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**St Michael’s NS**

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***A81 EA37***

***Principal: Ms. F Whelan***

***Vice Principal: Mrs. R Campbell***

**Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy**

**Clár Ama na Scoile**:

School day commences: 9.30am

School day concludes: 2.00pm (Junior and Senior Infants)

3.00pm (First to Sixth)

Please note the school cannot accept responsibility for pupils outside of these hours.

The school has a central role in the children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. In seeking to define acceptable standards of behaviour it is acknowledged that these are goals to be worked towards rather than expectations that are either fulfilled or not.

The children bring to school a wide variety of behaviour. As a community environment, in school we must work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. It follows that acceptable standards of behaviour are those that reflect these principles.

Children need limits set for them in order to feel secure and develop the skills for co-operation. Therefore any rules will be age appropriate, with clear agreed consequences.

Parents should co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, by visiting the school and by talking to the members of staff.

This code of behaviour is established to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

**Aims of the Code**

* To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
* To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
* To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
* To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others
* To facilitate the education and development of every child
* To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
* To enable teachers to teach without disruption
* To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through availability of school policies and an ethos of open communication
* To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy

**Responsibility of Adults**

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we should aim to:

* Create a positive climate with realistic expectations.
* Promote, through example, honesty and courtesy.
* Provide a caring and effective learning environment.
* Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others.
* Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.
* Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.
* To discourage physical aggression and encourage ‘*Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet’.*

**School Rules**

* Respect for self and others
* Respect for school and other’s property
* Respect other students and their learning
* Kindness and willingness to help others
* Be honest
* Follow instructions from staff immediately
* Walk quietly in the school building
* Courtesy and good manners
* Readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
* Ask permission to leave the classroom
* Do your best in class
* Take responsibility for your own work
* Be punctual for class
* Explanation notes are required for absences/no homework/no uniform etc.

These can be summed up as 6 main rules;

* Respect/ Be nice
* Do your best
* Be tidy
* Be Safe
* Walk
* Listen

**Yard rules**

* Ask permission from person on duty to leave yard- to go to the toilet
* Stay within allocated boundaries, only play on the part of the school grounds that they are supposed to be on.
* Play safely not roughly
* Be environmentally friendly
* As soon as bell rings, line up immediately
* Tidy away any equipment immediately
* Time out must be adhered to
* Don’t hurt anyone or their feelings
* Play fairly and don’t exclude anyone

**Homework**

It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis. Parents are strongly advised to take an active interest in their child’s homework and to SIGN their homework journal each night (ensuring that it is done).

**Bullying**

Students should never bully others. Students should never allow others to bully them

and if it happens they should tell their parents/teacher. Bullying is always unacceptable. This includes incidents of cyber-bullying by pupils in this school.

**Cyber bullying**: if cyber bullying takes place outside of school but has an adverse impact on the safety and well-being of a pupil then the school may see fit to intervene.

**Class Rules**

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children. These reflect and support the school rules, but are presented in a way that is accessible to the children. Class rules should be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. They should where possible emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. ‘Walk’ and not ‘Don’t run’). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

**Incentives**

Part of the vision of St. Michael’s N.S is to help children achieve their personal best - academically, intellectually and socially. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and that similarly children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Reward systems which are based on academic merit or particular extrinsic goals continuously apply to only a limited number of children and undermine the individuality of children. All children deserve encouragement to attain their own best. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to at all times by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

**The following are some samples of how praise might be given;**

* A quiet word or gesture to show approval
* 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
* A system of merit marks or stickers
* Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
* Golden Time
* Certificates
* A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.

**Unacceptable Behaviour**

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: **minor misbehaviour**, **serious misbehaviour** and **very serious misbehaviour**. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher. In cases of repeated minor/serious misbehaviour or single instances of very seriousmisbehaviour, parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the Principal to discuss their child’s behaviour.

**Procedures:** While we promote and reward positive behaviour, misbehaviour needs to be recognised and dealt with and sanctions will be administered. The degree of misbehaviour (minor/serious/very serious) will be judged by the teachers and/or principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misbehaviour. A list of misbehaviours and procedures for dealing with them, are included in this policy. However, it must be noted that this is a mere list, providing examples, and is not exhaustive

**Some examples of what we regard as MINOR misbehaviours:**

* Interrupting class work
* Being late without good reason
* Not listening
* Running inside classroom/corridors
* Leaving seat without permission
* Littering the school
* Being rude/unmannerly/discourteous
* Not having homework done or not finishing homework without good reason
* Endangering self or others at play through carelessness
* Entering school from yard without permission
* Not lining up when bell rings causing unnecessary delay
* Swinging on chairs
* Not taking necessary materials to school (books,etc)
* Not taking responsibility for weekly tests/homework, etc.
* Defacing copies/books/schoolbags, etc.

It should be noted that the above list consists of examples only and is not exhaustive

**When dealing with MINOR misbehaviours**

* Verbal warning including advice on how to improve
* Reasoning with pupil (point out rules)
* Record incident in teacher’s class behaviour book
* Time out / Temporary separation from peers within classroom
* Time out in yard
* Move to another classroom
* Send to principal
* Teacher/principal contacts parents. Communication with parents will be verbal/by letter, depends on circumstances. The parents concerned may be invited to come to school to discuss the child’s case

**When dealing with REGULAR occurrences of MINOR misbehaviours (yard/classroom)**

* Formal school work to be prescribed
* Communicate with parents where necessary – informally in school diary
* Individual Behaviour plan to be put in place.
* Temporary separation within class / within another class
* Loss of privilege e.g. Golden time, use of school tablets etc.

