



# Code of Behaviour

February 2019

## Introductory Statement

We at St. Peter's believe that it is the right of every pupil and member of staff to be able to work in a safe and caring environment. We further believe that a school should be a place of learning and this learning should take place in a mutually respectful environment. In order to attain this, high standards of discipline are set and are expected to be adhered to by all. These rules are put into place to benefit both students and teachers alike and are an invaluable tool in creating and maintaining a positive atmosphere in the school.

## Aims

- Encourage an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- Foster pride in our school and its community.
- Ensure that each student and staff member alike can work in a relatively disruption free, caring and safe environment.
- Develop an environment which is safe, supportive and conducive to learning.
- Ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement.
- Allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.

## Golden Rules

1. We are gentle.
2. We are kind and helpful.
3. We listen.
4. We are honest.
5. We work hard.
6. We look after property.
7. We respect ourselves and others.

## Section 1 Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour

We appreciate the importance each staff member, as well as parents, guardians and the Board of Management play in implementing and ensuring the effectiveness of this code of discipline and each of these parties were consulted in drawing up this code.

### **The staff are expected to:**

- Treat all children, parents, the school community and the outside community with respect and dignity.
- Promote the use of positive behaviour which is considered a priority and this will do this by:
  - Modelling, recognising and reinforcing good behaviour.
  - Positive everyday interactions between teachers and students.
  - Good school and class routines.
  - Clear boundaries and rules for children.
  - Giving positive feedback about behavior (eg. Monthly reports).
  - Involving the students in class rules.

- o Sending home monthly reports and making phone calls to report positive behaviours.
- o Using positive reward systems in class, e.g. star charts, homework passes, Dojo points, student and group of the week etc.
- o Informing the class each year of the school's golden rules.
- Give a student a daily/weekly report if warranted. This report will inform parents how their child is behaving in school on a daily/weekly basis. The report will be sent home to parents daily or on a Friday and they will be required to sign the report and return it to the school.
- Devise if warranted a student behaviour plan in an effort to improve overall behaviour. Parents and the child (if deemed necessary) will be involved in devising this plan.
- Liaise with outside agencies e.g. Lucena Clinic, Enable Ireland, HSE in relation to specific children.
- Use circle time or another whole class method as a way of addressing a behavioural issue that arises within a class.
- Teach the Stay Safe and Walk Tall programmes.
- To monitor the behaviour of all children in the school and should respond accordingly to any incident of misbehaviour.

#### **The Board of Management are expected to:**

- Be consulted in reviewing, drafting and ratifying the Code of Behaviour.
- Support the principal and staff in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.
- Discuss serious breaches of behaviour (which may involve expulsion) brought to the attention of the Board by the principal.

#### **Parents are expected to:**

- Contribute to the development of the Code of Behaviour. Their involvement will draw on their expectations, insights and experience.
- Cooperate with the school's system of rewards and sanctions.
- Ensure their children are at school in time.
- Be courteous towards pupils and staff
- To attend a meeting at the school when their child's behaviour is causing disruption/harm to their child and/or to other children. Initially, the meeting may be with the class teacher, but the nature of the behaviour may warrant a meeting with a combination of the class teacher, HSCL, Headlamps worker and Principal. Strategies for modifying behaviour will be discussed and behaviour will be reviewed within an agreed timeframe.
- Help their children with homework and ensure that it is fully completed.
- Support the use of the Homework diary.
- Model and reinforce good behaviour.
- Behave in a respectful manner towards all staff members.
- Supervise younger, non-school going children at all times whilst on the school premises.
- Refrain from approaching or reprimanding another child while on the school grounds

#### **Pupils are expected to:**

- Contribute to devising classroom rules.
- Learn about taking personal responsibility for their behaviour, thus contributing to each other's wellbeing and the wellbeing of all members of the school community.
- Appreciate the value of good behaviour to promote a positive learning atmosphere.
- Learn how to express themselves at the Junior and Senior Infants level, eg. "I didn't like it when..." in order to help them deal with various social situations that cause them distress.
- Attending school regularly and punctually.
- Do their best in class.
- Help to create a positive and safe environment.

- Respect staff.
- Respect themselves and other students.
- Allow other students to learn in a disruption free environment.
- Participate in all school activities.

## Rewards and Sanctions

### Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour

- The class teachers reward good behaviour in a class setting.
- Examples of recognition for positive behaviour and good work are verbal praise, points awarded on the Class Dojo, being sent to the Principal's office or positive note in the homework journal.
- At a class level, rewards are given at the discretion of the class teacher.
- There is a whole school approach to promoting good behaviour in a public setting. Eg. Points are given to all classes when lining up at the end of yard time. The class with the most points at the end of the month will be rewarded with a night off written homework.
- Good news is communicated to parents at parent teacher meetings (both formal and incidental), written comments in the Homework Journal and in the monthly and end of year reports.

