



St. John of God G.N.S. Kilmore Road, Artane, Dublin 5

Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement

This Code of Behaviour was formulated by the Board of Management, staff, parents and pupils of St. John of God G.N.S.

- At an in-service day in March 2009 the school staff began the process of reviewing our Code of Good Practice. This process was continued at a staff meeting in May 2009 and at subsequent staff meetings
- In October/November the principal met with the pupils in the fifth and sixth classes who in turn participated in the formulation of this updated Code of Behaviour.
- In December 2009 a meeting with representatives of the Parents' Association and parents was held and they contributed to this Code of Behaviour.
- Members of the Board of Management participated in the drawing up of the Code at its various stages.

Rationale

This school decided to review its Code of Good Practice as:

- The existing code was due for review and amendment.
- To ensure existing policy is in compliance with legal requirements as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008*

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of School

In drawing up our Code of Behaviour the Board of Management, staff, parents/guardians and pupils want to ensure that the school is a safe, secure and ordered environment which will facilitate the educational, moral, spiritual, physical, emotional and social development of all of our pupils so that each girl may live a full and happy life.

Through co-operation between staff, parents/guardians and pupils we strive to create a school environment where everybody's opinion is valued, where everybody is treated with respect and tolerance, and where everybody can be secure in the knowledge that they will always be treated in a fair and just manner.

Aims

The aims of St. John of God School Code of Behaviour are:

- To create a positive learning environment which encourages and reinforces good behaviour

- To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents/guardians on behavioural expectations
- To develop pupils' self esteem
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others where all members of the school community feel safe
- To facilitate the education and development of every child
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption
- To encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions
- To assist parents/guardians 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

Policy Content

The policy is addressed under the following headings in compliance with legal requirements as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008*

1 Behaviour in the school

- School Rules
- Dress code
- Communication
- Dissemination of Code of Behaviour

2 Whole School Approach to promoting good behaviour

- Staff
- Children with Special Education Needs
- Role of S.P.H.E. curriculum
- Board of Management
- Parents
- Pupils

3 Positive strategies for managing behaviour

- Classroom
- Playground
- Other areas in the school
- School related activities

4 Rewards and sanctions

- Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour
- Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour
- Involving parents/guardians in management of behaviour problem
- Managing aggressive or violent behaviour

5 Suspension / Expulsion

- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Appeals

6 Keeping Records

- Class

- Playground
- School records

7 Procedure for notifying pupil's absence from school

8 Reference to other policies

9 Roles & responsibilities

10 Timetable for review

11 Implementation date

12 Ratification and communication

1. Behaviour in the School

School Rules

Each pupil is 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.
- Show respect for all school property and comply with the school's green policy
- Be honest, truthful and courteous at all times.
- Do her best in school and complete homework to the best of her ability.
- Walk in a safe, orderly manner on stairs and corridors and as she enters and exits the building
- Play safely in the yard and be inclusive towards other girls
- Obey the school's mobile phone policy
- Recognise the fact that chewing gum is not allowed inside the school gates

Dress Code & Conduct:

Each pupil is expected to:

- Wear the school tracksuit with white collared t-shirt and runners every day. Black leggings or shorts are not part of the school uniform. Shorts will only be allowed on designated sports days like Active Schools Week.
- In general, leave jewellery at home. One pair of small stud earrings/sleepers may be worn in the ear lobe. Other earrings may not be worn on health and safety grounds.
- Wrist watches may be worn. Analogue watches (clock face) are the best as they greatly help to develop children's ability to read the time. Please be aware that watches that can record and store photos or allow access to the internet are not allowed in school (e.g. Vtech watches, Smart Watches). This is to protect the safety and privacy of other children.
- We strongly recommend to tie back hair for hygiene purposes and to prevent the spread of lice. Little children are often in each other's personal space and can touch heads quite frequently.
- Nail extensions/fillers can prevent children from fully take part in school activities and are therefore strongly discouraged.

Communication

Telephone calls to parents/guardians can be made from the secretary's office only and not on personal mobile phones, and telephone calls or messages from parents/guardians must also come through the office.

The use of mobile phones and recording devices is not permitted in school – cf . Acceptable Use Policy
Pupil mobile phones must be switched off at all times both in the school building and on school grounds.

