

St. Aidan's National School

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CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

St. Aidan's National School aims to provide a happy, secure, friendly, learning environment, where children, parents, teachers, special needs assistants, ancillary staff and board of management work in partnership. Each individual is valued, encouraged and respected for their uniqueness and facilitated to reach their full potential in a positive atmosphere. This will enable the child to live a full life and will equip him/her to avail himself/herself of further education so that he/she may go on to live a full and useful life as an adult in society.

The staff are committed to the realisation of these objectives. Our aim is to create a happy, secure environment for our pupils in which there is a sense of good order and a reasonable approach to discipline. In this way, a large group can be organised so that the school can operate smoothly for the benefit of all.

The original Code of Behaviour was drawn up and implemented in June, 2003.

This revised Code of Behaviour comes into effect from March 2015. The code has been considered by the Parents Association, Staff, Education Welfare Officer and approved by the Board of Management. It was ratified by the Board of Management on 24th February, 2015. The code is mindful of the Curriculum, the school's Health & Safety Statement, Anti-Bullying Policy, Admission Policy and Child Protection Policy.

Related Policies available on request:

- 1. Anti-Bullying***
- 2. Health & Safety Statement***
- 3. Admission and Participation (Enrolment) Policy***
- 4. Child Protection Policy.***
- 5. Substance use policy***

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

St. Aidan's National School is a Roman Catholic School under the Patronage of the Bishop of Ferns.

Our school cherishes all pupils equally and aims to create a harmonious environment that will enhance learning and teaching throughout the school. We strive to promote the complete development of all aspects of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual.

Aims

The code of Behaviour has three main aims:

- (a) The efficient operation of the school and the structuring of in-class discipline so that there exists an efficient learning environment.
- (b) The maintenance of good order throughout the school and respect for the school environment.
- (c) The development of good behaviour based on consideration, respect and tolerance of others.

In order for these aims to be achieved the school believes that it is important

- (a) for the happiness and smooth running of our school, that we foster positive caring attitudes to one another and the environment.
- (b) to acknowledge that each pupil's talents will be valued and enjoyed.
- (c) to support, through help and encouragement, the self-esteem of all. We realise the importance to children of approval by their peers.
- (d) to listen with care to the views of one another and value them.
- (e) on occasions, when a wrong doing or injury has been committed, that the child can reflect on his/her behaviour, make an attempt to undo their actions and be given the opportunity to make amends.
- (f) that teachers and pupils respond in a polite, thoughtful manner to one another.
- (g) that pupils fulfil their responsibilities with regard to:
 - (1) punctuality
 - (2) completing tasks to the best of their ability
 - (3) take responsibility for the school environment and its contents
 - (4) co-operation with other school members

In St. Aidan's we believe that emphasizing positive behaviour in school tends to marginalize bad behaviour and decreases the number of misdemeanors. A well-managed, orderly environment in school will encourage children to react in a positive, caring way. For this to happen a set of rules have been created by 5th and 6th class children and is reviewed every two years. These have been agreed, by the staff, parents and management. The rules will be taught to each class and will be on the wall of each classroom. The pupils will be reminded of these rules at assembly, at least once a term, therefore all students will have a clear understanding of the rules.

Rules, in themselves, do not encourage good behaviour. The two ways this is done is through praise and rewards.

Praise:

As a rule, teachers should try to give about twice as much praise as correction. Praise can be given in a formal and informal way, in public or private for the keeping of good standards of behaviour as well as particular achievements. Praise can be given in both oral and written form. The communications of such praise between home and school is very important and central to our code of behaviour. This is done through parent/teacher meetings, informal meetings and school reports.

Incentives:

The use of incentives is also very effective and creates a positive atmosphere in the classroom and school. Among those that can be used are:

- comments or reward stamp on children's work
- public praise in front of peers
- regular class gatherings where public mention and note is made of good examples, both of work and good behaviour e.g. assembly
- reward certificates, stickers and homework passes
- recording in school reports
- sharing achievements with parents
- being given greater responsibility in school
- specific privileges in use of school facilities or equipment
- golden time
- use of Circle Time
- Assembly
- "Be nice" charts
- Bualadh Bos in class
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A visit to another staff member/principal for commendation

Assembly:

On Monday and Friday mornings the children assemble in the lunch hall for prayers etc. During assembly the children will be reminded of specific school rules, be complemented on achievements, good behaviour etc. On occasion assembly will be used as an opportunity for students to showcase their talents e.g. music, dance, drama etc. On Monday mornings, students will be given an opportunity to share their out of school achievements at assembly. On Friday morning the children who have achieved "Student of the Week" will be recognised and presented with a certificate.

