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Mission Statement

St. Patrick's B.N.S. is a Catholic all boys senior primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Elphin, situated in Strokestown, Co. Roscommon.

"Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

- the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- a living relationship with God and with other people
- a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith,

and which school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of St. Patrick's B.N.S. shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.

We strive to provide a well ordered, happy, caring and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and curricular needs of all pupils are identified and addressed. While we are a school with a Catholic ethos, we also have due recognition for all other faiths.

The school is staffed in accordance with the standard pupil – teacher ratios sanctioned by the Department and any additional teaching hours sanctioned by the Department in respect of curricular concessions, special needs, special programmes etc. The school operates within the regulations laid down by the Department from time to time.

The capacity of the school to implement its desired curriculum, its broad range of educational programmes, its breadth of extra-curricular activities, its school plan and policies are dependent on the resources it receives. Consequently, in determining its activities and programme for any school year the school must have due regard to the teaching, management and administrative resources and the accommodation, equipment and funding available to it.

At St. Patrick’s B.N.S., we strive to promote the professional and personal development of teachers through staff development programmes.

We encourage the involvement of parents through home/school contacts. We endeavour to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community and to imbue in the pupils a respect for people and property.

Objectives

The primary objectives are aimed at embracing:

- A sense of fairness and good relationships with all people.
- Deep respect and cherishing for all people equally.
- Forgiveness and reconciliation: a place where grudges are not held.
- Respect and dignity: deep intrinsic respect for all others.
- Affirmation and tolerance: that we speak to, react to and act towards others, respectful of their dignity.

- Personal Faith Formation: formal prayer, religion lessons, celebration of the sacraments as well as recognition and appreciation of the liturgical seasons of the year.
- Belonging: That all experience a sense of belonging and contribute to the promotion of the Catholic ethos of the school.
- Understanding: Teachers and pupils promote positive experiences of school and foster healthy and wholesome relationships.

Aims of Code of Discipline

The code of discipline aims to achieve the following:

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

Principles of Discipline Policy

If the school is to achieve a happy, secure environment in which the children can develop to their full potential, it is necessary to provide a framework which promotes constructive behaviour and discourages unacceptable behaviour. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to an education in a relatively disruption free environment. The school code places a greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions, and the ideal is that pupils will acquire self-discipline. There are times however when it may be necessary to impose sanctions in order to maintain good order, and to

discourage offenders. We recognise the importance of a strong sense of community within the school and the existence of a high level of co-operation among teachers, ancillary staff, pupils, parents and the Board of Management.

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 the rules and regulations are enforced consistently and wisely.

School Uniform

Grey pants

Light blue shirt

Royal Blue V neck jumper

Royal Blue tie

P.E. Uniform

Plain **grey** hoodie/sweatshirt (*no logo/stripes or brand names*)

Plain **grey** polo shirt

Plain **navy** track suit bottoms (*no stripes/logo or brand names*)

The school uniform should be worn every day except PE day, when the school PE uniform should be worn.

No football jerseys to be worn at any time.

PE day will vary each week due to Soccer and Gaelic coaches coming into the school. The children will write it in their homework journal the evening before.

Swimming

Swimming lessons usually take place in the second school term (i.e. January to Easter) but this may change depending on the school calendar. All pupils are encouraged to participate, as this is part of the PE curriculum.

School Hours

Formal instruction begins at 9:20 a.m. and finishes at 3:00 p.m. It is important that the children develop the habit of being punctual for school. The school is required to abide by strict rules regarding insurance cover for children.

The school gate is opened to accept pupils each day from 9.10 a.m. They will be supervised for 10 minutes until formal instruction begins at 9.20 a.m. Pupils are not permitted to enter the school grounds unless they are supervised by school personnel.

The Board of Management informs parents that the school does not accept responsibility for pupils that are dropped off at the school gate earlier than 9.10 a.m. or are not picked up at 3.00 p.m.

Leaving School during School Hours

Should it be necessary for a child to leave school during school hours, parents are asked to request **in writing** that their child be allowed to leave. The child must be collected at the school door by the parent or authorised person and returned to his class teacher upon return. A parent or authorised person must sign the child out and sign them in upon their return. No child will be allowed to leave the school unaccompanied. This is for the safety of your child.

In the event of an accident/child becoming ill, every possible effort will be made to contact the pupil's parents. Failing this we will contact any other named persons on school medical form.

Absences from School

Parents are advised as to the importance of notifying the school about a child's absence for any reason. In the event of a pupil being absent through illness or for any other reason, the class teacher should be informed by note, text, telephone call or a visit in person to the class teacher. The reason for a child's absence **must** be given. Otherwise it will be recorded as **unexplained**, regardless of whether a note has been sent in. If it is anticipated that the absence will be a lengthy duration, the teacher should be informed as soon as possible. If a parent wishes a child to stay in at break-time, a written note must be supplied to the class teacher also.

Tusla

When a child misses 20 days at school, the school is obliged by law to report this to the Child & Family Agency.

Role of Parents

The support and co-operation of parents are essential to the effective operation of the Code of Discipline. If teachers and parents are not working in harmony, inevitably, the pupils will suffer. Parents will be informed at an early stage if problems occur. Parents are invited to keep in close contact with the school with regard to all aspects of the child's progress.

Should you require a meeting with your child's teacher, please telephone or email the school to arrange an appointment.

Communication with Parents

Information regarding school events, closure etc. are distributed via email to each family. It is important that the school has been given the correct working email address and that you check your

emails daily. Teachers will do their best to reply to emails or queries during school hours.

It is important that the school is able to contact a parent at all times, should your child be ill or injured. Please keep your mobile phone switched on during school hours and inform the school immediately if your contact or address details change.

