



# Code of Behaviour

## St. Patrick's G.N.S., Hollypark,

Draft Policy for: Code of Behaviour - February 2010

Review: February 2012

### Introduction

This policy has been prepared for the Board of Management, by Geraldine Dineen, Jackie Bracken Doireann Foy and Zoë Mannix.

### Introduction Statement

The code of Behaviour of St Patrick's G.N.S is directed toward creating and maintaining conditions of a pleasant, orderly environment within the school so that pupils and teachers may work in an environment which is conducive to learning. It is a working document designed to enhance the development of positive relationships between children, adults working in schools, parents and other members of the wider school community.

The school has a central role in the children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. In seeking to define acceptable standards of behaviour it is acknowledged that these are goals to be worked towards rather than expectations that are either fulfilled or not.

The children bring to school a wide variety of behaviour. As a community environment, in school we must work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. It follows that acceptable standards of behaviour are those that reflect these principles.

Parents can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, by visiting the school and by talking to the members of staff.

A code of behaviour for St Patrick's G.N.S was established to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

### Rationale

We aim to create a welcoming, caring environment where relationships are based on respect and to develop a positive self-esteem in each child. The staff at St Patrick's G.N.S. are committed to maintaining high expectations of good behaviour as an essential contribution to the educational experience of the children and to their happiness and well being while in school.

### The aims

The responsibility for the implementation of the policy rests with the partners in education i.e. the Board of Management, Principal and teaching staff and the parents and guardians of the pupils in St. Patrick's G.N.S.



### Aims of the Code

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships.
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour.
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights 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 school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the parent's handbook, availability of policies and an ethos of open communication.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

### Responsibility of Adults

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations.
- Promote, through example, honesty and courtesy.
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment.
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others.
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.
- To discourage physical aggression and encourage 'Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet'. A Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers ensures that the rights of the children are upheld.

### School Rules

1. School opens at 8.40 a.m. Dismissal at 2.20 p.m. Class begins at 9.00a.m. sharp. Punctuality is very important. Correct entrance / exit doors to be used.
2. Children will walk in an orderly manner with their teacher to the exit point when the school closes at 2.20 p.m.
3. Absence and lateness should be explained by a brief note, and signed by the parent / guardian. No need to phone secretary unless illness is contagious. Absences of 20 days or more must be reported to the relevant authority.
4. Pupils must respect and obey the teachers and be courteous to other pupils and visitors to the school.
5. Any pupil wishing to leave the school early must have a note signed by their parent / guardian and must be collected from the classroom by parent or guardian.
6. The uniform should be worn on all days save P.E. days when the pupils are required to wear the school tracksuit.
7. Pupils should respect school property at all times.
8. Homework should be checked and signed nightly by parents. If homework is not done, this should be a brief note of explanation from parents in the school homework notebook.



The school rules can be summed up as 6 main rules;

- Respect/ Be nice
- Do your best
- Be tidy
- Be Safe
- Walk
- Listen

#### Behaviour in the classroom

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children. These reflect and support the school rules, but are presented in a way that is accessible to the children.

Besides the procedures and other regulations implemented by the teacher for the effective teaching and learning environment for all our children, the following are basic requirements for the various classes:

#### Junior Infants - Second Class

1. Walk, work and talk quietly.
2. Listen to teacher and each other.
3. Put up your hand and wait for teacher to call your name.
4. Stay in your seat when the class teacher is not in the room.
5. Keep your table and classroom clean.
6. Be kind, fair and honest.

#### Third Class - Sixth Class

1. Be punctual, seated and prepared for each lesson.
2. Listen to teacher and each other.
3. For attention raise your hand and wait your turn.
4. Remain seated and find something quiet to do when your teacher is otherwise occupied.
5. Keep desk and classroom tidy.
6. Be kind, fair and honest.

#### Behaviour in the Yard

1. All play is to be conducted in a spirit of friendship, courtesy and care.
2. Walk out quietly in line to the yard.
3. Place all litter in the bins provided.
4. Climbing or other unsafe behavior is not permitted.
5. Admission to school building by ticket only during yard time.
6. Supervising adults instructions to be followed at all times.
7. Line up procedure: On first bell children freeze, on second bell all children walk to their respective class lines.