Parents/guardians will be informed by phone call, note in pupil's journal or letter where punctuality, absenteeism, homework or uniform are a cause of concern.

Dissemination of Code of Behaviour

In accordance with Section 23 (4) of the Education Welfare Act (2000) the principal teacher shall, prior to registering a child, provide the parents of the child with a copy of the school's code of behaviour.

The principal shall, as a condition of registering each child, require her parents/guardians to confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour so provided is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the code by the child.

2. Whole School Approach in Promoting Positive Behaviour

This code of behaviour cannot, on its own, create the environment that makes it possible for pupils to learn and behave well. Our school climate, values, policies and relationships support our code of behaviour. Part of the aim of St. John of God School is to help our pupils to achieve their personal best – academically, intellectually and socially. In order to achieve this aim we as a school community have adopted a whole school approach to behaviour, the elements of which are as follows:

- An ethos, policies and practices that are in harmony
- A teamwork approach to behaviour
- A whole school approach to curriculum and classroom management
- An inclusive and involved school community

Staff

Staff members as a team have opportunities to confirm that all school policies and practices support the objectives of the code of behaviour. These opportunities are provided at staff meetings and school planning days.

- The code of behaviour is considered annually. Teachers are invited to raise matters of concern at this time.
- All new and temporary staff members are given a copy of the code of behaviour.
- All staff members are reminded each term to ensure that they are familiar with the code of behaviour.

Children with Special Education Needs

All children are expected to comply with the Code of Behaviour. Children with special education needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Where it is established that a child presents with behavioural difficulties arising from her special education needs specialised behaviour plans may be put in place in consultation with parents, class teacher and learning support/resource teachers and the relevant issues will be dealt with in the child's IEP.

The Role of the SPHE Curriculum

- The school's SPHE curriculum supports the code of behaviour. It aims to help our children to develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. It also helps to foster self esteem and to help children to accommodate differences and develop citizenship.
- Teachers are required to teach the SPHE curriculum in accordance with our school SPHE plan.
- Teachers are required to record their SPHE lessons in their fortnightly schemes and note what has been taught in the Cúntas Míósúil.
- The success of the SPHE curriculum depends on the wholehearted support of the parents/guardians.

Board of Management

The code of behaviour is considered annually by the Board of Management and as the need arises.

- The Board of Management supports the code of behaviour in the school on an ongoing basis by ensuring that adequate copies are available, reviewing it annually, amending it if and when necessary and dealing promptly and fairly with serious breaches of behaviour.
- The Board of Management supports the staff in implementing the code of behaviour by providing opportunities and funding for staff development.

Parents/Guardians

Teachers are requested to bring matters of concern regarding pupils to the immediate attention of their parents/guardians. 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. They are also encouraged to respond promptly to requests from the school to meet staff if and when a problem arises.

The following methods will be used at all levels within the school:

- Informal parent/teacher meet ups and formal parent/teacher meetings
- Through children's homework journal (infants do not have a homework journal - check bags)
- Letter/notes from school to home and from home to school
- Notices on front window of school
- Text messages from the school

Parents/guardians support the school in the promotion of positive behaviour and the maintenance of high standards of behaviour by:

- Ensuring the pupils attend school every day and are punctual. If there is a genuine reason for absence, the school must be informed in writing, stating the reason. School begins at 8.50 a.m. Children are asked to line up with their classes as soon as the bell rings at 8.50 a.m. They will then be collected by their class teacher. School finishes at 1.30p.m.for Junior and Senior Infants and at 2.30p.m.for all other classes. Junior and Senior Infants are to be collected at the front door at 1.30 p.m. Other classes will be collected at the school gate.
- In the interest of safety never using the staff car entrance
- Showing respect for the safety of all children by using the pedestrian entrance, or if the pupil is cycling, to walk with bicycle/scooter/skates in the school grounds
- Walking into the school grounds when delivering/collecting children
- Labelling all items belonging to their daughters
- Reminding the children that chewing gum is not allowed

- Not bringing dogs in to the school grounds
- Providing a healthy lunch, in accordance with our Healthy Eating Policy, if your child isn't availing of the free school lunch scheme
- Making emergency calls to the school through the office
- Complying with the school's Acceptable Use Policy regarding phones, etc. The school cannot be responsible for personal items such as hand held gaming devices, mobile phones etc.
- Supervising homework and signing it if requested to do so by the class teacher
- Attending meetings at the school if requested. **If parents/guardians wish to speak to the class teacher, please make an appointment with her as the teacher cannot leave her class unattended.** The secretary will organise this for you
- Co-operating in keeping the school grounds clean and litter free.