Student of the week:

Each week the class teacher will choose a student who has contributed most to the class during that week. Student of the Week may be awarded for academic, sporting, artistic or social achievement.

The code of Behaviour covers the following areas

- *Behaviour in class*
- *Behaviour in the playground*
- *Behaviour in the school environment and behaviour on school outings*
- *Attendance at school/Education Welfare Act*
- *Homework after school and extra-curricular activities.*

Behaviour in class

Courtesy and respect are essential. Disrespectful behaviour towards other pupils or towards other pupils or towards a teacher (e.g. defiance, cheek, insolence) are unacceptable. Pupils must respect the right of other pupils to learn. Any behaviour which interferes with the right (e.g. constant disruption of the class, persistent distracting of others) is considered unacceptable behaviour.

In order that pupils benefit from their work in class full co-operation is required at all times. Pupils must co-operate with instructions given by the teacher.

Behaviour in the Playground

Pupils should treat others as they would like to be treated themselves. Any behaviour which endangers or offends others is not permitted. Rough behaviour e.g. fighting, kicking, spitting, pushing is forbidden. Games or activities considered to be dangerous shall be prohibited.

Any behaviour which interferes with other pupils' play is not permitted. Pupils may not leave the playground for any reason during breaks without permission of the supervising teacher, this includes re-entering the school building.

Yard Areas:

The yard is divided into four areas, 5th/6th and 3rd/4th boys/girls alternate between the court and the pitch. 1st and 2nd class play at the front of the school and those playing soccer in and around the side gable end / junior classes play at the front of the school

If the children need to use the toilets they may use their own class toilets.

- The corridor outside the staffroom, or resource room will be used as a sin bin area for children who are in detention during break time.
- Children should not be in the school during break time without teacher's permission and adequate supervision

Behaviour in the School Environment & Behaviour on School outings

Respect and courtesy to others is essential. Any kind of verbal or physical abuse of other pupils is unacceptable. Use of foul language among pupils is unacceptable. Bullying or intimidation of other pupils is prohibited and is always regarded as a serious offence. Pupils must show respect for school property at all times. For reasons of safety and to minimise accidents, pupils should move about the school in an orderly manner.

Pupils are encouraged to be respectful of each other on their way to and from school. When on school outings pupils are expected to behave in an orderly manner and show respect for public property. They should always co-operate fully with their teachers and special needs staff.

School rules broken while representing the school in sport or other activities will result in the offending being omitted from selection on the next occasion.

Attendance/Education Welfare Act

Under the Education Welfare Act 200, absences or lateness must be explained by a brief note written in school journal and signed by parent. Absences of 20 days or more must be referred by the school to Education Welfare Board. Parents will be notified by text when their child has been absent for 10, 15 and 20 days. Parents/Guardians must sign out pupils who are collected early from school. Daily attendance and punctuality are required from pupils. School opens to receive pupils at 9.10 a.m. each morning. After a pupil has been absent, a note from the parents should be given to the class teacher upon the pupil's return to school. Please refer to School Attendance Policy.

Homework

It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis. The time taken for this will vary from child to child, but should in most cases take between 30 minutes and one hour. Homework is

recorded in the pupil's journal. Parents should sign and time the homework journal to confirm that the work has been fully attempted.

If for some reason homework (*or part of it*) cannot be completed, parents are asked to note this in the homework journal.

Generally, homework is not given at weekends. Written work must be done neatly and carefully. Graffiti on textbooks and copy books is not permitted. Please refer to the school Homework Policy for further information.

Repeated non-completion of homework will incur sanctions.

School Rules: *(The senior students, with staff approval, compiled this list of rules. These rules will be reviewed every two years)*