Respect and Courtesy

All pupils are expected to treat staff and their fellow pupils and visitors with respect and courtesy at all times. The use of foul language or any form of bullying is unacceptable. Pupils must respect all school property and keep the school environment clean and litter free.

Personal Property

Children should have their names on their coats and other personal property such as schoolbooks, copies, jumpers etc. Pupils must have all their books and required materials on a daily basis.

Behaviour in Class

1. Pupils are expected to work to the best of their ability at all times.
2. They are to show respect for their classmates and to follow their teacher's instructions.
3. Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable.
4. Anything that is said or done that discourages others from learning is unacceptable.
5. Children should come equipped for the day wearing the correct clothing and should bring everything they need for their lessons.

Behaviour out of Class

1. Pupils must not behave in any way which endangers themselves or others.
2. Any instructions or directions given by the teachers or school staff are to be complied with.
3. Children must line up in an orderly manner when the bell rings.
4. Any form of threatening behaviour is unacceptable. If you are concerned about your child, the teacher must be told so that the matter can be dealt with effectively.

Strategies and Sanctions

- Reasoning with pupil.
- Verbal Reprimand, including advice on how to improve.
- Temporary separation from peers, friends and others.
- Note in homework journal or a Report Card sent to parents.
- Moved to another seat or transferred to another class for a cooling off period.
- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Detention during breaks – sit in the veranda.
- Prescribing extra exercises.
- Referral to principal.
- Pupils who misbehave frequently may not be allowed to participate in school outings for their own safety and that of the other pupils.
- Communication with parents – If the pupil continues to misbehave, parents will be asked to visit the school to discuss the matter with the Principal or class teacher.
- Formal report to the Board of Management.
- Suspension.

- Expulsion-Expulsion of a pupil is a very serious step and one that will only be taken in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.

Teachers shall keep a written record of all serious misbehaviours as well as a record of improvements in the behaviour of disruptive pupils.

Rewards for Good Behaviour

Rewarding good behaviour is an important part of our school ethos. Notes in pupils' copies and homework notebooks convey messages of approval from teachers. Small prizes, merit stickers, some homework off and extra privileges such as videos and extra sports activities at certain times etc. are awarded by teachers. Yearly reports on pupils' progress from third class upwards are sent to parents at the end of the school year. Parent/teacher meetings for all pupils are held once a year.

Homework

1. It is the policy of the school to assign homework to all pupils from Monday to Thursday. Please note that extra homework may sometimes be given during the week or at weekends if homework has been neglected during the week. Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given "homework off" as a treat or as an acknowledgement of some special occasion. Teachers shall make every effort to match the curriculum to the aptitude of the pupils. It follows, therefore, that homework assignments may vary from pupil to pupil.
2. Parents are strongly encouraged to take an active interest in their child's homework. If homework causes worry for the pupil, parents are asked to contact the class teacher.

3. Should homework not be completed by the child, an explanation note must be sent into the class teacher the next day.

Standardized and Screening Tests

Standardized tests are carried out each year (usually in May) on all pupils from third to sixth class.

Sometimes it may be necessary to carry out a Screening Test if a teacher is concerned that a child is experiencing difficulties. Should there be a concern, parents will be consulted in order to further investigate the nature of the child's difficulty.

Stay Safe and RSE Programmes

Both the Stay Safe and RSE Programmes are mandatory in primary schools.

The Stay Safe programme covers personal safety skills and is taught in all classes every year. Aspects of the programme such as bullying are revised in all classes regularly.

The school R.S.E. programme acts as a support only to parents, and parents retain the right to withdraw their children from participating in the sensitive areas of the programme. A parent's right to withdraw a pupil from the process will be respected on the understanding that the parent is taking full responsibility for this aspect of education themselves. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school of this decision and they will have to acknowledge this decision in writing, in the form of a letter.

Details of the content of each programme are available on the Department of Education and Science Website at www.education.ie

Personal Data

Data on the school enrolment form is given to the HSE School Services for health screening and to arrange inoculations. The same data is given to the School Dental Services. If you do not wish this data to be transferred, please inform the school in writing at enrolment.

Healthy Lunches

As a DEIS School, we are offering Hot Meals to each child in the school at lunch time. The child will receive a menu each week where he will choose his lunch for the following week. However, you will have to send in a small lunch for break time. As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E) Programme, we have developed a healthy lunch policy. The goal of this policy is to encourage children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes i.e. lunches which are low in fat, high in fibre, low in sugar and low in salt. For healthier lunches please choose milk, cheese and yoghurt, fish, chicken, or lean meat, fresh fruit and vegetables, sandwiches, pitta bread or wraps. An ideal lunch comprises, water, fruit, a sandwich and yoghurt. We would appreciate your co-operation in implementing this policy.

Access to School

For safety reasons, parents are asked to ring the front door bell to gain access to the school. Under **no** circumstances should a parent or visitor use the back door to enter the school building.

Book Rental

Here in our school, we believe it is important to keep cost to parents to a minimum. Our book rental scheme saves parents a lot of money, especially as children get older. The scheme will be

operated by the principal on behalf of the Board of Management with the assistance of other staff members.

A **security deposit of €10** is payable on behalf of each student who joins the scheme. Once you join the scheme, your deposit will be carried forward to next year, if all books are returned in good condition at the end of the current year.

A **rental charge of €30** per year will apply for the upcoming school year. This charge will secure the rental of all relevant text books listed in the book list as and when required throughout the school year. Purchase of workbooks, disposable materials and stationery will remain outside the scope of this scheme and remain the responsibility of the parents.

Review and Evaluation

In light of ever-changing circumstances in our educational system, there is need for frequent review and evaluation of all our policies.