



St. Joseph's Special School

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Registered Charity Number: 20140210 Roll Number: 19520H

Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement

This code of behaviour has been prepared by the staff of St. Joseph's School in consultation with the members of the Board of Management and Parent(s)/Guardian(s). St Joseph's School operates under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin. St Joseph's is a Catholic school that welcomes and respects pupils of all denomination and race.

St. Joseph's School caters for pupils/students with a wide range of special educational needs aged range 5-18. The school is divided into a Primary School and a Secondary School for pupils with Mild General Learning Disability and four Solas classes for students with General Learning Disability and Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

During the Primary years the pupils study the subjects as outlined in the Revised Primary School Curriculum, making use of the Guidelines for Mild General Learning Disability. At Secondary level the students study the core subjects: Mathematics, English, SPHE, Home Economics, Woodwork, Information Technology, Art and Design and French. We prepare students for the Junior Certificate at levels 2 and 3, the Leaving Certificate Applied and school designed Life Skills courses. In the Solas classes pupils follow a more individualised curriculum and may access both the Primary and Secondary curriculums and make use of the Guidelines for Severe, Moderate or Mild General Learning Disability as appropriate.

The school emphasises the importance of participation in sporting activities and we also encourage social activities.

A copy of the code will be available to both parent(s)/guardian(s) and teachers on the school website. The code will also be given to parent(s)/guardian(s) whenever they enrol a child in the school.

The code of behaviour shall apply to all students during all school related activities.

Rationale

The Board of Management of St. Joseph's School initiated the review of the Code of Behaviour to ensure that the school is in compliance with legal requirements and with good practices. The Code of Behaviour is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act 2000.

Linked Policies

This policy should be considered in relation to the following school policies

- Accident and Injury Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Strategy
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Critical Incident Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- ICT and Acceptable Use Policy
- Positive Interventions and Restrictive Practices Policy
- RSE Policy
- Safety Statement
- Substance Abuse Policy
- Supervision Policy
- SPHE plan
- Enrolment
- Tours

Vision

St. Joseph's School seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are nurtured and valued.

Aims and Objectives of the Code of Behaviour

In devising this code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of St. Joseph's School. The school caters for a wide range of special needs including some students who have conduct disorders to varying degrees. The code of behaviour reflects the particular characteristics of the students for which this school caters.

The aim of the code of behaviour is to create an ordered environment in which pupils can, through developing self-discipline and control, feel secure and make progress in all aspects of their development. The code of behaviour describes the school's expectations about how members of the school community can contribute to ensuring that the school continues to be

an excellent place for teaching and learning. Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to behaviour in the school.

Aims of the Code of Behaviour

- To ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others recognising the differences between pupils and the need to accommodate these differences
- To give everyone the opportunity to learn without interference from others
- To develop pupils' self-discipline and positive behaviour and to foster mutual respect between pupils
- To create an atmosphere where effective teaching and learning can take place
- To ensure pupils take control of their own behaviour and realise that actions have consequences
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions is implemented in a fair and consistent manner
- To ensure that students and parent(s)/guardian(s) are aware of the content of the code of discipline and to promote their active involvement and co-operation in its implementation.

Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Behaviour

The Board of Management and, in particular the Principal has overall responsibility for the implementation and on-going monitoring of this policy. All teachers however have responsibility for their own classes and share in the responsibility for the good order of the general school population especially when on yard duty or any organised out-of-school activities.

Special Needs Assistants should report breaches of the code of behaviour to a teacher or to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

Some Teachers and SNAs have received training in Crisis Aggression Limitation Management (**CALM**), which includes training in positive interventions including physical interventions and de-escalation training (please see Positive Interventions and Restrictive Practices Policy).

Yard Supervision

During break times a teacher is normally in charge. The teacher will be accompanied by a number of SNAs. Staff should monitor the entire area and ensure that the code of behaviour is observed. The SNAs have an important role in monitoring and supervising the school yard and should report incidents of significance to the teacher in charge. The teacher will

report any concerns to the Deputy Principal or Principal regarding on-going or potentially serious incidents.

Recording positive behaviour

Teachers implement class and individualised reward systems, including, but not limited to: star charts, sticker rewards, token economies and Class Dojo. Juniors will also receive in class awards as well as awards at assembly for reaching targets.

