving a choice / alternative
9. In class time – out
10. Refocusing

Teachers will also try to ensure that the following routines are put in place.

1. Transition from subject to subject should be smooth and well planned. A time table to show pupils what comes next will help to facilitate this.
2. Insist upon silence when instructions are being given out. Instructions should be given in a clear and consider fashion.
3. Insist upon children being in a quiet straight line before going out to year or around the school.
4. Seating in the classroom should allow easy and safe movement of adults and children and seating arrangements should allow for good classroom management.
5. Classrooms should be tidy and free of any obstructions or clutter. Children should be encouraged to tidy their place and classroom each day so that they take pride in their surroundings.

### **Class Records**

Each teacher will keep a special note book in which they will record incidents of behaviour. The note books will record:-

- The frequency of incidents.
- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour.
- The context of the behaviour.
- The impact of the behaviour.
- The interventions tried to date.
- These records will enable the teacher to track a child's behaviour and will be used to inform parents of their child's behaviour and progress at parent teacher meetings and at other times when they are invited up to the school to meet with the teacher and/or principal.
- A record will also be kept of letters and telephone calls to parents in relation to pupil's behaviour. A record will also be kept of communication with outside agencies and with the Board of Management.
- Documentation pertaining to Section 29 appeals will be kept and stored in a secure place in the principal's office.

## **Homework**

It is the policy of the school to give homework from Monday to Thursday.

Homework is given for the following reasons:-

1. To reinforce work that is done in school.
2. To promote good study habits.
3. To make a link between home and school.

Homework is written down in the school journal and done in a separate homework copy.

It is favourable that homework would be signed by a parent or guardian.

It is suggested that homework should take no longer than thirty minutes.

When and if homework is not done the teacher has the following options:-

1. Issue a warning and repeat request for the work.
2. Notify parent or guardians.
3. Seek the assistance of the Principal, Deputy Principal or HSLC.
4. If all of the above fail then an arrangement can be made with parents.

Good homework practices should be encouraged and rewarded using the same incentives as used in the classroom.

Most children do their homework adequately with a little coaxing from their parents and teacher. However for some pupils homework is a task that they manage to avoid doing despite everyone else's best efforts. Looking for homework from such pupils can be a frustrating task for the class teacher each morning and it can cause an undesirable confrontation that may set the tone for the day. Therefore it is important to identify those pupils who refuse to do homework and devise an agreed strategy that bypasses those morning confrontations.

## **Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school**

The school's policy on attendance includes use of the following strategies to encourage school attendance.

Creating an attractive school environment.

Creating a system for acknowledging and rewarding good attendance. This will be done by awarding certificates and homework passes and other appropriate rewards which will be given out at the end of each term.

Adapting the curriculum content and methodologies to maximise relevance to pupils.

Adapting the school and class timetables to make it more attractive for pupils to attend and to be on time.

Making parents aware of the terms and implications of the Education Welfare Act.

The Home School Community Liaison Coordinator will work with parents on non attending pupils to help improve their child's attendance.

The school's policy requires parents/guardians to send in a note informing teachers in writing of their child's absence from school and the reason for this absence. These notes are signed and dated and kept until the end of the school year. The school will use the standard forms to report on pupil absences to the national Educational Welfare Board.

## **Reference to other policies**

SPHE Plan

Anti-bullying and harassment.

Enrolment

Record Keeping

Home/School Links

Health and Safety

Equality

Special Education Needs



## **Success Criteria**

Practical indicators of the success of the policy include the following:-

Observation of positive behaviour in classrooms, playground and in the school environment.

Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.

## **Roles and Responsibility**

Responsibility for implementation of the policy include:-

The Principal and Staff

Board of Management

Pupils

Parents

## **Implementation date**

This policy will apply from .....

## **Timetable for Review**

This policy will be reviewed in .....

### **Ratification and communication**

The Board of Management officially ratified the policy at its meet of

.....

The ratified policy will be circulated through established channels to all staff and will be available to the school community for inspection.

Signed:

Date:

*Chairperson, Board of Management.*