### There are two levels of misbehaviour within our Code of Behaviour:

1. Mild Misbehaviour
2. Serious Misbehaviour

<i>Examples of Mild Misbehaviour</i>	<i>Sanctions for Mild Misbehaviours</i>
Distracting or interrupting others	Discussion with the child and/or reprimand
Interrupting the teacher	Teacher to inform parents and the Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) teacher may follow up
Wandering around the classroom or school	Phone call or note home to parents in the journal
Fidgeting or inattention	Object causing the distraction taken and returned to pupil or parent
Deliberately wasting time	Additional tasks at the teacher's discretion
Careless or untidy work	Child made to sit or stand out of activity for short period
Breaking any of the school rules	Extra work given
	Time out at the wall at break times
	Child moved to another seat
	Other sanctions at the discretion of the class teacher
	Discussion with the child and/or reprimand
	Phone call or note home to parents in the journal
	Dojo points taken away
<i>Examples of Serious Misbehaviours</i>	<i>Sanctions for Serious Misbehaviours</i>
Constantly breaking mild misbehaviours (as stated above)	
Bad attitude or back-answering adults	Teacher to notify parents. HSCL teacher may follow up
Teasing/Bullying	Withdrawal of privileges
Any behaviour that interferes with other students' learning	Withdrawal to another class or to the Headlamps worker who will discuss the child's behaviour.
Abusing and vandalising property	Extra work given
Defiant behaviour	Timeout at the wall at break times
Fighting or causing injury to others	Child sent to the principal's office
Telling lies	Detention in school or after school (parents will be notified)
Stealing	Missed work to be completed at home
Inappropriate sexual language, behaviour or gestures	Suspension.
Aggressive or threatening behaviour towards a pupil or staff member	Longer periods of suspension
Using technology in an inappropriate manner	In very extreme cases expulsion from school

Leaving the school grounds without permission	
Cyber Bullying (see Anti-Bullying Policy)	

**Note:**

- Any of the sanctions listed in “sanctions for minor misbehaviours” may be used for any of the behaviours listed above in the “Examples of minor misbehaviours.” And likewise for the serious misbehaviours.
- The above lists are not exhaustive and therefore any misdemeanours that occur but are not mentioned above will be categorised into the above two categories.
- It is at the teachers’ or principal’s discretion to make a judgement in relation to which misdemeanour they consider the behaviour to fall within.
- Behaviours will be recorded on Databiz (the school’s online database of students).
- For pupils who manifest persistently serious misbehaviour, it might be necessary to involve outside agencies.

## Suspension

### Process Leading to Suspension/Expulsion

The power of suspension is delegated to the principal by the school Board of Management. The delegation of such authority reflects the provisions of the Guidelines for Schools (NEWB), and any legal requirements, as directed by the Dept. of Education and Science.

The school will record incidences of consistent misbehaviour and serious misbehaviour. In the event of consistent or serious misbehaviour being recorded on Databiz, the following steps will be taken:

#### Step 1

- Two copies of letter 1 (see appendix 1) will be sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the pupil in question requesting that they talk to their child about this matter. One of these copies has to be signed and returned to the school and the other one can be kept by the parent(s)/guardians.
- At this time a daily record of the student’s behaviour will be kept by the class teacher for a minimum of two weeks and for a longer period where deemed necessary. A copy of this record will be sent home to the parents/guardian of the child.

#### Step 2

- If the misbehaviour continues, two copies of letter 2 (see appendix 2) will be sent to the student’s parents/guardians. This letter will invite the parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting in the school to discuss the misbehaviour. One of these copies has to be signed and returned to the school and the other one can be kept by the parent(s)/guardians.

#### Step 3

- If after these two warnings the misbehaviour continues, it will be proposed that the student will be suspended for a period of no more than three days (amount of time to be decided by the Principal). The school will follow a fair process before they suspend any child. This process involves the parents/guardians right to be heard and to respond and to have the reason for the proposed suspension fully explained. If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal should write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the school will have the right to impose the sanction.
- Two copies of letter 3 (see appendix 3) will be sent home advising the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the suspension as well as the date of the student’s return to school. A phone call will also be made to ensure the parent(s)/Guardian(s) are aware of the situation. The student and/or his parent(s)/guardian(s) will be required to attend a meeting in the school to discuss the inappropriate behaviour and give assurances that this behaviour will not continue. The student will be re-

admitted only when these assurances are given. If the child continues to misbehave after being suspended, then the school reserves the right to immediately suspend them, without giving them the three letters of warning again.

