



St. Michael's N.S
Rackwallace

**CODE OF
BEHAVIOUR
POLICY**

Introduction:

This policy was first formulated by the staff of St. Michael's N.S. following a review of the previous policy in September 2007 and has been reviewed regularly since then.

Rationale:

We decided to review our Code of Behaviour because;

- The existing policy is due for review/amendment
- It is a requirement under DES Circular 20/90 on School Discipline
- It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) which refers to *the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in Section 23(2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:*
 - *The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;*
 - *The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;*
 - *The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;*
 - *The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and*
 - *The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.*

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school:

St. Michael's N.S. seeks to provide education for all pupils of the school by promoting a caring learning environment which facilitates the nurturing of each pupil's educational potential. It is hoped that the Code of Behaviour will contribute towards this.

Aims:

Our aims are:

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement.
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- 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.

Content:

1.Guidelines for behaviour in the school:

- School begins at 9.00a.m. and finishes at 1.40p.m. for infants and 2.40p.m. for all others.
- Pupils are expected to be punctual.
- From when a child enters the school premises a level of behaviour is expected which conforms to the aims of the school and to the rules.
- Children are encouraged to wear school uniform or track suit. Whichever is worn children should wear blue shirt or blue T-shirt.
- The school expects all members of the school community to strive towards a high level of good manners.
- Respect for all others form the basis for the code of good behaviour. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour will generally be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.
- Polite language is expected from pupils and swearing is considered to be misbehaviour.
- Once a child enters the school premises they may not leave it again without the permission of the class teacher or the Principal.
- If a parent wishes a child to leave school during school hours (for example to visit the dentist) it is essential that this is requested verbally/in writing by the parent. In the interest of the safety of the child the child must be collected from the classroom by a parent, or by prior arrangement, by someone designated by them.
- The teacher should also receive a note from the parent if a child is going home by a different means than they ordinarily do.
- A note should always accompany a child on returning to school after an absence.
- When a child has contracted a specific illness such as German measles or any contagious illness the school should be informed as soon as the diagnosis is made.
- During breaktime children should never leave the yard without the express permission of a member of the teaching staff.
- Mock fighting is discouraged due to the risk of accidental injury.
- Due to the confined space in the yard children are asked to always take care not to bump into or knock down another person.
- It is expected that older children would at all times protect and care for the younger children.
- Children are expected to follow the instructions of the teacher/adult on yard duty. If they disagree with instructions they may voice their disagreements in a polite manner at a suitable time.
- All people using school premises are expected to walk within the school building as running in classrooms and hallways is extremely hazardous.
- It is expected that at all times school property (including books) and equipment will be treated with respect and defacing of such is forbidden.
- Mobile phones are strictly forbidden during all school related activities and will be confiscated for a specific duration of time if brought to school
- Piercings are acceptable – however earrings must be “stud like” in appearance. “Dangly” “Hoop-like” earrings are not permitted in the interest of safety.

All the above rules are designed in the best interest and safety of all the pupils of the school so that they may play and learn in a happy healthy environment.

2. Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour:

Staff:

In our school, we aim to cultivate a growth mindset and we aspire to develop students who are intrinsically motivated to achieve.

In some instances, more emphasis may be placed on rewards than sanctions in the belief that it will encourage positive behaviour among students. We aim to 'catch the child being good.' However, there obligation on any teacher to integrate a reward system into their teaching.

Examples of some rewards are:

- Golden Time
- Sticker Charts/Class Dojo
- Homework passes

Time is allocated at staff meetings for discussion of the Code of Behaviour on a regular basis to facilitate new members of staff becoming familiar with the code and to facilitate sharing of positive and negative experiences.

Copies of Code of Behaviour are distributed to parents upon enrolment of child

Copies of Code of Behaviour are also made available to new staff members upon uptake of new position.

Allowances will be made for children with behavioural difficulties arising from their Special Educational Needs. IEPs with behavioural targets will be implemented in conjunction with class teacher, parents and learning support teacher and reviewed on a regular basis. Individual reward schemes may be used with these children.

The school's SPHE curriculum is used to support the Code of Behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship.

Board of Management:

This Code of Behaviour is ratified by the Board of Management.

The Board of Management supports the Code of Behaviour by dealing with serious breaches of behaviour in the following way:

- Chairperson may meet with parents to discuss concerns
- Board of Management may enforce suspension/expulsion where the need arises in conjunction with DES guidelines.

Parents:

Good discipline in our school depends upon co-operation between parents and teachers. A consistent attitude between parents and teachers is essential to the well-being of the pupils.

- Where a teacher wishes to contact a parent they may do so by seeking a meeting with them giving some idea of the matter to be discussed.