A note is required in the following circumstances

- If parents / guardians wish to collect their child from school during school hours
- If there is a change in the normal routine at collection time
- When a child has been absent from school
- If your child is unable to comply with uniform rules, stating the reason
- If your child has been unable to do her homework, stating the reason

Pupils

We believe that positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self discipline and we place a greater emphasis on praise than on sanctions.

During the school year activities will be held to promote good behaviour e.g.

- good behaviour week
- pupils will be involved in drawing up their own class rules with their teacher
- a reward system may be used within the classroom to affirm good behaviour
- verbal praise will be given throughout the school
- at assembly pupils will be reminded about on-going practice of the rules
- Circle Time
- S.P.H.E. activities
- Positive phonecalls home for good behaviour
- Positive Behaviour Noticeboard in the foyer
- Friendship Week

(this is not an exhaustive list)

3. Positive Strategies for Managing Behaviour

Classroom

The following strategies are used to encourage positive behaviour in the classroom

- Involve pupils in drafting classroom rules
- Remind pupils of classroom rules regularly
- Catch pupils being good
- Praise positive behaviour
- Give clear instructions
- Plan for routines and transitions from task to task

- Employ a variety of activities and methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation

Yard/ Playground Rules

- When leaving the school, walk to your own area of the yard
- Stay in your own part of the yard/playground and always use appropriate and respectful language
- You must have permission to leave the yard/playground
- Obey all supervisors in the playground
- Play safely, showing consideration for others
- Treat all equipment with respect and return it to the boxes when playtime is over
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself
- Be honest and helpful if there is a problem
- Keep the yard/playground safe and tidy

Role of staff on the playground

- Teachers/SNAs are required to re-acquaint themselves with yard/playground rules at the start of each year
- Teachers are required to remind pupils of the yard/playground rules regularly
- SNAs monitor the pupils they have been assigned to but also intervene when they observe breaches of acceptable behaviour
- Individual pupils and/or groups that breach acceptable behaviour may be temporarily separated from their peers for some quiet thinking time. Pupils must be accompanied to and from the yard/playground by their teachers at reception and dismissal time, before and after breaks and for all other yard/playground based activities
- Pupils who are unable to go to the yard/playground due to illness or for other reasons must sit outside the Staff Room where they are monitored

Wet Days

On wet days the following procedures apply:

- Supervising teachers monitor the classrooms
- All pupils are required to remain seated unless otherwise instructed
- Special Needs pupils who require SNA support have their SNAs with them in the classroom
- Pupils may play board games or view a suitable, educational DVD on the Inter-Active White Board

Other Areas in the School

- Pupils are expected to walk in the corridors
- Pupils are expected to behave responsibly in toilets and cloakrooms and have consideration for others
- Pupils are expected to treat their own property, the property of others and school property with respect
- Teachers and parents/guardians are required to remind pupils of these rules regularly

School Related Activities

Pupils are expected to comply with all school rules in the code of behaviour while participating in school related activities such as school tours, games, extra curricular activities and all other school linked events.

4. Rewards and Sanctions

Good behaviour and achievement is acknowledged in the following ways:

- Praise
- Reward systems such as announcement on intercom or at assemblies
- Good Behaviour Certificates
- Class rewards such as library time, choose a friend to sit beside, extra P.E. / art class etc.
- Stars/Stickers

Strategies for Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. They are applied as a response to inappropriate behaviour and are a form of positive intervention but, on their own, they are unlikely to alter behaviour.

Sanctions

Sanctions are used in a respectful way that helps students to understand the consequences of their inappropriate behaviour and encourages them to take responsibility for their behaviour.

Sanctions are required to:

- Diffuse and not escalate a situation
- Preserve the dignity of all parties
- Be applied in a fair and consistent manner
- Be timely
- Be proportionate
- Be appropriate

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross

Examples of minor misbehaviour

- Interrupting class work
- arriving late for school
- running in the school building
- talking in the class line
- leaving assigned seat without permission at lunchtime
- placing unfinished food/drink cartons in class bin
- leaving litter around the school
- not wearing the school uniform
- being discourteous to others
- not completing homework without good reason
- not having homework signed by a parent when asked to do so

Example of serious misbehaviours

Repeated incidents of minor misbehaviour may be deemed to be serious misbehaviour.

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation).
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning – constantly disruptive in class, back answering a teacher or not working to full potential.
- Threats or physical hurt to another person.
- Endangering self or fellow pupils in the school yard at break time.
- Damage to property.
- Telling lies / theft
- Using unacceptable language
- Disregarding Acceptable Use Policy
- Frequent non-completion of homework

Examples of gross misbehaviours

- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher/pupil
- Leaving school premises during school hours without appropriate permission.
- Behaviour that represents a serious threat to the pupil herself
- Verbal abuse or physical abuse of any member of staff or other pupils
- Disobedience and defiance of teachers/SNAs
- The use of foul or inappropriate language
- Vandalism of school property or the property of others

When dealing with gross misbehaviours the Chairperson of the Board of Management may be informed.

Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development. These may include:

- Reasoning with the 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, including non-academic tasks
- Loss of privileges
- Detention during break
- Class Teacher/Learning Support teacher communicating 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 the Education Welfare Act 2000).

All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher or the teacher on yard duty

Regular occurrences of minor misbehaviours will be dealt with as follows

- Note in homework journal to be signed by parents/guardians.
- Temporary separation from peers.
- Withdrawal from a particular lesson.
- Note to parents/guardians concerning further misbehaviour in yard. (Misbehaviour in yard includes bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation).

- In cases where minor misdemeanours persist the child will be taken to the Principal and a note will be sent to parents/guardians.

Involving Parents/Guardians in Management of Behaviour Problems

In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or a single incident of gross misbehaviour, parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the principal to discuss the child's behaviour.

Meetings with Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians will be invited by letter/telephone call to discuss their child's behaviour. At the meeting it will be explained to the parents/guardians that the school is grateful for their support and that it is hoped that by working together the school and parents/guardians will be successful in their efforts to address the problem behaviour of the child concerned.

The parents/guardians will be given an outline of the inappropriate behaviour. The child will be called to the meeting and asked to give her side of the story and an explanation for the behaviour. Any concerns raised by the parents/guardians will be noted. The child, in the presence of the parents/guardians, will be requested to give an assurance that she will make determined efforts to improve her behaviour.

Where a pupil continues to engage in persistent misbehaviour in either classroom or yard/playground, and all strategies to improve behaviour have not been successful, the following sanctions may apply:

- ***Detention*** - ***during school breaks***

The principal will inform the parents/guardians by letter or telephone call that the pupil must serve a period or successive periods of detention.

- ***Formal Report to the Board of Management***

Where a decision has been made by the principal to make a formal report to the Board of Management the parents/guardians will be invited to meet with the principal before the Board of Management meeting. The principal shall outline to the parents/guardians the reasons for making the formal report and explain that this report will be placed on the pupil's file. The principal shall inform the parents/guardians that one of the following decisions may be made by the Board of Management.:

- The BOM may note the report and take no further action and advise the parents/guardians of the decision
- The Chairperson may request the parents/guardians and pupil to attend a meeting with her and the principal. The parents/guardians and pupil shall be requested to give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future and the pupil shall be issued with a Suspension Warning.
- The pupil may be suspended for a temporary period, not in excess of three successive school days. The details of the suspension shall be communicated in writing to the parents/guardians. Should the parents/guardians have cause for a complaint in relation to the suspension of their child an appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act (1998) may be lodged.

The parents/guardians shall be advised, in writing, of the time and date of the Board of Management meeting and that they may attend such meeting and make a case for their child before the BOM makes a decision.

- *The Board of Management may impose a suspension*

5. 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.

- The Principal in consultation with the class teacher/learning support teacher/resource teacher will review the child's record of behaviour, in class and on the yard.
- The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed.
- The pupil's parents/guardians will be invited to attend the school to discuss the misbehaviour with the Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management.
- If the parents/guardians 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.