- (a) **I WILL BE GENTLE AND KIND – I WILL NOT HURT ANYONE.** (I will respect my own and other children's safety, on entering and leaving school: line up in an orderly fashion and walk at all times without pushing or shoving. After break: line with class in yard until teacher gives permission to return inside.)
- (b) **I WILL BE HONEST – I WILL NOT HIDE THE TRUTH.**
- (c) **I WILL WORK HARD AND ALWAYS DO MY BEST.** (I will be on time for class, have all the necessary books and copies, complete homework neatly and on time, attend school on a regular basis, obey teachers' and supervisors' instructions).
- (d) **I WILL LOOK AFTER SCHOOL PROPERTY – I WILL NOT DAMAGE IT.** (I will respect other children's property)
- (e) **I WILL PLAY FAIR – I WILL NOT LOSE MY TEMPER.**
- (f) **I WILL RESPECT OTHERS – I WILL NOT CALL NAMES**
(I will allow other children to work, and respect their work).
- (g) **I WILL BE MANNERLY IN SCHOOL.** (I will walk while in the school building and be mindful of noise levels and space limitations).
- (h) **I WILL LISTEN – I WILL NOT INTERRUPT.**
- (i) **I WILL WEAR MY FULL UNIFORM.**
- (j) **I WILL CHOOSE A HEALTHY LUNCH.**

Consistency:

It is important that there is a consistent policy for dealing with misdemeanours throughout the whole school. A child's behaviour is not just the responsibility of his/her class teacher but of the whole school. All rules should be encouraged and all misbehaviour dealt with in an evenhanded way. Also it is central to our code that the age, maturity and social background of each child must be taken into account in respect to our expectations of their ability to have good behaviour. This has to be taken into account when we come to the area of sanctions and what is acceptable and unacceptable.

Unacceptable Behaviour:

There is no room for violence, bullying, vandalism or rudeness to adults and bad language in St. Aidan's. All occurrences of this type of behaviour should be noted, including the name of the victim. Repeated occurrences will be put in the child's record. Sanctions will be implemented as seen necessary.

- *See school bullying policy*

Examples of minor misbehaviours

Non-completion of homework/back answering/lack of manners and courtesy/failing to wear full uniform regularly/hurting other pupil's feelings/disobedience/ not wearing appropriate uniform/bringing electronic equipment, mobile phones etc./not following instructions.

Examples of serious misbehaviours

Constantly disruptive in class/ telling lies continually/ stealing/ damaging other pupil's property/ bullying/harassment/discrimination/victimization/threats/behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning/ non-completion of homework on a regular basis / leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission/ not working to full potential/ using unacceptable language regularly/ deliberately injuring a fellow pupil/person/damage to property/theft/bringing dangerous equipment to school.

Examples of gross misbehaviours

Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a pupil/teacher, serious theft/serious damage to property/serious bullying

THE ABOVE LISTS CONSIST OF EXAMPLES ONLY. IT IS NOT MEANT TO BE A TOTALLY COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF MISBEHAVIOURS

Sanctions:

Where rules are broken there must be a system of appropriate sanctions which are applied consistently and fairly. Sanctions must be reasonable and factors affecting the child, such as age and background be taken into account. Sanctions for minor misbehaviours will include:

- 1 Reasoning with the pupil, including advice on how to improve
- 2 Verbal reprimand
- 3 Temporary separation from peers within the class
- 4 Prescribing extra work.
- 5 Incident will be recorded in the class misbehavior book.
- 6 Detention during break.
- 7 Loss of privilege.
- 8 Temporary removal to another class
- 9 Referral to the Deputy Principal/Principal

The following course of action will be taken for serious misbehaviour.

STEP 1:

Children will be given three verbal reprimands in a day and these will be recorded in the behaviour book. The following day a reflection sheet will have to be completed by the child: (up to three reflections depending on the severity). Depending on the seriousness of the misbehavior, a student may need to complete a reflection sheet following one verbal reprimand.

STEP 2:

If there is no improvement in the child's behaviour the child will be put on report. A letter will be sent home to the child's parent advising them of this before report commences.

STEP 3:

Up to two weeks, reports may be deemed necessary. Before week two begins a letter will be sent to Parents and there will be a meeting between the disciplinary board which will consist of the Principal and two teachers and the Parents, to discuss unacceptable recurring behaviour.

STEP 4

Parents are briefed about the next stage. Internal suspension up to 3 days. This may be done on a 1 day basis. If the child doesn't behave after that the school will implement the withdrawal of major privileges and 2 days internal suspension will apply.

STEP 5 Suspension from the school for a set time. (*This procedure will be used in the case of gross misbehaviour and or health & safety grounds.*) The Chairperson/Principal can sanction immediate suspension for up to 3 days. In certain circumstances the Principal with the approval of their Chairperson of the Board of management may suspend a pupil for 5 school days. The Board of Management can sanction suspension for up to 10 days. (See section 21 4a Education Welfare Act and circular 20/90)

STEP 6 External Suspension may be considered in extreme cases (see Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act, 2000). ***Grounds for Expulsion***

- Behaviour is persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- Continued presence of pupil constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- Pupil responsible for serious damage to property.