- Similarly, if a parent wishes to meet a teacher it is appropriate to make an appointment so that the teacher may give the parent their undivided attention. In this way it may be possible to make arrangements for the class to be supervised in the interests of their safety and the confidentiality of the matter/child under discussion.
- In general such meetings shall take place during school hours or immediately before or after school.
- As with a meeting set up by a parent, it is appropriate for the subject matter to be outlined so that a teacher may prepare properly for the meeting.

Note: *There is no need for an appointment for incidental visits to the school however if the matter requires a more formal approach either party may decide to meet again for a scheduled meeting.*

- Parent representatives on the Board of Management will have the opportunity to examine and endorse the Code of Behaviour.
- Questionnaires will be sent to parents occasionally to elicit their views on various aspects of school policies.
- Copies of the Code of Behaviour will be made available to parents upon enrolment of their child.
- Parents can support the school in the promotion of positive behaviour and the maintenance of high standards of behaviour by:
 - Being aware of, and co-operating with the school's system of rewards and sanctions
 - Ensuring children are at the school on time
 - Attending meetings at school, if requested
 - Helping children with homework and ensuring that it is completed
 - Equipping pupils with appropriate school materials, sufficient healthy lunch and full uniform
 - Being courteous towards pupils and staff
 - Making an appointment to meet with a teacher/Principal through the school office
 - Respecting school property and encourage their children to do the same
 - Labeling pupils uniforms, coats and other property
 - Supervising their young children on school premises when collecting other pupils or visiting the school
 - Refraining from bringing family pets/dogs into the school yard (even on a lead)

Please Note: **As the Board of Management is responsible for the Health and Safety of all staff and students parents are requested not to approach or reprimand another child (not their own) on the school premises.**

Pupils:

Pupils support the code of behaviour by:

- Drafting rules for classroom
- Behaving well in school
- Helping to maintain the school garden and environment
- Giving good example to younger children
- Reporting to their teacher or principal if they witness unacceptable behaviour in school.
- Caring for each other
- Offering suggestions as to how our school can remain a friendly, kind environment

3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour

Classroom:

- Class rules/behavioural expectations in each class that are consistent with the ethos as expressed in the code of behaviour and which set a positive atmosphere for learning.
- Pupils have input into devising the class rules.
- Teachers ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave.
- Pupils are aware and understand that should they break the rules in the classroom that they will be given an appropriate sanction in line with the code of behaviour.

Junior Classroom:

- Children receive 30 minutes Golden Time at the start of each week to be used from 1.00p.m.-1.30p.m. every Friday. During Golden Time children can participate in a number of fun activities in the classroom e.g. using the computer, playing games, drawing, play dough etc. Golden Time can be lost during the course the week for minor misbehaviours in 5 minute blocks.
- Children may receive stickers and Class Dojo points for good behaviour and work if the class teacher implements this system. When certain targets are met children receive different rewards.
- Children receive lunchtime detention for 5 incidents of minor misbehaviour and for a single incident of more serious misbehaviour. Lunchtime detention is carried out in the yard under the supervision of the teacher on duty. If weather is not permitting lunchtime detention is carried out in the classroom again under the supervision of the teacher on duty.
- When children receive 3 lunchtime detentions in less than a month (i.e for 15 minor incidents of misbehaviour) the parent is contacted and when agreed upon the child misses the next upcoming treat e.g. visit/activity in school.
- All minor misbehaviour/lunchtime detentions are recorded in classroom.

Senior Classroom:

- Children receive 30 minutes Golden Time at the start of each week to be used from 2.10p.m.-2.40p.m. every Friday. During Golden Time children can participate in a number of fun activities in the classroom e.g. playing on computer, playing games, writing on the white board, drawing, reading etc. Golden Time can be lost during the course of the week for minor misbehaviours in 5 minute blocks.
- Individual rewards may be given on a random basis if pupils have consistently put in an effort that is comparable to their ability and also behaved well in class and/or shown acts of kindness,
- Children receive lunchtime detention for 3 incidents of minor misbehaviour and for a single incident of more serious misbehaviour. Lunchtime detention is carried out in the yard under

the supervision of the teacher on duty. If weather is bad the detention is carried out in the classroom again under the supervision of the teacher on duty.

- When children receive 2 lunchtime detentions in less than a month (i.e for 6 minor incidents of misbehaviour) the parent is contacted and when agreed upon the child misses the next upcoming treat e.g. visit/activity in school.
- All minor misbehaviour/lunchtime detentions are recorded in classroom.

