

St Mochta's National School

Code of Behaviour

Mission Statement:

The mission of St Mochta's National School is *for every child to learn, develop and grow in a safe, secure and stable learning environment.*

Introduction:

The aims of Primary education can be briefly stated as follows:

- To enable the child to live a full life in a caring and safe environment
- To prepare a child for further education and lifelong learning

As a school committed to the realisation of these goals, our aim is to provide a happy secure environment for our pupils in which there is sense of order and discipline. This is achieved by having guidelines to direct behaviour for the good of all our pupils. Every effort is made to ensure that our code is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner.

The school will make every effort to provide support for children with social, emotional and behavioural needs and make referral to outside support agencies when necessary.

A high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within our school and to achieve this, we maintain a high level of co-operation among all the staff and between staff, pupils and parents.

Aims:

The aims of this Code of Behaviour are:

1. To allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious way.
2. To enhance the learning environment where children can progress in all aspects of their development.
3. To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
4. To promote positive behaviour and self discipline, while recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
5. To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures in our code and to seek their co-operation in their application.
6. To ensure that our systems of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner.

This school's Code of Behaviour supports the principles, initiatives and procedures for good practice as outlined in the two documents-

- Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (NEWB 2008)
- Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties: A Continuum of Support (NEPS 2009)

A Code of Behaviour helps the school community to promote the school ethos, relationships, policies procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour and prevent unacceptable behaviour. The Code of Behaviour helps teachers, other members of staff, pupils and parents to work together for a happy effective and safe school.

General School Rules

1. School starts at 8.50am. All pupils are expected to arrive on time and to assemble on the class line in playground before the 8.50am bell.
2. Children remain in school each day until their correct finishing time. Infants 1.30pm and all other classes 2.30pm, save in emergency circumstances only.
3. Entry to the school for visitors is by the Centre Gate and using the buzzer located on the front door.
4. In the interest of security, any caller must identify himself or herself through the intercom and once on the premises must first check in with the Secretary's Office.
5. Children are never allowed to open the main entry door for any caller, so please do not ask them to do so for you, even if you know them.
6. Children arriving to and leaving school do so by their own class exit gate, and some classes leave by the Centre Gate. Parents are asked to co operate with this arrangement at all times.
7. It is a strict rule that children walk into and out of school at all times and on the corridors especially, and do so very quietly so as not to disturb the other classes.
8. Politeness and good manners are expected at all times and towards all persons.
9. A note from parents is required when a pupil:
 - Has been absent
 - Has to leave school during hours
10. A parent must always collect or arrange for another person to collect the child if this is to happen during school hours. A note will not suffice.
11. No child may leave the play area during breaks without permission from the teacher on yard duty.
12. Treat all school furniture and property with respect.
13. Label each child's belongings.
14. Chewing gum is banned.
15. In the event of a systematic bullying- verbal, physical or psychological - tell any member of the teaching staff.
16. Bring food and drinks to school according to the school's Healthy Lunches guidelines.
17. In the interests of health and safety, long hair must be tied back and stud earrings only are allowed.

Expected Behaviour:

In addition to the school rules children are expected to

- Be honest and co-operative
- Show respect for self and others while in school and while wearing the school uniform and have respect for school property, furniture and equipment
- Acknowledge the equality of other races and creeds
- Reply in a mannerly fashion, correctly addressing teachers, i.e. Yes, Mr/Mrs/Ms
- Recognise that each pupil deserves a share of the teacher's time
- Remain seated, at his/her own place in the classroom, unless otherwise instructed by the teacher
- Be tidy in appearance
- Do their best in school and when doing their homework
- Uphold the Code of Behaviour

Rewards Systems and Support Strategies

Promoting Positive Behaviour

- Teacher approval i.e. a quiet word/gesture to show approval, a comment in a copy, a visit to another member of staff or principal/Deputy Principal for commendation.
- Peer approval i.e. a word of praise in front of a group or class, including at assembly
- Visual Display of Excellence i.e. progress chart, stars, merit stickers, stamps
- Dispensation from homework
- Delegation of some special privilege or responsibility
- A mention to a parent - either written or verbal

Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour

- Disrespect for self and others
- Bullying in any form (see our anti-bullying statement)
- Behaviour that is hurtful (including lying, name calling, bullying, harassment, discrimination, victimisation)
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning (including disruption in class, talking out of turn, not completing homework regularly, inappropriate language)
- Defiance of teacher or any member of staff
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Indecent behaviour
- Substance use
- Bringing illegal or dangerous objects or devices or materials in to school, classroom or playground.

