



St Laurence's National School, Chapelizod

Code of Behaviour Policy

May 2021

St. Laurence's National School

Code of Behaviour

Introduction

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school.

In St. Laurence's National School we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians. In collaboration with staff, pupils, parents and the BoM, we have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school.

Relationship to our Ethos Statement

In St. Laurence's N.S. we attempt to address co-operation between staff and pupils on a daily basis. Through our ethos statement and school values we provide a harmonious environment and aim to nurture the potential of everyone in the whole school community. It is the intention that this Code of Behaviour will attempt to continue to develop positive relationships and values which exist in the school and to act as a framework for good behaviour.

Rationale

Our Code of Behaviour is necessary in ensuring a positive and orderly environment for learning in our school.

In addition, it is a requirement for all schools to have a Code of Behaviour as outlined in DES Circular 20/90 on School Discipline and also in the Education Welfare Act 2000. Section 23 of this Act refers to the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details that the code of behaviour shall specify:

- A. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
- B. The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
- C. The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
- D. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and
- E. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

Aims of the code

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour, ensuring that our school environment is guided by our Ethos Statement
- 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, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- To facilitate the education and development of every child
- To foster respect, tolerance and caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption and allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community

- 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.

Responsibility of Adults

The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.

Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school.

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 positive behaviour, 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*'.

Please see 'Code of Conduct for staff and parents' attached which ensures the rights of all are upheld.

School Rules and How Behaviour is Monitored

Our school operates a green and white card system. Green cards are given for exceptional behaviour and white cards are given as a reminder of school rules and a record of when these may be broken. Both are also a means of communication to parents regarding their children's behaviour.

Our school rules are as follows:

1. We listen to each other at all times
2. We show respect for our own property and the property of others
3. We are kind and willing to help others
4. We follow instructions from staff immediately
5. We walk quietly in the school building
6. We show courtesy and good manners
7. We try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
8. We ask permission to leave our seats/the classroom/ the yard
9. We work hard and participate fully in learning
10. We wear our uniform appropriately and with pride.

Playground Rules

As an extension of the School Rules, these are our rules which specifically apply to the playground. It is important for pupils, staff and parents to all be aware of what is expected at yard times in order to keep everyone safe and happy.

In our playground we...

- Use kind words, kind hands and kind feet
- Listen to instructions
- Stay in our own part of the playground (junior and senior ends)
- Walk up and down the steps at the doors and otherwise, may only be on them to sit and rest
- Use the garden area to play with the mud kitchen or to relax
- Don't run or use equipment in the garden area, apart from the mud kitchen
- Make sure our outdoor voices are at an acceptable level
- Respect other people's personal space
- Wear appropriate outdoor clothing
- Show respect for school property
- Put equipment we are not using back into the box
- Don't bring our lunch into the yard
- Ask permission before we take off our coats or jumpers
- Put coats and jumpers, which have been take off, on the bench (junior end) or stair rail (senior end)
- Enter and leave the yard quietly
- Line up immediately when we hear the bell
- Have fun!

Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children, based closely on the "School Rules". Class rules will be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Where possible they emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. 'Walk' and not, 'Don't run'). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

Incentives/Reward System

Part of the vision of St. Laurence's N.S. is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and similarly that children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Our reward system seeks to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Acknowledgement of positive behaviour and effort with work will be equally noted.

The following are some samples of how acknowledgement might be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication
- 2 weekly achievement awards presented to pupils in each classroom in assembly and addition of these pupils to our Proud Cloud on the school website
- Green cards will be given out for exceptional behaviour.

Merit Points and Golden Time

As a whole school, merit points will be awarded to pupils individually by their class teachers in the form of dojo points, stickers, beans in a jar etc. Upon receipt of a specified amount by a specified time, pupils will receive whole class rewards in the form of Golden Time which may be spent going to the park for a picnic, watching a film etc. Pupils who have not achieved the required amount of points by the specified time, will not participate in Golden Time and will instead be assigned revision work to complete.

Golden time, field trips, annual school tours and our end of year special event will be reserved for those who have consistently strived to behave well and have worked to the best of their ability.

Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school.

Parents/Guardians must send an email to the office informing teachers in writing of their child's absence from school and the reason for this absence. These notes will be maintained and kept on file for the duration of the school year.

Absences of 20 days or more must be notified to Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, by the school, bi-annually. Parents will be notified when their child had missed 10 days and then, 20 days.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher, or the supervising teacher at break-times. In cases of repeated misbehaviour, (ie deviating from the School Rules) parents will be involved at an early stage. This will be in the form of white cards. If pupils get 6 cards, there will be a meeting with the parent/s, class teacher and/ or principal. The child will also be involved as part of this meeting. The hope would be that there would be a significant improvement in behaviour however, further misbehaviour will result in white cards being issued once again. A record of these will be kept on file.

Parents are welcome to discuss cards further with the class teacher at any time when they are brought home by emailing the school email address to make an appointment.

In single instances of serious or gross misbehaviour, parents will be contacted immediately and invited to discuss their child's behaviour with the class teacher and /or principal.