Reward Time – Encouraging positive behaviour

Reward Time is run for a specific time period a week in class depending on student ability and is used as a reward system to promote positive behaviour and learning. Each teacher can offer a choice of activities to suit his/her own class and it is a good idea to involve pupils in the selection of ideas for activities. Pupils are encouraged to meet their targets in their respective reward system and repeated wilful disregard of school/class rules will result in a reduction of this privileged time by increments of 5 minutes (school staff will at all times be mindful of each student's capacity for understanding their own behaviour). Ideally pupils should be given the opportunity to win back at least 15 minutes of this time. The remainder of the Reward Time is spent by the pupil sitting out and not partaking in the activities.

Rewards to promote positive behaviour

- Weekly assemblies – pupils will be singled out for special praise for good behaviour
- Class rewards e.g. stickers, trips to the park/library or other local resources and chips on Friday and praise will be used to reward those with good behaviour
- Prizes for perfect attendance
- Notes in the journal to parent(s)/guardian(s) to let them know how well pupils are doing
- Prizes for the class/students who wears their uniform all week
- Delegation of some special responsibility or privilege

School Rules

The aim of the school rules is to create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.

- Pupils should arrive on time and in full uniform.
- Pupils must not leave the classroom or the school without permission.

- Pupils will be expected to speak and act with respect to staff and fellow pupils.
- Mobile phones cannot be used during school hours (except for cases where the class teacher has allowed students to use phones for a set period of time in class).
- Smoking is not allowed in any part of the school or school grounds.

Sanctions and Ladder of Intervention

Punctuality

Late arrivals are recorded on the Aladdin. This record will be posted to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of persistent offenders and they will be invited to the school to discuss the issue. Ongoing lateness may be reported to the Education Welfare Officer (TUSLA).

Uniform

Pupils are required to wear the school uniform every day unless they have a recognised sensory issue that prevents this. Breaches of this rule will be recorded. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of those pupils who do not wear their uniform three or more times in a week will receive a phone call home and the student will receive an in school detention. If there is no improvement a letter will be sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and they will be invited to the school to discuss the issue.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are not to be used in school (except for cases where the class teacher has allowed students to use phones for a set period of time in class). If students are using their phones in school (except in the case above) the following steps will be followed:

1. The student will be asked to hand his/her mobile phone over to staff who will return it at the end of the school day
2. If a pupil is caught using their mobile phone during school hours and refuses to give it to the teacher, their parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed that they are breaking school rules. A letter will be sent home to their parent(s)/guardian(s) and they will receive one in-school detention
3. A second offence of refusing to hand over their mobile phone will result in a further two days in school detention and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be asked to come in to school to discuss the ongoing disruptive behaviour.

Repeated use of mobile phones may result in suspension as per the school's Code of Behaviour.

The school does not accept any responsibility for phones which have not been handed up and are later declared lost or broken.

Ladder of Intervention

- Pupil's behaviour is recorded on the respective reward system
- Notes in the journal or a phone call home to inform parent(s)/guardian(s) of disruptive behaviour
- Removal from class by Principal or Deputy Principal
- Lunchtime detention for 15 or 30 minutes one or two days a week (for secondary)
- Behaviour management plans drawn up and/or Contracts of behaviour to be signed by pupil/parent(s)/guardian(s) and principal where appropriate
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive a phone call and letter inviting them to come to the school to discuss continuous disruptive behaviour.
- Possible suspension depending on the seriousness of the offence.

In school detention

In school detention will take place from 12.20pm to 12.35 while other pupils are on the yard. A maximum of eight to ten pupils will be detained at any one time. A roster for teachers will be drawn up by the post holder responsible for timetabling. The teachers on detention will get a fifteen-minute lunch break before or after lunch.

Non-attendance at detention will result in a pupil receiving a verbal warning and a phone call home to the parent/guardian and the pupil will be put on a further detention for the next day. A second incidence of non-compliance may result in suspension.

Abusive or aggressive behaviour during detention will be deemed to be a serious offence and will be treated in the same manner as other serious offences which may result in suspension.

