



# St Fintan's NS Sutton

## Code of Behaviour

*This Code of Behaviour has been drafted Under Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, which states that the Board of Management of each school must prepare and make available a Code of Behaviour in respect of its pupils. The Act requires that the school Code of Behaviour be prepared in accordance with Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board / TÚSLA. TÚSLA must also advise schools on matters relating to the conduct of pupils and must "promote and foster, in recognised schools, an environment that encourages children to attend school and participate fully in the life of the school," Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 Section 10.*

*( Referenced material includes 'Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools' NEWB 2008; 'Managing Challenging Behaviour: Guidelines for School' INTO 2004).*

### Introduction

If the school is to achieve a happy, secure environment in which children can develop to their full potential, it is necessary to provide a framework which promotes constructive behaviour and discourages unacceptable behaviour. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to an education in a relatively disruption free environment. The school code places a greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions, and the ideal is that pupils will acquire self-discipline. We recognise the importance of a strong sense of community within the school and the existence of a high level of co-operation among teachers, ancillary staff, pupils, parents, the Board of Management and the Parents Association. This Policy was developed through consultation with staff, pupils and parents.

### Aims

Our Code of Behaviour aims to achieve the following:

- **Harmony:** Good behaviour among our pupils means that learning can take place in an atmosphere of harmony in our school, where co-operation exists between pupils, teachers and \*parents.

\*The term 'parent' implies any person with parental responsibility such as foster parent, carer, guardian or local authority.

- **Respect:** In line with the ethos of our school, we instil in our pupils good behaviour patterns based on consideration, respect, courtesy, tolerance and forgiveness of others.
- **Trust:** We expect to be able to trust our pupils with regard to their behaviour.
- **Understanding:** Our pupils are helped to understand the need and reasons for rules of behaviour – namely, to foster an environment conducive to learning and development and for their own safety and well-being and that of all in the school community.
- **Responsibility:** Our pupils are helped to gain a sense of responsibility in terms of their own behaviour. Staff, parents and the Board of Management also have responsibility for upholding the Code of Behaviour.
- **Community Awareness:** We help our pupils to become aware of their individual importance as part of their class and as part of the whole school community. Individual good behaviour has a positive effect on that community, just as individual misbehaviour can have a negative effect on all.
- **Parental Support:** We rely on our parents to support the school's Code of Behaviour and to help their children to uphold good standards of behaviour at school, just as at home.
- **Consistency:** We will aim to ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner.

**The following strategies will be used to show approval for acceptable behaviour and disapproval for unacceptable behaviour:**

- Affirmation of good behaviour
- Praise and encouragement
- Stars, stickers and prizes
- Stamps and certificates
- Homework passes
- Golden time/iPad time
- Special responsibilities
- Extra time on yard or in play area
- Reasoning with pupil
- Reprimand, including advice on how to improve
- Temporary separation from peers or friends
- Loss of privileges
- Time out on yard
- Prescribed appropriate additional work
- Referral to Principal
- Communication with parents
- Conference between parents and Principal
- Referral to Board of Management.
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Note: The final 3 points proceed in line with relevant governmental/ Department of Education procedures.

Misbehaviour can be deemed minor, serious or gross and will be dealt with as appropriate.

The following are examples of various kinds of misbehaviour:

<b>Minor</b>	<b>Serious</b>	<b>Gross</b>
Inattentiveness	Homework regularly not completed	Persistent bullying
Talking during class time	Stealing	Vandalism
Lack of effort	Verbal abuse of pupils	Verbal and/or physical abuse/assault of staff/pupils
Homework not completed	Physical abuse of pupils	Leaving school without permission
Failure to follow teacher's instructions	Constant defiance	Inappropriate /sexualised behaviour
Distracting behaviour	Rudeness	Racism
Not wearing uniform	Persistent distracting behaviour	Homophobia
		Substance Use

### **General Rules**

- Each pupil is expected to treat every other person he/she meets in the school premises with courtesy and respect.
- Each pupil is expected to be neatly dressed in appropriate school uniform, to be punctual and to attend school regularly.
- When moving through the school each pupil is expected to do so quietly and in an orderly fashion.
- If late or absent from school each pupil is expected to provide a written explanation from his or her parents.
- No pupil is allowed to leave the school premises during school hours unless he/she has a written request from a parent/guardian and the permission of the teacher or Principal.
- During playtime pupils are expected to avoid games of unnecessary roughness which could lead to injuries.
- The pupil's best effort in class-work and homework is expected from all pupils in the school.

### **Communication between parents and teachers**

The school recognises that a good open relationship with mutual respect between parents and teachers is of vital importance in promoting the social and emotional development of each pupil in the school.

To promote this relationship in a positive and professional way, this policy sets out the following procedures:

- Parents and teachers are expected to communicate in a friendly and open manner and always in an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- There is a formal parent teacher meeting each year, usually in November.

- Informal contact between parents and teachers is welcomed but if a parent wishes to speak to a teacher about a specific issue, an appointment must be made by writing a note in the pupil's journal or by sending a message to the office, so that a mutually suitable time can be arranged.
- Teachers are not available for appointments with parents outside school hours, and parents should not approach or contact teacher outside of school times.
- If a pupil forgets lunch, copies, sports gear etc. they can be left in the office where they will be passed to the child.

### **Expected Behaviour**

Expected behaviour can vary with circumstances and is set out in Appendix A at the end of this policy. This may change from time to time as new issues arise.

### **Sanctions**

Sanctions will initially be class based as outlined below. If these prove insufficient, school based sanctions will be used. Referral to the Board of Management will be invoked for serious problems.

### **Role of the School Community**

#### **Teachers' Role**

Create a happy, inclusive and respectful atmosphere in each class.

Implement the RSE, Walk Tall and Stay Safe programmes.

Incorporate circle time into methodologies.

Record all serious incidents of misbehaviour.

Monitor pupils who appear to have difficulties.

Communicate regularly with parents.

Reinforce class and yard rules.

Provide support for colleagues.

Surveys will be carried out periodically.

#### **Pupils' Role**

Behave in a manner which respects themselves, others and property at all times.

Report problems when the situation warrants.

Act as monitors in their own classes, (Student Council members).

Help with surveys as necessary.

#### **Parents' Role**

Encourage their children to behave in an acceptable manner.

Impress on their children the need to respect the person and property of others.

Emphasise to their children the hurt caused by disrespectful behaviour.

Liaise with teachers and staff to help improve behaviour.

### **Role of the Board of Management**

Ensure that an atmosphere of trust, respect and happiness pervades the school.

Ensure that a clearly understood strategy to deal with the perpetrators of unacceptable behaviour will be put in place.

Support staff in dealing with the pastoral care of pupils.

Implement a staged system of sanctions to address inappropriate behaviour.

Record behaviour reports at every Board of Management meeting.

Ratify the Code of Behaviour and oversee its review.

## **Prevention**

### **Preventative Class Based Strategies**

In order to maximise the teaching and learning in a classroom all pupils are expected to co-operate with their teacher and their classmates.

Positive reinforcement of good behaviours will be emphasised at all times.

Rewards and sanctions will be used by teachers to promote good behaviour.

### **Junior and Senior Infants**

The emphasis will be on helping the pupil to integrate socially.

Reward systems will be used mainly to promote acceptable behaviour.

Pupils will be given time out when they misbehave.

Pupils will be temporarily excluded from the yard for persistent rule-breaking in the yard.

Pupils will be temporarily excluded from play or golden time for persistent rule breaking or poor behaviour in the classroom.

Parents will be informed if their child presents with behaviour difficulties and strategies will be put in place to help improve this behaviour.

### **1st and 2nd Classes**

Positive reinforcement will continue to be the main focus in behaviour management.

Time out and reflection will be used to help a pupil understand expected and acceptable behaviour.

Teachers will continue to work with parents if problems persist.

Pupils will be temporarily excluded from the yard for persistent rule-breaking in the yard.

Pupils will be temporarily excluded from play or golden time for persistent rule breaking or poor behaviour in the classroom.

### **3rd and 4th Classes**

Emphasis will change to a more sanction based system, with the aim of modifying unacceptable behaviour.

Reminders to the pupil, time out, reflection sheets, extra work and removal of rewards will all be used as strategies to improve behaviour.

Pupils will be temporarily excluded from the yard for persistent rule-breaking in the yard.

Parents and Principal will be informed if serious incidents occur.

Formal procedures may be instigated if necessary.

### **5th and 6th Classes**

The highest standards of responsibility and respect will be expected.

Sanctions as for other classes will continue to be implemented.

Formal procedures will be instigated when necessary.

### **Sanctions - School Based**

Teachers will initiate meetings with parents, outlining difficulties

Principal will become involved in meetings and in monitoring pupils if behaviour persists.

Sanctions will be imposed which may include withdrawal from yard, reflection sheets, temporary separation from peers, extra work or detention.

Behaviour modification strategies will be introduced by parents and teachers.

Social skills groups may be introduced to help pupils modify behaviours.

### **Empowerment of Pupils- Student Council**

Pupils, especially in senior classes, will be given the responsibility of monitoring their own behaviours and reporting concerns to their teachers.

- The Student Council will act as monitors in their own class.
- The qualities needed for being member of Student Council include:
  - Fairness
  - Respect
  - A caring attitude
  - Good judgement
  - Being responsible and trustworthy

### **Role as Student Council members**

- Monitor issues that arise in class and that may adversely affect the atmosphere of the class and/or individuals within it.
- Look out for incidents of
  - Verbal aggression
  - Aggressive behaviour
  - Inappropriate language
  - Classmates being isolated
  - Classmates being made fun of or belittled

### **Responsibilities of the Student Council**

- Meet with the teacher on a regular basis.
- Report incidents that may affect the atmosphere in the class.
- Suggest ways of dealing with the situation.
- Support the reporting of incidents by individual pupils.
- Deal with incidents themselves, if appropriate.

### **Role of the teacher with pupils from Student Council**

- Organise and facilitate regular meetings.
- Direct and manage the meetings.
- With support from staff, allow ownership of the project by the pupils.
- Ensure that the group is comfortable to discuss various incidents and problems.
- With support from staff, follow up on incidents as appropriate.

### **Record Keeping**

All teachers will have an anecdotal records file. The class teacher will record all incidents of a potentially serious nature.

When a pattern of inappropriate misbehaviour is noted, the Principal is informed.

The records of these incidents may be kept in a secure location in the classroom / in the office.

These records may be used when liaising with parents and if matters proceed to BOM level.

Records will not be used outside the school.

### **Incident report**

An incident report of serious misbehaviour will include the following:

- Name
- Class
- Teacher
- Date of incident
- Description of event
- Witnesses
- Action taken
- Pupil response

### **Formal Procedures**

Formal procedures will only be invoked when other strategies have failed to produce a change in behaviour or in cases of serious misbehaviour.

Stage 1: A meeting will be held between the teacher, the Principal and the parent/s of the child whose behaviour is causing concern. Its purpose will be to inform the parent/s that the school is initiating the formal procedure and the reasons for this.

Stage 2: A meeting will be held with parent/s and Principal together with the Chairperson of the BOM with the intention of seeking a resolution to the issues. If the Chairperson is unable to attend a designated member of the Board will deputise.

Stage 3: A referral to the Board of Management will be made to discuss the option of suspension.

All stages will be preceded and followed up by a letter explaining the current stage in the process.

### **Involvement of the Board of Management**

When a matter comes before the Board, it will consider all behaviour records, notes from informal meetings and records from the formal procedure.

The Board may seek further meetings to clarify any issues.

The Board can impose further sanctions.

The Board is empowered to impose the ultimate sanction of expulsion in the most serious cases.

**Ratification and Review**

The implementation of this policy will commence immediately on ratification by the Board of Management on November 27 2023. It will be reviewed every three years in the third term or as circumstances may warrant.

  
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Date 27/11/23

**Chairperson of the Board of Management**

  
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Date 27/11/23

**Principal**

## **Appendix A – Expected Behaviour**

### **Absence**

If a pupil is absent from school a note of explanation must be brought to the teacher upon returning to school.

If for any reason a pupil knows they are not going to be in school a note should be provided before the absence.

### **After-school classes**

The same good behaviour is expected during after-school activities.

If the extra class is directly after school, pupils should go straight to the activity and must not leave the school.

Pupils should leave the hall or classroom as they have found it.

Pupils are not allowed to return to their classroom after school hours.

### **Arrival at School and Punctuality**

School begins at 8.50 a.m., pupils should arrive on time each day.

If a pupil is very late a written explanation should be provided.

Pupils should line up at their designated point in the yard each morning.

Pupils are not allowed leave the school premises without permission.

### **Bathrooms**

Pupils should be mindful of personal hygiene when using the bathroom.

Pupils should have their own hand towel .

Toilet paper is for toilet use only.

### **Books, copies etc.**

Pupils should have all books and stationery every day.

Books and copies should be clean and well cared for.

Pupils should put their best effort into their written work

Covers of copies should be kept free from graffiti and other defacement.

### **Classroom behaviour**

Pupils should remain seated whenever the teacher has to leave the room.

Respectful behaviour is expected towards others at all times.

Classroom rules should be obeyed at all times.

Good listening skills are encouraged.

Tables and floor area should be kept tidy at all times.

The green bin is to be used for paper only and all other refuse items should be placed in the ordinary bin.

### **ICT**

ICT equipment should be carefully handled.

ICT use should be in accordance with the ICT Policy

No food or drink is allowed near ICT equipment.

### **Good Manners**

Show respect for other children and adults by use of good manners.

When meeting others on corridors, greet them politely possibly in Irish e.g.

'Dia Duit' 'Gabh mo leithséal,' and 'Go raibh maith agat'.

When meeting an adult at a doorway, stand back and allow them to pass first.

### **Home time**

At the end of the day, pupils should ensure they have everything they need to bring home with them.

Pupils should walk quietly in single file to the yard with their class teacher.

Pupils should meet parents or minders outside the school.

Pupils should leave the school grounds in a prompt and well behaved manner.

### **Homework**

It is recommended that homework be done as soon as possible after school.

Homework should be neat and legible.

If any homework is not done a note must be given to the teacher explaining the reasons why it is not completed. (See homework policy)

Homework journals must be signed by a parent.

Homework should be supervised.

### **Jewellery**

Only a limited amount of jewellery is permitted as it can cause distraction and may be a health and safety hazard during playtime and P.E. class.

Permitted items include a wrist watch (not a smart watch), one finger ring and one pair of stud earrings.

### **Lunch**

Have a healthy and nutritious lunch each day. (See Healthy Eating Policy)

Crisps, popcorn, chewing gum, fizzy drinks and sweets are not allowed.

For safety reasons, glass bottles are not permitted.

Unfinished lunches and refuse from lunch should be put in lunchbox and brought home.

### **Mobile phones and wearable communication devices**

Mobile phones and wearable communication devices are permitted in school but must be powered off when within the school grounds

Mobile phones and communication devices must be powered off and handed up to the teacher upon arrival in class. The onus is on the pupil to collect their device at the end of the day. The school will not take responsibility for devices left behind in school overnight.

Devices may not be brought to the yard.

Emergency phone calls can be made from the office.

### **Outside of classroom**

Within the school building, everyone should walk.

Class groups should walk quietly and in single file in the corridors.

When bringing a message to another classroom, knock on the door and then enter the classroom. Do not wait for the door to be answered.

### **Tours or outings**

Respectful behaviour is expected from all pupils.

Pupils must remain seated while the bus is in motion.

Pupils must wear seat belts provided.

### **Uniform**

School Uniform/tracksuit must be worn each day.

Pupils' names should be put clearly on all items of uniform, coats etc.

### **Wet day Procedures**

When the weather is inclement, the children will not go to the yard. They will be supervised by the designated teachers in their classroom while participating in appropriate activities.

Pupils will not be permitted to leave their place during breaks unless directed to do so by the supervising teacher.

### **Yard**

Play only in designated areas.

Obey instructions of supervising teachers.

Rough games or dangerous play is not permitted.

Pupils should not need to go into the school during yard-time.

If a pupil needs to enter the school he/she must get permission from the teacher on duty and be accompanied to the toilet by an SNA.

Pupils should walk quietly to their class line on hearing the bell and stand quietly until the teacher arrives.

When the class teachers collect their line, pupils will walk in single file and quietly to their classroom at the end of yard-time.