Playground(s):

- A concise set of playground rules which emphasise positive behaviour and make it clear what activities are permitted.
- Playground supervision rota is on display in the staffroom and each classroom and is explained to substitute teachers and newly appointed teachers.
- Children who remain inside due to illness, remain in the lunchroom (1st and 2nd Classroom) and are checked upon regularly by staff members who are not on duty.
- Children must line up before entering school building and wait to enter until teacher instructs them to do so.
- Children must ask permission from the supervising teacher before entering school building to go to toilet during lunch break but are encouraged and advised to go to the toilet before going out on yard.
- On wet days, children will remain in their classroom under the supervision of teacher on duty. Children have the opportunity to play with games from their classroom.
- The decision as to whether the children stay indoors because of bad weather is taken by the teacher on duty in consultation with the principal
- The teacher on supervision duty will be easily accessible to children during breaks and teacher will endeavour to supervise children as well as possible.
- In good weather the children make use of the grass area according to a timetable which is clearly displayed in the staffroom and in each classroom.
- Major incidents of misbehaviour are recorded in the incidents book which is kept in the school office and are dealt with by class teacher and principal.
- Students should inform the teacher on yard duty of any incidents of misbehaviour or unfairness/unkindness during the yard time and not their class teacher when class resumes after break.

Other areas in the school:

Corridors: Children are expected to walk and not run in corridors.

Toilets: As far as possible, only one child at a time is allowed to go to the toilet.

Lunchroom: Children are supervised by teacher on duty in the lunchroom.

Children are made aware of these rules on a regular basis at assemblies.

4. Rewards

- **Golden Time:** 30 minutes of Golden Time is set aside for Friday afternoons. Children start each week with 30 minutes of Golden Time and blocks of 5 minutes are deducted for incidents of misbehaviour.

- **Rewards Charts:** These may be used by some teachers if they wish to do so, for example: Class Dojo
- Good behaviour/achievements are acknowledged at assemblies and end of year presentation evening. Parents are made aware of achievements through the annual school newsletter. Note may be written in child's copy/journal acknowledging good work. A quiet word/gesture may be used to encourage good behaviour.

5. Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour:

Reasoning with the pupil / Reprimand (including advice on how to improve) / Temporary separation from peers, friends or others during play times/class / Loss of privileges e.g. Golden time, school trips, extracurricular activities / Timeout / Outside detention during a break / Prescribing additional work / Referral to Principal Teacher/Other teacher (maximum stay 1 hour) / Reflection sheet (kept on file by class teacher) / Note in homework journal to be signed by parent Formal communication with parents / Meeting with parents and pupil / Referral to Chairperson of Board of Management / Referral to outside agencies e.g. Gardaí, HSE, NEPS, NEWB / Suspension (See Section 5 on Suspension) –

Examples of Minor Misbehaviours:

Minor infringement of school rules / Interrupting class work / Not working to full potential / Running in school building / Leaving litter around school / Not wearing correct uniform / Being unmannerly / Not completing homework without good reason / Inappropriate behaviour/Inappropriate gestures

Examples of Serious Misbehaviours:- Phases culminating in suspension

Constantly disruptive in class / Stealing / Bullying / Deliberate continual disobedience / Deliberately endangering self/fellow pupils in the school yard at break times/in classroom / Deliberately injuring fellow pupil / Repeated use of unacceptable bad language / Damaging others property (*Parents are informed immediately of any breach*)

Examples of Gross Misbehaviours: - Immediate Suspension

Deliberately causing damage to school property / Setting fire to school property / Leaving school premises during school day without permission / Bringing weapons/dangerous substances to school / Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher/pupil / Substance misuse e.g. smoking/inhaling aerosols / Persistently engaging in activities which have been identified by members of staff as dangerous/inappropriate / Deliberately setting out to injure another person.

Initially, misbehaviour should be dealt with by class teacher by way of warning and /or advice, but if it is more serious or persistent, principal and parents may be involved. The Board of Management become involved in incidents of persistent serious misbehaviours and will become involved immediately when gross misbehaviours take place.

Staff ensure consistency in the application of sanctions through collaboration at staff meetings.

All serious and gross misbehaviours will be documented appropriately.

Involving parents in management of problem behaviour:

Parents will be kept fully informed from the outset of instances of serious misbehaviour on the part of their children. They will be involved at an early stage rather than as a last resort.

- Parents are contacted for continual breaches of the Code of Behaviour on the part of the child. Initially, contact is made by note sent by class teacher. Should misbehaviour persist, the teacher will request a meeting with the parents and draw up a plan to insure that the child's behaviour improves.
- If there is no improvement the teacher will liaise with the principal. The principal then initiates contact the parents by note or telephone call to invite parents to a meeting with Principal and class teacher to discuss behaviour.
- Where there are repeated instances of misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management may be informed and the parents shall be invited to meet with the Principal and the Chairperson and the class teacher or any combination of the above as appropriate.
- If the parents, and where appropriate the pupil, do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the pupil may be suspended for a temporary period.
- In the case of serious misbehaviour the Board has authorised the Chairperson and/or the Principal to sanction an immediate suspension pending discussing the matter with the parents.
- Expulsion will be considered, where appropriate in accordance with the legislation.

Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have concerns re their child. They can make an appointment with class teacher/Principal to discuss concerns.

Managing aggressive or violent misbehaviour:

- Children who are emotionally disturbed are referred for psychological assessment.
- Through the Special Educational Needs Organiser, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Service Executive, NEPS, SESS..
- If physical restraint is required as a strategy for dealing with violent or threatening behaviour, we will read Managing Challenging Behaviour - Guidelines for Teachers, INTO 2004: 11 and to consult competent legal advice.
- Teachers will have opportunities to avail of professional development.
- In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil himself/herself or the safety of other pupils or staff, temporary exclusion may be authorised by the Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management while consultation with SENO takes place about appropriate resourcing, alternative placement etc.

Procedures for noting and reporting an incident of Bullying Behaviour:

- Where there are repeated instances of bullying behaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management shall be informed and the parents shall be invited to meet with the Principal and the Chairperson and the class teacher or any combination of the above as appropriate.

- If the parents, and where appropriate the pupil, do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the pupil may be suspended for a temporary period.
- In the case of serious bullying behaviour the Board has authorised the Chairperson and/or the Principal to sanction an immediate suspension pending discussing the matter with the parents.
- Expulsion will be considered and shall at all times accord with legislation

6. Suspension / Expulsion procedures:

Suspension:

Gross misbehaviour/repeated incidents of serious misbehaviour warrant suspension. Suspension will only be carried out after all other means of dealing with behaviour have been tried. Parents will be consulted re. intention to suspend/exclude pupil except in the case of seriously violent/threatening behaviour which poses a risk to other pupils safety which would incur an immediate suspension. A standard form will be used when suspension takes place.

The Board of Management has agreed to defer responsibility to the Principal for imposing an initial suspension of up to 3 days. A meeting of parents, class teacher, Principal, Chairperson of Board of Management (and child) will take place prior to the child's return to school so that agreements/procedures can be put in place to facilitate the child's return to school.

To impose a subsequent suspension (up to 10 days) an emergency meeting of the Board of Management will be convened to discuss the issue and determine the length of the suspension.

After 6 days of suspension in total the Board of Management will make an appropriate report to the Educational Welfare Services (EWS).

Expulsion (permanent exclusion)

Expulsion will only take place in extreme cases or where repeated incidences of gross misbehaviour interfere with the educational opportunities of other students or where there is a threat to the health and safety of either students/staff.

Procedures in respect of expulsion : see appendix No. 1.

Under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, *'A student shall not be expelled from a school before the passing of twenty school days following the receipt of a notification under this section by an educational welfare officer' (Section 24(4))* It is the right of a Board of Management to take *'...such other reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school concerned and that the safety of students is secured.'* (Section 24(5))

Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science against some decisions of the Board of Management, including (1) permanent exclusion from a school and (2) suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year. Accordingly, schools should advise parents of this right of appeal and associated timeframe if it has been decided to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. Appeals must

generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student. (See Circular 22/02)

Parents will be informed of their entitlement to appeal a decision of the Board of Management in relation to suspension or expulsion. A copy of Circular 22/02 will be provided to parents. The Chairperson of the Board of Management in conjunction with school Principal will prepare a response if and when an appeal is being investigated.

7. Keeping Records:

Supervising staff keep a record of in the yard misbehaviour/serious misbehaviour in the incidents book. All staff have access to these records which will be kept in the staff room. Teachers will keep records of minor misbehaviours in classroom on a daily basis. Where students have a record of repeated misbehaviour/serious misbehaviour these records will pass from teacher to teacher. Teachers shall comment upon a students general behaviour in class and on yard as part of their parent-teacher meeting.

8. Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school:

Parents must notify the school by note prior to or following pupil's absences. Notes will be kept on file.

Success Criteria:

- Observation of positive behaviour in classrooms, playgrounds and school environment
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils

Roles and Responsibility:

The Board of Management and the Principal have overall responsibility for the implementation and ongoing monitoring of this policy. All staff members are responsible for the implementation of this policy in their own classes and for the general school population during *all* school related activities and will co-ordinate and monitor same. This policy will apply to all pupils during *all* school related activities.

Implementation Date:

This policy was first implemented in September 2007.

Timetable for Review:

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Ratification & Communication:

- The Board of Management first ratified this policy in March 2008.
- Parents will have an opportunity to express their views which will be taken into consideration but the final responsibility for content of the code will rest with the Board of Management.
- As with all policies, parents can view this policy in the school office.

Date of latest review: September 2024.

Chairperson's Signature: _____

Principal's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: September 2025

Appendix 2:

(Standard Form)

Name:

Date:

Class:

Reason for suspension:

Signature:

Principal

Chairperson of Board of Management

Parent