School Discipline Rules

- Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
- Keep school environment clean and green e.g. respect school furniture and property.
- Speak to please and not to tease.
- Present homework in neat tidy fashion.
- Inappropriate language isn't acceptable.
- Politeness and good manners are expected at all times and towards all persons, e.g. stand back for adults, wait your turn, no pushing, respect visitors to school and classroom, use words "Please" and "Thank You", walk quietly from one place to another.
- Knock on classroom door and say "gabh mo leithscéal. Ta brón orm cur isteach...."
- In the event of any systematic bullying, verbal, physical or psychological, tell any member of the teaching staff.
- Chewing gum is banned.
- Spitting, biting or throwing objects will not be tolerated.
- Be aware of safety at all times, e.g. skipping ropes, school bags etc.

Rules for Playground

- Keep your hands and feet to yourself
- Wrestling/martial arts moves not allowed
- Keep your environment clean and green
- Speak to please and not to tease. No inappropriate language.
- Respect the advice of all teachers on yard
- Include others
- Stay within yard boundaries
- Never leave play area during breaks without the permission of the teacher on duty.
- Tell teacher on yard duty if you have a problem
- Line up quietly when bell rings
- Walk in orderly fashion to classroom
- Note if a pupil has special needs and that these needs be responded to
- Follow all instructions given by teachers on playgrounds

Class Rules

Each teacher will have their own classroom rules which will be consistent with the school's overall Code of Behaviour. These rules will be kept to a minimum and be written in clear, simple language, stated positively, telling children what to do, as well as what not to do. They will be based on a clear rationale that is explained, understood and agreed and developed through appropriate consultation with all the parties involved. They will be communicated and referred to regularly.

Sanctions:

Sanctions will be used according to a pupil's age/maturity and taking personal and family circumstances and other relevant factors into account. They will take account of the pupil's behaviour to date and the seriousness of the offence.

The objectives of a sanction are to help the student to learn and to change behaviour.

Sanctions may be needed to help a student with special educational needs to learn about appropriate behaviour and skills as in the case of any student. The school and classroom practices that support good learning behaviour are valid for all students including those identified with special educational needs.

Sanctions within the classroom are at the discretion of the classroom teacher consistent with the strategies outlined in the Code of Behaviour.

A log will be kept of those who persistently misbehave.

Strategies used are as follows:

1. Teacher reasoning with the pupil, making him/her aware of inappropriate behaviour and its impact on others, suggesting correct behaviour
2. Verbal reprimand
3. Extra assignments
4. Time appropriate removal from the situation within class or in a similar class level
5. Loss of privileges
6. Detention for period of break time with supervision of Teacher
7. Referral to designated staff member/Deputy Principal/Principal
8. Communication with Parent/Guardian
9. Exclusion from school tour, following consultation with Principal
10. Suspension
11. Expulsion

White Card:

A white card will be issued following three offences. The pupil will be aware of these offences.

