

St. Patrick's B.N.S.  
Strokestown,  
Co. Roscommon.

## Code of Behaviour

### Introduction

At St. Patrick's B.N.S. we are committed to creating an environment in which each individual child and adult feels valued, respected and safe. Our aim is to create an ordered environment in which pupils can, through developing self-discipline, feel secure and make progress in all aspects of their development; social, moral and academic. We seek to set high standards of behaviour, based on the principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility, and educate children in making the right choices and in accepting responsibility for their actions, thus leading them to the greater freedom of self-discipline.

The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children, and the need to tolerate these differences. Thus, the aims of establishing the Code of Behaviour in St. Patrick's B.N.S. are to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of the child to an education in a relatively disruption free environment.

It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, parents and pupil. The Code of Behaviour of the school will be dispersed to new parents on enrolment in June of every year.

### Aims of the Code of Behaviour

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour, and promotes self-esteem and positive relationships
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
- To facilitate the education and development of every child, and to enable teachers to teach without disruption
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood by the whole school community through an ethos of open communication both formally and informally.

### The role of adults in promoting a positive Code of Behaviour

The adults encountered by the children at our school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other. We should aim to promote, through example, kindness, respect and consideration for others, and encourage relationships based on these principles. We should ensure fair treatment of all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability, and we aim at having a Code of Behaviour which is unbiased, uniform, consistent, firm and tempered with kindness. Adults should provide a positive and effective learning environment and recognise and show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of every pupil.

## **An ethos of positive behaviour and respect**

Our pupils are led to look at the school's Code of Behaviour in the following way:

- We have a fair set of rules in our school.
- We understand the reasons for these rules.
- If we break these rules, we know what will happen.
- We try to make the right choices.
- We try to make our school a safe and happy place for us all.

## **School rules**

- Respect yourself and others, including all school personnel, visitors included.
- Respect the property of the school and of others. Keep your school tidy and free from litter.
- Respect other pupils and their learning.
- Be kind and willing to help others.
- Follow instructions of the staff immediately.
- Walk quietly in the school building.
- Be mindful of your own safety and the safety of others. Never do anything that would endanger another person.
- Be courteous and well-mannered.
- Be respectful in resolving difficulties and conflict.
- Ask permission to leave the classroom or school yard.
- Do your best in class.
- Take responsibility for your work: come to school fully prepared with the necessary books, writing material etc. and with all oral and written homework completed.

These rules can be summed up as 6 main school rules:

- Treat others as you would like to be treated
- Do your best
- Be tidy
- Be safe
- Walk
- Listen

## **Classroom/ School Management**

We hope to develop a system in St. Patrick's B.N.S. whereby at the beginning of each academic year, each class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children, which will reflect and support the school rules, presented in a way which is accessible to the children. Rules will be positive in nature, and positive reinforcement will be at the core of classroom and school-wide management.

Praise may be given by means of any one of the following:

- a comment in a pupil's exercise book,
- a visit to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation,
- a word of praise in front of a group or class,
- delegating some special responsibility or privilege,
- a mention to parent, written or verbal communication, e.g. 'Well Done' note to be sent home in Homework Diary.
- a mention from teacher on yard duty for a class who behave well and are orderly.

Any misbehaviour; minor, serious, or gross, will be judged by the teachers and/or Principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misbehaviour. The teacher will choose a sanction that is appropriate to the offence. As much as possible, the sanctions imposed will be a direct result of the misconduct, e.g. when homework has been neglected, the pupil may be asked to complete work in the evenings or at weekends.

Examples of steps to be taken by teachers when dealing with **minor misbehaviours** such as littering, incompleteness of homework, disruptive behaviour during class etc. are:

- Verbal reprimand / reasoning with pupil.
- Loss of privileges e.g. loss of playtime at breaktimes, exclusion from school activities and outings
- Apply “Sin Bin” Rule – timeout for 5 minutes

Examples of **serious incidents of misbehaviour** are: being constantly disruptive in class, damaging other pupil’s property or school property, bullying, using unacceptable language towards a peer or staff member, spitting, or theft. Examples of steps to be taken by teachers when dealing with such behaviour are:

- The principal will be informed and the parents will be asked to come in to discuss the situation with the teacher in school.
- A behaviour plan will be devised and put in place.
- Teachers will monitor situation and communicate regularly with parents.
- If satisfaction is still not achieved, the Chairperson of the Board of Management could then be informed, and parents requested to meet with Chairperson and Principal.

In dealing with **gross incidents of misbehaviour**, such as deliberately harming a fellow pupil, malicious damage of school property, deliberate harm to a staff member, smoking, substance and alcohol abuse and repeated incidents of serious misbehavior, the following steps could be taken:

- Chairperson / Principal to sanction immediate suspension pending discussion with parents.
- Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code of behaviour, and the principal must be satisfied that the pupil’s reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil’s own safety or the safety of the other pupils or staff.
- The principal will facilitate the review of the behaviour plan for the pupil and will re-admit the pupil formally to class.
- Expulsion will be considered in an extreme case in accordance with Rule 130 (6) of the Rules for National Schools, i.e. *“No pupil can be struck off the rolls for breaches of discipline without prior consent of patron and until alternative arrangements are made for the enrolment of pupil at another suitable school in the locality”*.

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilized. Communication with parents may be verbal (face to face or by telephone) or written (through a child’s homework diary or by letter), depending on the circumstances.

It should be noted that these lists consist of examples only. It is not meant to be a comprehensive list of incidents of misbehaviour or procedural steps.

### **Children with Special Educational Needs**

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with special educational needs may need assistance in understanding certain rules. In these cases, the school

will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given and specialised behaviour plans put in place as required.

This Code of Behaviour is a review and update of the existing Code of Behaviour of St. Patrick's B.N.S. which was prepared and ratified in October 2013. This review and update took place in October 2018 and was ratified by the Board of Management on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

### **Timetable for Review**

This policy will be reviewed in 2022 or beforehand if deemed necessary.