Suspension

The Board of Management hereby delegates to the Principal the power to immediately suspend a pupil for up to three days where:

- Behaviour has a detrimental effect on the education of others.
- Pupil's presence in school is a threat to safety.
- Pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.

When the pupil's behaviour is such that suspension (not to exceed three days) is being considered, the Principal will:

- Investigate the incident(s) fully by speaking to all involved.
- Send for parents/guardians and explain to them what has happened and give them a chance to speak with their daughter.
- Where the parents/guardians do not agree to meet the principal, written notification of the suspension will be sent to them. The written notification will state the reason for the suspension, the period of time for which the pupil is suspended and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end, the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupils and parents
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the D.E.S. (Education Act 1998, Section 29).

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the principal to be warranted a preliminary investigation shall be conducted to establish the case for the suspension. The parents/guardians shall be notified and arrangements made with them for the child to be collected. The formal investigation shall immediately follow the imposition of the suspension.

Appeals against Suspension

The Board of Management shall offer an opportunity to appeal a Principal's decision to suspend a pupil.

The parents/guardians of the pupil shall be advised that they may appeal the decision of the principal or chairperson to a full meeting of the BOM. The parents/guardians shall be invited to the BOM meeting to speak on behalf of their child. The parents/guardians shall be advised in writing of the date and time of the BOM meeting.

In the case of decisions to suspend made by the Board of Management, the parents/guardians shall be advised of their right to make an appeal to the Patron.

Section 29 Appeal

Where the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days the parents/guardians may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007.

At the time when the parents/guardians are being formally notified of such a suspension they shall be told of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, and shall be given information on how to lodge an appeal.

Implementing the Suspension

Written Notification

The Principal shall notify the parents/guardians in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter shall confirm:

- The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- The reasons for the suspension
- Any study programme to be followed
- The arrangements for returning to school including a commitment by the pupil and parents/guardians to abide by the school code of behaviour
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management where the suspension has been imposed by the Principal
- The provision for an appeal to the Patron where the suspension has been imposed by the Board of Management
- The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Skills (Education Act 1998, Sec. 29)

Engaging With Pupils & Parents/Guardians

Where a decision to suspend has been made the Principal or another staff member, delegated by the Principal, shall meet with the parents/guardians to emphasise their responsibility in helping the pupil to behave well when she returns to school and to offer help and guidance in this.

Where parents/guardians do not agree to meet with the Principal written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.

Grounds for Removing a Suspension

A suspension shall be removed if, for any reason, the Board of Management decides to remove the suspension or if the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Skills directs that it be removed following an appeal under Sec. 29 of the Education Act 1998

Reinstatement

Following a period of suspension the pupil must be accompanied to the school by her parent(s)/guardians.

- The parents/guardians must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school Code of Behaviour.
- 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.

Records and Reports

Formal written records shall be kept of

- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- The decision making process
- The decision and the rationale for the decision
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension

Report to the Board of Management:

The Principal shall report suspensions to the Board of Management with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

Report to NEWB:

The Principal shall report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines (Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, Sec. 21(4)(a)).

Expulsion

The Board of Management of St. John of God N.S. reserves the right to expel a pupil in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the terms of Sec. 24(4) and Sec. 24(5) of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

A proposal to expel a pupil requires serious grounds such as that:

- The pupil's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- The pupil's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property

The grounds for expulsion are similar to the grounds for suspension. In considering expulsion the Board of Management shall take in to account the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour and will have come to the belief that all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour have been exhausted.

Expulsion for a First Offence

The Board of Management shall expel on the basis of a single breach of the code of behaviour in the case of the following:

- A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Supplying alcohol or illegal drugs to another student in the school
- Sexual assault

Procedures in Respect of Expulsion

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the procedural steps shall include:

Step 1 A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal

Step 2 A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal

Step 3 Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing

Step 4 Board of Management's actions following the hearing

Step 5 Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer

Step 6 Confirmation of the decision to expel

Step 1 Investigation

Parents/guardians shall be informed in writing of the alleged misbehaviour, the proposed investigation and the possibility that the pupil could be expelled

- A meeting between the pupil (depending on age), parents/guardians and the principal will be called. The parents/guardians will give their side of the story and have an opportunity to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts. This meeting shall provide an opportunity for the parents/guardians to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents/guardians how to best address the student's misbehaviour.
- If a pupil and her parents/guardians fail to attend a meeting the principal shall write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour. The school shall record the invitation issued to parents/guardians and their response in the pupil's file.

Step 2 Recommendation to Board of Management by the Principal

Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal shall make a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

The Principal shall

- Inform the pupil and the parents/guardians that the Board of management is considering expulsion
- Ensure that the parents have records of the allegation against the pupil, the investigation and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- Provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parents/guardians
- Notify the parents/guardians of the date and time of the hearing by the Board of management and invite them to that hearing
- Advise the parents/guardians that they can make a written or oral submission to the Board of Management

- Ensure that the parents/guardians have enough notice to allow them to prepare for that hearing

Step 3 Consideration by the Board of Management of Principal's Recommendation and the Holding of a Hearing

The Board of Management shall review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. The Board shall undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It shall ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations.

Where the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it shall hold a hearing. The Board meeting for the purpose of the hearing shall be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures. At the hearing, the principal and the parents/guardians shall put their case to the Board in each other's presence. Each party shall be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. The meeting may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction. In the conduct of the hearing, the Board shall take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be, impartial as between the principal and the pupil. Parents/guardians may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board shall facilitate this, in line with good practice and Board procedures. After both sides have been heard the Board shall ensure that the principal and parents/guardians are not present for the Board's deliberations.

Step 4: Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing

Having heard from all the parties, the Board shall decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion. (Education Welfare) Act 2000, S24(1)). The Board of Management shall refer to National Educational Welfare Board reporting procedures for proposed expulsions. The student cannot be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification (*Education Welfare Act 2000, S24(1)*).

The Board shall inform the parents/guardians in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. Where expulsion is proposed, the parents/guardians shall be told that the Board of Management will now inform the Educational Welfare Officer.

Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

Within twenty days of receipt of a notification from a Board of Management of its opinion that a pupil should be expelled, the Educational Welfare Officer must:

- Make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents/guardians and the student, and anyone else who may be of assistance.
- Convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend (*Education Welfare) Act 2000, section 24*).

The purpose of the consultations and the meeting is to ensure that arrangements are made for the pupil to continue in education. These consultations may result in an agreement about an alternative intervention that would avoid expulsion. However, where the possibility of continuing in the school is not an option, at least in the short term, the consultation shall focus on alternative educational possibilities.

In the interests of the educational welfare of the student, those concerned shall come together with the Educational Welfare Officer to plan for the student's future education. Pending these consultations about the student's continued education, the Board of Management shall take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of students is secured (Education Welfare) Act 2000, s24(5)). The Board may consider it appropriate to suspend the pupil during this time. Suspension shall only be considered where there is the likelihood that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other students or staff.

Step 6: Confirmation of the Decision to Expel

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Chairperson of the Board of Management shall formally confirm the decision to expel. Parents/guardians shall be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents/guardians and the pupil shall be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record in the Board of Management Minutes shall be made of the decision to expel the student.

Appeals

A parent/guardian may appeal a decision to suspend or expel a pupil to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act 1998 section 29). An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a pupil. Accordingly, the school shall advise parents/guardians 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 of the pupil.

The parents/guardians shall be informed in writing of their entitlement to appeal a decision of the Board of Management in relation to a suspension or expulsion of a pupil in the:

- Letter of notification of suspension by the principal.
- Letter of notification of expulsion by the Chairperson of the Board of Management. Parents will be given a copy of Circular 22/02 and related forms.

Review of use of expulsion

The Board of Management shall review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school, and to ensure that expulsion is used appropriately.

6. Record Keeping

All records are written in a factual and impartial manner.