- A white card may also be issued for one serious offence
- Pupils will take the white card home and parent/guardian will sign it. There will be an indication of the nature of the offence on the white card
- A meeting with parent/guardian will be sought following third white card

Consequences of Serious Misbehaviour:

1. Instances of gross misbehaviour recorded and parents informed
2. Parents called to a meeting in the school with teacher/ Deputy Principal. The child may be requested to attend this meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to seek a solution to the behavioural problem, with all involved parties working together.
3. If misbehaviour continues the Board of Management may become involved, with a view to suspension/expulsion.
4. In situations involving more than one than one person, in a serious breach of discipline/bullying.
 - The teacher/Deputy Principal will speak to each party separately. If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually and then as a group. Interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all concerned.
 - The teacher will keep a written account of these interviews.
 - If it is determined that a serious breach of discipline has occurred or the student's continued presence in the school is deemed to constitute a threat to safety
 - The parents will be informed and requested to attend a meeting with the teacher/Deputy Principal/Principal.
 - The pupil/pupils involved may be requested to attend
 - Appropriate sanctions will be imposed. This may involve suspension from 1-10 days.
 - The Board of Management will be involved in the decision
 - A reoccurrence of serious breaches of discipline/bullying may lead to expulsion
5. The Principal in consultation with the Chairperson of the Board has the authority to suspend for one day with immediate effect
6. Expulsion may be challenged under Section 29 of the Educational Welfare Act, 2000 by Parents/Guardians
7. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil are as follows:
 - The pupil and his/her parents meet with Principal
 - Adequate recompense be decided and agreed
 - The Code of Discipline should be signed by the pupils' parents
 - Assurance given that the Code of Discipline will be observed and of parent co-operation in its observance

In deciding on the consequences of serious and other misbehaviour three procedures based on the principles of natural justice will apply.

- The right to be heard
- The right to impartiality
- The right to appeal

This overall policy aims to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in an environment that is safe and conducive to the child's development and learning.

Roles of Education Partners

Role of Parent/Guardian:

Schools need the support of parents in order to meet legitimate expectations with regard to good behaviour and discipline. Schools can more easily implement a policy on behaviour and discipline if they receive the active support of the parents. For this reason, parents sign the acceptance form supporting the implementation of the Behaviour Policy for St Mochta's National School. Parents can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, by visiting the school when requested to do so by the Principal or other members of staff, by ensuring that homework is allocated due time and effort by the child, and that the child uses the correct dress code. Please communicate regularly with the school about factors likely to affect the behaviour of your child in school. Regular attendance in school is vital. *Lack of attendance at school will come to the attention of the Educational Welfare Officer.*

Role of Teacher:

Healthy relationships by their very nature involve fun, sharing, laughter, trust and honesty. However, conflict and disharmony are equally part of relationships. Through the S.P.H.E (Social, Personal and Health Education) programme in St Mochta's National School, teachers will endeavour to teach how to deal with conflict by practising different techniques that focus on identifying the problem and exploring possible solutions: for example, pupils can learn how to compromise, apologise, to receive an apology and to forgive. In this context, children are taught to become familiar with passive, aggressive and assertive behaviour. The teaching staff seeks to promote a strong sense of community within the school, which involves a high level of co-operation among staff and between pupils and parents. Staff will respond promptly and firmly to any instance of unacceptable behaviour during school hours or whilst in a supervisory capacity.

In making a decision in around any case of suspension or expulsion, the school will follow the procedures outlined in Sections 10, 11 and 12 of the document developing a Code of Behaviour Guidelines (NEWB 2000), see also www.newb.ie

This overall policy aims to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in an environment that is safe and conducive to the child's development and learning.

Role of Principal:

The overall responsibility for discipline within a school rests with the Principal. The Principal will always endeavour to facilitate meetings between parents and teachers. It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure that the school's Code of Behaviour and Discipline is administered in a manner, which is consistent and fair to all pupils. He/she will be assisted in this regard by the teaching staff, Deputy Principal, those teachers with posts of responsibility regarding school behaviour.

The Role of the B.O.M:

The Board of Management is supportive of the Principal in the application of a fair Code of Behaviour and Discipline within the school.

This policy is open to review by the Board of Management.

Ratified and signed on behalf of the Board of Management of St. Mochta's National School.



**Tony Rock
Chairperson**



**Maria Farrell
Principal**

25th November 2014

Date

I agree to the rules as outlined in the Code of Behaviour and support the implementation of the Behaviour Policy in St Mochta's National School.