#### School Grounds and Garden

1. Every effort shall be made to respect and care for our environment.
2. Litter shall be placed in bins provided.
3. Care shall be taken not to break or damage the plants.



#### School Hall

1. Children shall enter and exit the hall in an orderly manner.
2. Children using the hall must be supervised at all times.
3. Suitable clothing and footwear must be worn while participating in physical activities in the hall.

#### School Corridors

1. Children are expected to walk in an orderly and quiet manner and hold on to handrails where appropriate.
2. Children shall behave in a mannerly way by standing back to allow adults to proceed through doorways etc.
3. Children are invited to view but not interfere with displays.
4. Children may be sent on messages/errands in pairs.
5. When a child is sent on a message to another classroom they should knock first and then walk in.

#### Behaviour in the Computer Room\*

1. No food and drink in the Computer Room at any time.
2. Make sure hands are washed and dried thoroughly before commencing work.
3. Use the keyboard and equipment gently.
4. If you have a problem, stay at the computer and seek help from your teacher.
5. No moving around on the swivel chairs.
6. Do not place any object on any part of the computer.
7. Only teachers are allowed to handle blinds.
8. Make sure the computer room is left tidy and that the chairs are in place for the next class.
9. Work quietly on your computer.
10. Do not use printer without permission from your teacher.

\*Please see the school Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) to see rules on use of internet.

#### Sanctions

The use of sanctions or consequences should be characterised by certain features;

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

The following steps will be taken when the children behave inappropriately. They are listed in order of severity with one being for a minor misbehaviour and eight being for serious or gross misbehaviour. The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the features by which sanctions should be characterised. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupils devise strategies for her;



1. Reasoning with pupil.
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class.
4. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened.
5. Communication with parents.
6. Referral to Principal.
7. Principal communicating with parents.
8. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000)

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

#### Sanctions for when a child is brought to the Principal

This should be seen as a last resort, and the matter should be discussed with the Principal beforehand.

1. Record the time and date, name of pupil and reason for visit. The child must write a letter of apology signed by the parent / guardian.
2. Record the date, name of pupil and letter sent home.
3. Date recorded and meeting with parent is requested.

#### Suspension and Expulsion

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

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. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

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.

### Children with Special Needs

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning support/ resource teacher, and or Principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable.

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

### Roles & Responsibilities of Parents

Parents are expected to:

- Equip pupils with appropriate school materials, a sufficient healthy lunch and full uniform.
- Be courteous towards pupils and staff
- Make an appointment to meet with teacher/Principal through the school office
- Respect school property and encourage their children to do the same
- Label pupils coats and other property
- Supervise their young children on school premises when collecting other pupils or visiting the school
- Refrain from bringing family pets/dogs into the school yard (even on a lead)
- As the Board of Management is responsible for the Health & Safety of all staff and students, parents are requested not to approach or reprimand another person's child on the school premises.

### Methods of Communicating with Parents

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents should be encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour.



The following methods are to be used at all levels within the school:

- Informal parent/teacher meetings and Formal parent/teacher meetings.
- Through children's homework journal (infants do not have a homework journal-check bags)
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school.
- School notice board.
- Monthly newsletter.

### Roles and Responsibility

At the start of each year teachers will discuss and clarify the Code of Behaviour with each class group. This could be followed by a class code of behaviour being drawn up between the class teacher and the pupils. The post holder will ensure that each new staff member has a copy of the Code of Behaviour.

### Implementation.

Teacher's attention (especially that of new teachers) will be drawn to the Code of Behaviour. Children's homework notebooks include an abbreviated version of the Behaviour Code which should be signed by parents.

New parents are advised of the Code and a copy will be included in the school prospectus information pack.

### Timeframe for Review.

The success of the policy will be reviewed on a regular basis at staff meeting taking into account feedback from the Board of Management, parents and pupils. Changes will be made where necessary.

### Responsibility for Review.

The responsibility for this review will fall upon the post holder along with a small subcommittee and full support and cooperation from all staff members.

### Ratification and Communication

The Behaviour Policy will be subject to review by the Board of Management.

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

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairman)