**St. Mary’s N.S.**

**CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

St. Mary’s N.S. Code of Behaviour was reviewed by the staff at meetings during the first term November 2019 with all teaching staff present. It was necessary to review our Code of Behaviour at this time as part of our cycle of policy review under our school development plan. This policy reflects the school’s philosophy and ethos as outlined on our Aims and Ethos statement, and was formulated in consultation with BoM, parents, pupils, teachers and auxiliary staff.

**Scope**

This Code of Behaviour applies to all pupils enrolled in the St. Mary’s National School, Bagenalstown and relates to all school activities both during and outside of normal school hours; it applies both on and off site. For avoidance of doubt any reference to Principal is to be construed as meaning Acting Principal or Deputy Principal in the absence of the Principal.

**The aims of the Code of Behaviour are:**

* To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
* To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
* To develop pupils’ self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
* To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others.
* To facilitate the education and development of every child.
* To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
* To enable teachers to teach without disruption.
* To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner.

# Implementation

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Rules will be kept to a minimum, emphasise positive behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

**Supporting Measures**

* Parental co-operation is considered fundamental to the implementation of the school’s code. By enrolling their child/children in the school, parents indicate agreement with the aims and ethos of the school and are acknowledging acceptance of the code of behaviour. In accordance with the Education Act 1998 parents are asked to indicate that they will make every effort to ensure that their child/children complies with every aspect of the code;
* A copy of school’s Code of Behaviour is available for download on www.stmarysnsbagenalstown.ie. Pupils are reminded of our rules regularly and the reasons for them and the procedures followed if the rules are not upheld;
* At the start of each academic year, the code of behaviour is discussed with each class and any changes highlighted. This is done so as to remind pupils of the content and to take account of the fact that they have been out of our school environment for nine weeks.
* School rules and the reasons for them are discussed as part of SPHE/RSE/Circle Time/Religion. The concepts of tolerance, self-control, fairness and the principles of natural justice are also discussed as part of the Follow Me Programme;
* If there are incidents of serious misbehaviour, the class teacher discusses these with the whole class
* Issues such as Bullying, Racism, Substance Use, Internet Safety, Cyber Bullying, Road Safety and Healthy Eating are discussed with the pupils in formal classes and/or with guest speakers in the senior classes.

# General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour

*Each member of the school is responsible for his/her behaviour. Responsible behaviour helps to create a secure, happy, working environment in which pupils can learn and grow in their understanding and knowledge. It builds up a pupil’s self-esteem. Each pupil is entitled to a disruption-free environment where they can be happy and safe to grow and learn.*

1. Pupils are expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable
2. Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
3. Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.
4. Pupils are expected to obey a teacher’s instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
5. Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing, stating the reason for absence.

# School Rules

School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community to enable pupils to develop into mature and responsible individuals. If a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly. School rules are discussed regularly in classrooms and at whole school assembly.

School rules at St. Mary’s are as follows:

**C**o-operate with students and staff

**A**ct safely and responsibly

**R**espect yourself, others and property

**E**ncourage and help others

C

A

R

E

Our golden rule is to

*Treat others as you would like them to treat you.*

Affirming Positive Behaviour

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions.

Strategies/Incentives

* A quiet word or gesture to show approval
* A comment on a child’s exercise book
* A visit to another class or Principal for commendation
* Praise in front of class group
* Individual class merit awards, points awards or award stamps/ Stars
* Rewards for pupils with special needs, will take account of their particular learning style
* Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
* Presentation of a ‘golden’ good behaviour note to be taken home/signed by parent
* Written or verbal communication with parent

Discouraging Misbehaviour

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development of the child. Sanctions will be fair, just, predictable and consistent.

Pupils must realise what misbehaviour is and understand that such behaviour carries sanctions with it for all school related activities, including classroom, yard, swimming, school tours etc.

Any student that does not comply with the schools COVID-19 Response Plan will be dealt with in accordance with our plan as set out below. Should any student deliberately spit or cough at another person, they will be dealt with under the serious and gross misbehaviour sanctions set out below, (i.e. there is an automatic move to step 4 on our staged procedure).

The school operates the following procedure to deal with instances of general misbehaviour:

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| Step 1: Class Teacher   1. Reasoning with pupil 2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve 3. Warning from the teacher 4. Second warning from teacher   Some sanctions may be imposed during this step including;   * A change of seat * Distraction/redirection strategies * Calming strategies – breathing techniques (if necessary) * No reward earned * Miss out on yard time (up to 5 minutes) * Time out of activity/removal from classroom to have a sensory break if necessary * Removal from classroom to complete classwork in the corridor while being supervised by class teacher (door to classroom left open and student in full view of teacher) * Removal from classroom to sit in another classroom until work is completed * Additional classwork assigned * Informal chat with parents |
| Step 2: Behaviour Note   1. A first behaviour note is issued. |
| Step 3: Principal Teacher   1. Referral to the Principal on receipt of a second Behaviour Note. 2. On receipt of a third Behaviour note parents/guardians will be requested to come to a meeting. Possible dates/times will be suggested to which a prompt reply will be expected. |
| Step 4: Board of Management   1. On fourth Behaviour Note a formal report will be made to the Board of Management 2. Should a further Behaviour Note be issued, Exclusion from school (Suspension or Expulsion) will apply in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000. |

Possible Misbehaviour

The following are examples of types of misbehaviour which pupils may be reprimanded for.

Notes:

A] In cases of Serious or Gross misbehaviour the school will issue a behaviour note and parents will be contacted (i.e. there is an automatic move to step 4 on our staged procedure).

The following table aims to outline some examples of minor, serious and gross misbehaviours.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Minor | Serious | Gross |
| * Not carrying out or completing assigned work in school or at home without a good reason. * Distracting other pupils or constant talking. * Chewing gum * Writing and passing notes. * Writing on books or items of clothing. | * Deliberately spitting, coughing at another person * Deliberately activating fire alarm. * Engaging in dangerous games e.g fighting, kicking, spitting, biting etc. * Writing graffiti: in any format, scratched, penned, inked * Use of bad or obscene language or gestures. * Use of mobile phone – when outside of school mobile phone policy * Bullying behaviour * Verbally answering back a member of staff * Being dismissive of staff requests * Lying and dishonesty * Loss of temper * Damage to school property * Bringing inappropriate items to school * Misbehaviour en route to, at and returning from venues outside the school | * Any other behaviour not listed, which the staff, the Principal and the Board of Management, deem to be a serious misdemeanour. |

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| **School Rules and Students with Special Educational Needs**   * Class teachers and specialist personnel such as the Special Educational Teachers and Special Needs Assistants should check that school standards and rules are taught according to the cognitive and emotional abilities of students. |

**Bullying - Definition of Bullying**

Bullying may be defined as repeated acts of intentional aggression; which may be verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others who are not able or willing to defend themselves in that situation. Refer to Anti-Bullying Policy.

B] The cumulative effects of Behaviour Notes apply within each school year. Every new school year represents a new beginning for sanctions. Every day represents a fresh start until the pupil reaches level 6 on the school procedures.

C] Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health / safety.

**Suspension/Expulsion**

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilized. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child’s case.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil. The Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

**Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)**

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil’s reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil’s own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

Before/After School

Parents are reminded that the school’s responsibility for pupils commences at the official opening time of 9.20 a.m. and ends at the official closing time of 2.00 p.m. (Infants) and 3.00 p.m. (other classes). Children travelling by bus will be accommodated on arrival in a designated area and will be supervised until departure. Where pupils are engaged in an extracurricular activity organized by the school and approved by the Board of Management they are expected to behave in accordance with school behaviour policy during these times.

**Board of Management’s Responsibilities**

* Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
* Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
* Ratify the code

# Principal’s Responsibilities

* Promote a positive climate in the school
* Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner
* Arrange for review of the Code, as required

**Teachers’ Responsibilities**

* Support and implement the school’s code of behaviour
* Create a safe working environment for each pupil
* Recognise and affirm good work
* Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils
* Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils
* Be courteous, consistent and fair
* Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum
* Deal appropriately with misbehaviour
* Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour
* Provide support for colleagues
* Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern

Parents / Guardians are always welcome to call to the school, but because of their duties, staff may not be at liberty to give immediate attention. If any Parent / Guardian wishes to discuss a matter, an appointment will be arranged.

# Pupils’ Responsibilities

* Attend school regularly and punctually
* Participating and doing one’s best at all times
* Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice
* Show respect for all members of the school community
* Respect all school property and the property of other pupils
* Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger themselves or others-in school rooms, play-ground or on school buses-including wearing of seat belts
* Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling
* Include other pupils in games and activities
* Bring correct materials/books to school
* Follow school and class rules
* Avoid bringing toys or games to school
* Avoid bringing mobile phones to school

**Parents/Guardians’ Responsibilities**

* Encourage each child to have a sense of respect for himself/herself and for property
* Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually
* Communicate to the school reasons for absences
* Be interested in, support and encourage their children’s school work
* Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation
* Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child’s behaviour is causing difficulties for others
* Be interested in, support and encourage their children’s school work
* Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation
* Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child’s progress / behaviour

**Success Criteria**

* Positive feedback from teachers, parents, auxiliary staff, bus drivers and pupils
* Observation of positive behaviours in classrooms, in the yard and on buses and for all school related activities

**Reference to other Policies**

The following policies have a bearing on our Code of Behaviour and should be referred in reading this policy.

* Anti-Bullying Policy
* Enrolment Policy
* School Trips Policy
* Homework Policy
* iPad/Internet Acceptable Use Policy
* Mobile Phone Policy
* Health & Safety Statement
* Substance Use Policy
* Supervision Playground Policy

**Implementation and Review**

This Policy will be circulated to all members of the current school community (Patron, BOM, teaching staff, auxiliary staff and parents) and will be given to prospective parents before registration of their child.

This policy will be implemented from December 2019. It will be discussed annually and reviewed during the school year 2021/22 or earlier if deemed necessary.

**Ratified by Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date**

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

**Chairperson, Board of Management**

**Approved by Patron on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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