Automatic Expulsion

Board of management may sanction automatic expulsion for certain prescribed behaviours:

1. Sexual Assault
2. Possession of illegal drugs
3. Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
4. Actual violence or physical assault
5. Serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff.

Procedures in Respect to Expulsion

1. Detail investigation by school principal
2. Recommendation by principal to the Board of Management
3. Board of Management considers Principals recommendation and holds hearing

4. Board of Management decision, is expulsion appropriate? If Board of Management recommends expulsion, the Board of Management will propose a date which will allow a 20-day cooling off period
5. Education Welfare Officer is informed of proposal to expel pupil and effective date of that proposal
6. Parents of the pupil are informed of rights to invoke a Section 29 appeal under the Education Act 1998
7. Education Welfare Officer arranges consultations
8. Confirmation of decision.

Appeal

Parents of a pupil who has been suspended for 20 school days or more are entitled under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 to appeal such a suspension.

This procedure may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

Wet Days:

On wet days the children remain in their classrooms. Children from 6th class may go to the infant classes to play games with them. The teachers will ensure that all children will have some enjoyable task to do during break. Where feasible SNAs will remain in the junior classes.

Rules for Wet Days:

- a) Children are not to get out of their seat without the permission of the supervising teacher.
- b) Children are to get permission from the teacher in charge to go to the toilet.

Role of the Board of Management:

The Board has the responsibility of ensuring that a Code of Behaviour is drawn up and has direct input into the policy of the school. Where there is a serious breach of Behaviour the Board may meet to discuss the matter and issue suspension proceedings.

The Parents:

No Code of Behaviour can operate successfully without the backing and support of the Parents. It is expected that parents send their child to school with respect for the school rules and other pupils/personnel in the school. To help with this, parents, on enrolling their children into the junior infants, are given a booklet which outlines the school ethos and the behaviour which is expected in the 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 meeting*
- *Through children's homework journal (infants do not have a homework journal, please check bags for notes)*
- *Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school*
- *School notice board*
- *Newsletters/school web-site/e-mails*
- *TextaParent service.*

Children with Special Needs:

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However, the school recognizes that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans may 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.

Teaching Staff:

Each teacher has responsibility for the maintaining of good behaviour within his/her classroom while having a shared responsibility for good order within the school.

Teachers are responsible for the behaviour of children within their sight and should respond at all time to any instances of unacceptable behaviour. Teachers should expect good behaviour from their pupils. Teachers can ensure that good behaviour exists in the school by:

- a) being familiar with the Code of Behaviour and constantly teach and remind pupils of the rules.
- b) by use of class discussion, teachers can instill in their children a respect for themselves, their fellow pupils and the school from which good behaviour is a result.
- c) by rewarding children for good behaviour, therefore, concentrating on the positive aspect of behavior rather than the negative, i.e. sanctions.
- d) by informing the Principal of a serious breach of behaviour and work with the Principal on the strategies outlined in the code.
- e) by being consistent and fair in dealing with the Code of Behaviour. Children quickly sense if one teacher is more lenient than another
- f) by informing parents of good behaviour.
- g) by using the school's SPHE curriculum to support the code of behaviour.
- h) it is central to our Code of Behaviour that good behaviour is framed in a positive manner.
- i) by encouraging students to "Be Nice" each day and rewarding "nice" comments, actions etc.

Assessment:

Where a child has repeated instances of serious behaviour every effort will be made to have the child assessed by an Educational Psychologist and any help, which can be got for the child, will be.

Code of Conduct for Parents

Parents are expected to:

- encourage pupils to select a healthy lunch, if they are not partaking in the School Lunch Scheme.
- Ensure their children attend school and are punctual.
- Equip pupils with appropriate school materials and full uniform.
- Be courteous towards pupils and staff.
- Make an appointment to meet with a teacher/the Principal through the office.
- Respect school property and encourage their children to do the same.
- Label pupil's coats and other personal property.
- Strictly supervise pre-school children, when in the school.

As the Board of Management is responsible for the Health & Safety of all staff and students, parents are requested not to approach or reprimand another person's child on the school premises.

Conclusion

The essence of our code of behaviour is valuing people and encouraging them to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and to develop self discipline.

This policy was ratified by **BOM** on 28th January 2004. Most recent review carried out October 2020. Next review October 2021.

Review ratified:

Chairperson

Principal

Date

***** See Covid guidelines also**