Examples of minor misbehaviour include:

- Using a mobile phone or other electronic device, brought from home, in school
- Not wearing appropriate uniform
- Bringing in chewing-gum
- Not following instructions.

Examples of serious misbehaviour include:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Bringing dangerous equipment to school
- Leaving school/school activities without permission.

Examples of gross misbehaviour include:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil

- Serious Theft
- Serious Damage to property
- Serious bullying
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes

Bullying is repeated aggression – physical, verbal or emotional - conducted by an individual or group against another or others.

- PHYSICAL: includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping, etc.
- VERBAL: name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates.
- EMOTIONAL: threats or persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Threats to extort money or possessions. "Cyber/text" bullying.

The school takes particular care to intervene early in responding to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.

Issues in relation to Bullying are explored continually during SPHE lessons and using Circle Time, Drama etc.

Should a parent/guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed with a teacher, all staff members are more than willing to facilitate a meeting, made through the proper channels i.e. a phone call or email to the office for the attention of the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties. The first person to be informed should be the class teacher.

This arrangement ensures that all concerns are dealt with in a dignified, meaningful manner, without infringing on valuable teaching time.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying.

Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same manner as breaches of discipline – already outlined in our Anti-Bullying Policy.

In the case where a parent reports a bullying incident, the school reserves the right to inform the relevant parties of the identity of the person making the complaint, when this is deemed necessary.

Sanctions

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour
- signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
- keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the circumstances involved. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupil devise strategies for this.

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. White card and consequent communication with parents
5. Loss of privileges (connected to reward point system)
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)

Usually sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

Individual behaviour charts and records may be kept by the class teacher as a stage of behaviour management for individual pupils with the classroom. This will be discussed with parents in advance.

Suspension and Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as 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 Education Welfare 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.

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 are 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 of communication are to be used within the school:

- Informal/formal parent/teacher
- Through children's homework journal
- Emails/letters from school to home and from home to school
- Newsletters/school web-site/e-mails
- Text messages

Please refer to our Parent/Staff Communications Policy for further clarification.

St. Laurence's National School Code of Conduct

Expectations of Staff

The Teaching Council have set out a code of professional behaviour and practice for teachers. In conjunction with this code we encourage staff to:

- Be aware of the school's code of behaviour.
- Be familiar with and follow the school's policy on 'Child Protection.'
- Be courteous towards each other, pupils and parents.
- Be prepared for lessons, professional and on-time.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate in a positive and appropriate manner with parents, staff and pupils.
- Create a safe and welcoming environment for each pupil.
- Praise desirable behaviour.
- Facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential.
- Keep a record of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehavior.
- Provide reports on matters of concern.
- Be familiar with and follow the School's policies if he/she has any complaint against staff, parents or outside personnel.

Expectations of Parents

Parents are encouraged to:

- Nurture in their children a positive attitude towards school and try not to pass on any negative experiences parents may have had themselves while at school.

- Ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually in full school uniform with labeling and appropriate clothing for the weather so that their child will be warm and dry playing outside during breaks.
- Send an email to the school office for the attention of the class teacher, explaining their child's absence from school.
- Ensure the school has up-to-date phone numbers of family/friends to be contacted in case of an emergency.
- Arrange and ensure that a family member/friend is contactable and available to attend the school in the event of an emergency.
- Ensure their child attends school clean and with a good level of hygiene; to check their child's head regularly for head lice and treat as necessary.
- Ensure their child has a healthy lunch in school every day in line with the school policy on "Healthy Eating".
- Arrange meetings with the class teacher and/or principal when they are concerned about any issue relating to their child.
- Communicate with staff when necessary, always with courtesy and respect and to model good behaviour in their relationship with teachers.
- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves, for others, for their own property, school property and that of others.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their child's school work.
- Ensure that their child has the correct books and other materials.
- Be familiar with the code of behavior and other school policies and to support the implementation of these policies.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Communicate to the school problems which may affect a child's behaviour.
- Be courteous towards pupils and staff
- Make an appointment to meet with a teacher/Principal when necessary by contacting the school office.
- Follow the school's 'Complaints Procedure' if they have a complaint about a staff member.

Modification Clause

The management and authorities of St. Laurence's N.S. reserve the right to modify details of this code of conduct at short notice. Such modification may be needed in an ever - changing environment and social context.

May 2021

Ratification and Review

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____.

The policy will be reviewed in the light of changes to legislation, directives from the patron or other circular letters.

Signed:

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: _____

Signed:

Principal

Date: _____



St. Laurence's N.S.

Date: ____/____/20____

Card no:

Pupil's name: _____

Your child demonstrated exceptional behaviour today in relation to

Please sign and return to school immediately.

Teacher's signature: _____

Parent's signature: _____

GREEN
CARD
Front



St. Laurence's N.S.

Date: ____/____/20____

Card no:

Pupil's name: _____

Your child's behaviour was unsatisfactory in relation to Rule Number _____

(See School Rules on reverse)

Please sign and return to school immediately.

Teacher's signature: _____

Parent's signature: _____

WHITE
CARD
Front

Our School Rules:

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6. We show courtesy and good manners
7. We try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
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WHITE
CARD
Back