### **Immediate Suspension**

- In the event of a once-off incident of serious misbehaviour, which in the opinion of the Principal or Chairperson of the Board of Management is deemed serious enough, the student may be immediately suspended (pending fair process). If the school principal deems it necessary, the school may require the parent to collect their child as soon as possible from the school. If the parent is unable to do this, the school may arrange for the child to be brought home. Two copies of letter 4 (see appendix 4) will be sent home advising the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the suspension as well as the date of the student's return to school. A phone call will also be made to ensure the parent(s)/Guardian(s) are aware of the situation.

### **Post Suspension**

- The parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student (if deemed necessary) will be required to attend a meeting in the school to discuss the inappropriate behaviour and give assurances that this behaviour will not continue. The student will be re-admitted only when these assurances are given.
- If the misbehaviour continues after the suspension, the student may be immediately suspended but may be for a longer period (at the discretion of the Principal). A letter (letter 4) will be sent home. If deemed necessary, a meeting with the principal, Chairperson of the Board of Management, teacher and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be required before a child will be re-admitted.
- Where allegations of criminal behaviour are made about a student, these will be referred to the Gardaí who have responsibility for investigating criminal matters.

### **Note:**

- Discipline letters will not be carried forward from the previous year and therefore each child will start with a clean slate for the new school year.
- Parents of a pupil who has been suspended for 20 school days or more are entitled under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 to Appeal such a suspension.

## **Expulsion**

Expulsion of a student, in extreme cases, will be in accordance with section 24 of the Education Welfare Act 2000 and will only be considered when:

- a) The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- b) The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- c) The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

### **Automatic Expulsion**

The Board of Management may sanction automatic expulsion for the following prescribed behaviours:

1. Sexual Assault
2. Possession of illegal drugs in the school
3. Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
4. Actual violence or physical assault
5. Serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff
6. Any other serious misbehaviour that the Board of Management deem to warrant expulsion

### **In imposing expulsion as a sanction, due regard will be given to the following factors:**

1. The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
2. The context of the behaviour
3. The impact of the behaviour
4. The interventions already implemented

5. Whether expulsion is an appropriate response
6. The possible impact of expulsion

### **Procedures to be followed in relation to expulsion**

#### **Investigation**

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include the following.

#### **Step 1**

A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal in line with fair procedures. Inform student and their parents about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and the possibility that this investigation might lead to an expulsion. Parents and student will have an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed. Parents will be informed in writing of the alleged misbehaviour and the proposed investigation. Parents will be given every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour.

#### **Step 2**

A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.

#### **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. In the event that the Board of Management of St. Peter's Primary School invokes its right to expel a student, the steps listed above will be followed, as detailed in the National Educational Welfare Board publication "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools"

### **Appeals Process**

A decision to expel may be overturned if directed by the Department of Education and Science (following a Section 29 Appeal).

Put in about appeal

#### **Notification of a child's absence from school**

When a child is absent, the parents/guardians are required to notify the school (in the school journal) as to the reason. This is important as the school needs this to fill out their records at the end of the school year.

#### **Incident occurring outside the school's grounds or school hours**

Incidents occurring either outside the school grounds or school hours, that either directly or adversely affect any member of the staff or the reputation of the school, may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Code of Behaviour. This may include, but is not limited to cyber bullying (see Anti-Bullying Policy). If deemed necessary, suspension, or in extreme cases expulsion may occur.

## Related Policies

### **Child Protection**

Some inappropriate behaviours (eg. Sexual, Bullying) may result in advice being sought of a referral being made to TUSLA on the grounds of child protection (See Child Protection Safety Statement).

### **Admissions & Participation Policy**

The school Code of Behaviour is appended to the admission and participation policy for parental information. The full version of the Code of Behaviour will be given to parents of new children admitted to the school. Copies of the Code of Behaviour are available to all parents, at any stage upon request. Children enrolled in our school are required to cooperate with and support the school / Board of Management's Code of Behaviour. The BOM places Parents/Guardians responsible for ensuring that their children cooperate with said policies. Parents /guardians must sign and accept the school Code of Behaviour as a mandatory condition of enrolment in the school.

### **Physical Intervention Policy**

When a staff member believes a child is a safety risk to either themselves or others, physical restraint may be used. In such cases, the school will follow the physical intervention policy which is available from the school upon request.

### **Attendance**

The area of good attendance is rewarded in a number of ways. See attendance policy for more details.

### **Anti-Bullying Policy**

Bullying behaviour will not be tolerated in St. Peter's. Behaviour of this nature will be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour. Please refer to our Anti-Bullying Policy for more details.

## Review and Ratification

**Review:** This policy will be reviewed as necessary.

**Ratification:** This policy was ratified on 25/2/19