Smoking

- Any pupil caught smoking in the school or on the school grounds will receive a one day suspension.
- A second occasion will result in a 2 day suspension

Damage to property

- Any deliberate damage to school property may result in parent(s)/guardian(s) being billed for the cost of repairs
- Pupil may be suspended for one day or two days depending on the seriousness of the damage

Serious offences

- Bringing weapons or dangerous substances to school
- Persistently leaving the yard or school grounds without permission
- Deliberately injuring any member of the school community
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff or a pupil
- Bullying behaviour to either staff or pupils
- Persistent incidents of disruptive behaviour will be classified as a serious offence
- Possession or consumption of alcohol
- Possession or consumption of illegal substances e.g. drugs
- Passing illegal substances to another student
- Selling illegal substances to another student
- Pupil coming to school under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- All serious offences may result in suspensions of up to three days. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be consulted and the matter reported to the Board of Management and exclusion from the school may result

Procedures and Recording of Suspensions and Expulsions

The Board of Management of St. Joseph's Special School has the authority to suspend a student. This authority is delegated to the Principal, for suspensions of up to three days' duration. All suspension must be reported to the Board of Management at their next meeting. If a suspension longer than three days is proposed by the Principal, the matter should be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes. However, the Board of Management may authorise the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion.

- A serious offence sheet will be written up (see appendix)
- The pupil's response to the incident will also be recorded if appropriate
- Serious offence sheets will be kept on file and for the duration of time prescribed in the Data Protection Act
- Principal is called immediately
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) contacted by letter and/or phone call
- For suspensions of more than three days the Principal will contact the Chairperson of the BOM
- Student may be suspended with immediate effect

- A special Board of Management meeting may be convened to deal with the issue of possible exclusion from the school

Immediate suspension

In certain circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person. The principles and fair procedures governing suspensions must be applied. In the event of an immediate suspension the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the pupil will be invited to the school the next day to discuss the incident. A decision will then be made to uphold the suspension, extend the suspension or have the pupil returned immediately to the school.

Automatic suspension

The Board of Management may decide as part of the school's policy on sanctions and following consultation with the principal, parent(s)/guardian(s), teachers and students, that particular named behaviours may incur suspension as a sanction. A decision to impose automatic suspension for named behaviours, however, does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures in every case.

Interventions post suspension

In extreme cases, parent(s)/guardian(s) may be asked to meet with representatives of the Board of Management and asked to sign an undertaking that their child will behave in school and/or get the necessary help or assistance to ensure that this is possible. It may be necessary to extend the period of suspension to arrange for this meeting or for additional supports to be sought from the DES, particularly where there is concern that the readmission of the student may pose a risk to others.

Repeated incidents of serious misbehaviour may warrant limiting the number of hours per day that a student may attend school. In such cases the student will be referred to the clinic or agency responsible for referral for additional support.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) may at any time request a meeting with the school principal or chairperson of the Board of Management to discuss/appeal sanctions applied to their child.

The grounds for exclusion

Exclusion should be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour. Exclusion of a student is a very serious step, and one that will only be taken by

the Board of Management of a school in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. A proposal to exclude a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- the behaviour of the student is persistently having a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- the student's continuing presence in the school poses a real threat to the safety of the student or of others
- serious damage to property

Board of Management's Responsibilities

The Board of Management will:

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code
- Ratify the code
- Ensure the code is communicated to the whole school community.

Principal's Responsibilities

The principal is:

Responsible for the good order and discipline throughout the school

The principal will:

- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner taking into account the special needs of the pupil and the home circumstances.
- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Support teachers in dealing with challenging behaviour
- Meet pupils who misbehave on a regular basis and strongly encourage them to observe the code.
- Regularly refer to positive behaviour at assembly
- Arrange for review of the Code, as outlined in the timetable for review.

Teacher's Responsibilities

Teachers are expected to:

- Teach/explain the code of behaviour on a regular basis
- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour having regard to decisions made on whole school basis
- Be cognisant of duty of care
- Create a safe and welcoming working environment for each pupil
- Develop and nurture a sense of self-esteem in each pupil
- Praise desirable behaviour

- Facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential
- Listen, at appropriate times, to pupils' explanations of behaviour
- 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) when necessary
- Provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

Pupils' Responsibilities

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school regularly and punctually
- 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 others
- 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

Parent(s)/guardian(s)' Responsibilities

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are expected to:

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for their own and other people's property
- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually
- 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
- Communicate to the school the reasons for children's absences
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour

Success Criteria

This policy will be deemed to be successful when the following are observed:

- Positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers
- Positive feedback from teachers, parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils.

Review and Monitoring

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Board of Management on an annual basis and when the need arises. The Board of Management will ensure that adequate training and support is provided for all staff.

This policy is a collaborative document and is disseminated to the school community.

Storage Procedures: In St. Joseph's School.

Ratified by: Board of Management, St. Joseph's School in January 2020
