

# *Saint Feichín's National School*

## *Cross*

### **Code of Behaviour**

#### **Introductory Statement**

This policy was formulated by the staff, the parents and the Board of Management of Saint Feichín's N.S.

#### **Rationale**

The existing policy was due for review, thus ensuring an orderly climate for learning in our school. 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 in our school. It details in Section 23 (2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:

- The standards of behaviour that shall be taken when a student attends 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
- The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student
- The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

#### **Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School**

In creating this code of behaviour, we aim to uphold the ethos of Saint Feichín's National School, Cross. We endeavour to provide a happy, caring, secure and orderly environment in which pupils can develop self-esteem and self-discipline. We also aim to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption-free environment. A successful code of behaviour requires the co-operation of staff, parents and pupils.

The aims of the code of behaviour of St. Feichín's N.S. are:

- To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.

- To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
- To develop pupils' self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.

### **Implementation**

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the code of behaviour. Teachers will respond promptly and firmly to any incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Rules will be kept to a minimum, emphasise positive behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage. Parents are a vital component of the school community. The school needs the support and co-operation of parents to achieve good behaviour and discipline. Parents should model positive behaviour and encourage their children to abide by the school rules.

### **General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour**

1. Pupils are expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable
2. Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
3. Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.
4. Pupils are expected to obey a teacher's instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
5. Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing, stating the reason for absence.

## **Bullying**

Bullying is repeated verbal, psychological or physical aggression by an individual or group against others. The most common forms of bullying are aggressive physical contact, name-calling, intimidation, extortion, isolation and taunting. Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to co-operate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

In the context of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (DES: 2013) placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour. This will be dealt with under the school's Anti-Bullying policy and/or code of behaviour.

## **Affirming Positive Behaviour**

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions.

### ***Examples of Strategies/Incentives:***

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment on a child's exercise book
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation
- Praise in front of class group
- Individual class merit awards, points awards or award stamps
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- Written or verbal communication with parent.

## **Discouraging Misbehaviour**

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions (Circular 20/90) will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development. These may include:

- Reasoning with pupil

- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class
- Prescribing extra work
- Loss of privileges
- Detention during break
- Communication with parents
- Referral to Principal
- Principal communicating with parents
- 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).

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health/safety.

### **Suspension/Expulsion**

Before serious sanctions such as detention, 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 Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education 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.

#### **Procedures for Notification of Pupil Absences from School**

The Education Welfare Act 200 (Section 18) stipulates that parents must notify the school of a student's absence and the reason for the absence. All notes detailing absences will be retained in the school. If a pupil reaches a total of twenty days absence in the school year, TÚSLA (Child and Family Agency), will be notified.

#### **Managing Aggressive or Violent Misbehaviour**

If a child is presenting as aggressive, the staff will work with the Special Needs Organiser (SENO), National Educational Psychology Services (NEPS), the Special Education Support

Service (SESS) and the Health Service Executive (HSE) to find strategies to deal with the behaviour, manage aggression and protect other children, staff and parents.

### **School Rules**

School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly. See Appendix 1/2 for a copy of the school/classroom rules.

### **Before/After School**

Parents are reminded that the Board of Management does not accept responsibility for pupils before the official opening time of 9.20 am or after the official closing time of 3.00 pm, except where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management. Pupils involved in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with the school code of behaviour during these times.

### **Board of Management's Responsibilities**

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- Ratify the code.

### **Principal's Responsibilities**

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the code of behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Arrange for review of the code, as required.

### **Teachers' Responsibilities**

- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- 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 parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

### **Pupils' Responsibilities**

- 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.

### **Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities**

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for 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, support its implementation and model positive behaviour.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour.

This code of behaviour was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on

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*Chairperson*

*Board of Management*

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*Principal*

# **Appendix 1**

## **School Rules**

1. School begins at 9.20 a.m. and ends at 3.00 p.m. Pupils are required to be on time, to remain on the school property and leave only with the permission or in the care of parent/guardian.
2. Pupils are advised to be vigilant when coming to and going home from school, showing particular care when crossing the main road.
3. All movement within the school must be in an orderly manner, with due regard for safety.
4. Pupils are absolutely forbidden to leave grounds without the permissions/supervision of a teacher.
5. Pupils must line up at the end of break time in an orderly manner.
6. The use of crude/vulgar language is strictly forbidden.
7. A strict healthy eating policy is in place. Sweets, chocolate, crisps, fizzy drinks and chewing gum are forbidden. Pupils are permitted to bring a small treat on Fridays (see Healthy Eating Policy).
8. Pupils are required to bring all necessary equipment for school and do their homework.
9. Full uniform must be worn at all times.
10. Inform the teacher in writing of all absences.
11. Pupils must always treat the staff, visitors and other students with respect.
12. Pupils must play safely at all times. Anti-social, dangerous or hurtful behaviour is forbidden, (e.g. wrestling, headlocks, jockey backs, bullying, intimidation, teasing, jeering, fighting, spitting, kicking, charging in groups, bad language, exclusion).
13. Pupils should walk to gates at going home time.
14. Keep the schoolyard litter free.
15. Respect school property – trees, shrubs and school equipment.
16. Be kind and show respect for fellow pupils.
17. Be truthful and honest at all times.
18. Mobile phones/devices are not permitted on school premises during school hours or on school outings.

19. Children are not allowed to bully others and should bullying occur parents/teachers should be informed immediately.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Classroom Rules**

1. Instructions given by teacher must be obeyed.
2. Pupils should work to the best of their ability and present exercises neatly.
3. Work quietly. Do not disturb others who are working.
4. Pupils must stay seated in their places unless told otherwise.
5. Respect others. Be kind with your words and actions.
6. Work and play safely.