Methods of Recording Breaches of Behaviour

Class Level:

- Minor breaches of behaviour will be recorded by class teacher as they arise

- Teachers are required to write up detailed factual accounts of incidents of behaviour that give rise to concern
- Serious misbehaviours are reported to the principal as soon as possible
- The end of year report includes a reference to both positive and negative behaviour and notes improvement in behaviour. Parents/guardians are kept up to date during the year regarding behaviour issues in the pupil's Homework Journal

Playground:

- Minor breaches of behaviour will be dealt with by the teacher on yard duty and will not be recorded in writing in the School Yard Book
- Supervising staff keep a record of serious and gross misbehaviour in the School Yard Book. The child's name, class and details of the incident and sanction are entered in the Yard Book. Class teachers are informed immediately following the breaks by the teacher on yard duty. The principal is informed of persistent misbehaviour and serious misbehaviour by the class teacher and if necessary by the teacher on yard duty.
- At staff meetings teachers are reminded to apply rules consistently

School Records:

- Each teacher retains records of individual incidents.
- Where a child has been referred to the principal factual reports of incidents, communication between school and home, with outside agencies and Board of Management where applicable will be kept in the principal's office.
- Documentation pertaining to appeals under Section 29 is retained in the principal's office.

7. Procedures for Notification of Pupil Absences from School

Parents must notify the school in writing of a student's absence **and the reason for this absence** (Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 18).

These absences are reported on-line to www.schoolreturn.ie.

All children leaving school early must be signed out at the secretary's office by a parent/guardian.

Punctuality

Please note that the Board of Management does not accept responsibility for children arriving in the school before the official opening time, or pupils who remain in the school grounds after the official closing time or any time outside school hours. Our school is open to receive pupils at 8:50 a.m. each morning. Parents are encouraged to ensure that their children are punctual at all times as reception time provides an invaluable opportunity for children's social development.

Promoting Regular Attendance

St. John of God School promotes regular attendance in the following manner:

- Creating a stimulating and attractive school environment.
- Attendance Certificates.
- Whole class rewards for full attendance.
- Adapting curriculum content and methodologies to maximise relevance to pupils.
- Adapting the class and school timetables to make it more attractive to attend and to be on time.
- Making parents aware of the terms of the Education Welfare Act and its implications.
- Providing food and drinks (milk, water) in school

Reference to Other Policies

The following policies are linked with the code of behaviour.

- SPHE School Plan
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Admissions and Participation Policy
- Health & Safety Statement
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy

Success Criteria

Some practical indicators of the success of the policy are

- Observation of 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, parents/guardians and pupils.

9 Roles & Responsibilities

Board of Management

The Board of Management shall ensure that the resources and training necessary for the successful implementation of the school's code of behaviour are provided in a timely fashion. The Board of Management shall also ensure that the code of behaviour is reviewed on a regular basis and revised as required from time to time with the relevant stakeholders.

Before/After School

Parents/guardians are reminded that the staff or the Board of Management does not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening time of 8.50 a.m. or after official closing time 1.30 p.m. for infant classes and 2.30 p.m. for other classes except where pupils are engaged in extra curricular activities organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management. Pupils engaged in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with school behaviour policy during these times.

BOM Responsibilities

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the Code of Behaviour
- Ratify the code
- Participate in review of 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
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils
- Be courteous, consistent and fair
- Keep opportunities for disruption to a minimum
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of minor misbehaviours
- Provide support for colleagues
- Communicate with parents/guardians when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern

Parents'/Guardians' Responsibilities

To support the school in implementing the Code of Behaviour

10 Timetable for Review

The Code of Behaviour will be reviewed annually by both the staff and the Board of Management.

11 Implementation of Code of Behaviour

- The Principal, Teachers & SNAs shall ensure the consistent implementation of the school Code of Behaviour, review it, and propose amendments if and when necessary.
- The pupils will abide by the Code of Behaviour and suggest changes, when appropriate, in the context of SPHE.
- Parents are requested to support the school in the implementation of the code of behaviour and to contribute to its review and amendment when such are required.

Implementation Date

The Code of Behaviour will be implemented when it has been ratified by the Board of Management and signed by the Chairperson. Such ratification will be notified to staff, parents/guardians and pupils.

12 Ratification & Communication

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 18th October 2010

This policy was amended and ratified annually since then, most recently on 15th October 2019

This Policy was circulated to parents/guardians in November 2010 and The Code of Behaviour is also available on the school's website.

The policy was most recently reviewed by staff on 15th October 2024.

Signed: Brendan Prunty
Chairperson Board of Management

Date: 15th October 2024