*Regular occurrences of MINOR misbehaviours may be defined as serious / misbehaviours and therefore will be dealt with in that manner*

**Some examples of what we regard as SERIOUS misbehaviours**

* Constant disruption in class
* Telling lies
* Stealing
* Back answering and other disrespectful behaviour towards teacher
* Damaging school and other people’s property
* Using unacceptable language (sexist, racist)
* Not working to full potential
* Throwing objects
* Deliberately injuring a fellow pupil
* Not seeking permission to leave supervised area
* Graffiti
* Refusal to take homework down
* Loss of school property (rentals, library books, etc.)
* Inappropriate material – written or otherwise in possession

*The above list consists of examples and is not exhaustive*

**When dealing with SERIOUS misbehaviours**

* Send to deputy principal / principal
* Homework diary to be signed by parent/guardian
* Individual behaviour plan to be put in place
* Inform parents (parents concerned will be invited to come discuss their child’s case)
* Principal may meet with parent/guardian
* Chairperson of Board of Management may be informed and involved and parents may be requested to meet with chairperson/principal
* Loss of privilege e.g. Golden time, attending school tour, participating in football match etc.

*Regular occurrence of SERIOUS misbehaviours may be defined as very serious misbehaviours and therefore will be dealt with in that manner*

**Some examples of what we regard as Very Serious misbehaviours**

* **Bullying** (see anti-bullying policy)
* Leaving school/school premises without permission
* Deliberately damaging school or another person’s property
* Aggressive/threatening behaviour towards others or premises
* Bringing serious danger to or assaulting any person in the school
* Bringing illegal substances or dangerous implements to school
* Arson / setting fire to school property

*The above list consists of examples and is not exhaustive*

**When dealing with VERY SERIOUS misbehaviours**

* Physical restraint where necessary
* Parent/guardian obliged to collect and supervise their child from school (for example at break & lunchtime,) for an agreed period of time, especially if it is felt that the child poses a threat towards staff, pupils or others
* Chairperson/principal meets with parents
* Use of **Report Card System** to monitor behaviour for an extended period of time.
* Suspension following discussion with parents

***Suspension****: serious and very serious misbehaviours may be considered as grounds for suspension. Suspension is in accordance with terms of Rule 130 (5) of Rules for National Schools and in accordance with D.O.E. In accordance with this rule, a school my suspend a pupil for 3days and up to 10days with approval by the Board of Management*

* **Expulsion**: done in accordance with D.O.E guidelines and where it is necessary to safeguard the welfare of pupils, teachers, and employees. The patron must sanction expulsion (Rule 130-6)
* In Junior/Senior infants and first class, steps are to be taken in consultation with staff and at the discretion of the deputy principal, principal and chairperson of the board of management.

*Before resorting to serious sanctions (suspension/expulsion), which are deemed as a last resort, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Parents will be involved at an early stage rather than as a last resort.*

**As regards these lists of misbehaviours and procedural steps, it should be noted that these lists consist of examples only. It is not meant to be totally comprehensive.**

**Sanctions**

The use of sanctions or consequences should be characterised by certain features;

* It must be clear why the sanction is being applied
* It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions
* Group punishment should be avoided as it breeds resentment
* There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences
* It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus

However sanctions should relate as closely as possible to the behaviour. Therefore a child, who for example does not do his work in class or has not completed his homework, may be given additional formal homework for the next night.Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, for example P.E / ART, except on the grounds of health&safety.In the event where a sanction has been placed on a child, this is a confidential matter between the child being sanctioned, their parents and the school staff. Other parents are not entitled to be informed of the sanctions being used.

Where there are instances of very serious misbehaviours or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the principal. In dealing with instances of very serious misbehaviours or in the event of repeated instances of serious misbehaviours, a report card may be used (where deemed appropriate) as an initial course of action. Parents of the child being placed on “report” will be invited to come into the school to discuss their child’s case and how the sanction will operate. The report (red) card system is given to the child in question. They must present this card to their class teacher, on three designated times throughout the day. They must also present the card to the teacher on yard duty at both break and lunch time. If the child’s behaviour is acceptable and in line with the code of behaviour policy, the teacher will sign the card. The child must get the card signed at home nightly. This ensures that both home and school are collaboratively monitoring the child’s behaviour and that no further breach of behaviour will be tolerated. The child will remain on report card for a period of 6 – 8 weeks. The child is made aware that any breach of the schools behaviour code, while on the report card, will lead to more severe sanctions being imposed.

Suspension: If it is felt that a report card system, is insufficient, suspension may be used. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of very serious misbehaviours, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

### Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and 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.

**Children with Special Needs**

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

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

**Methods of Communicating with Parents**

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in 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 should be 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 are to be used at all levels within the school:

* Informal parent/teacher meetings and Formal parent/teacher meetings
* Through children’s homework journal
* Letters/notes and phone calls from school to home and from home to school

In St. Michael’s N.S the belief is that the most effective schools tend to be those with the best relationships with parents, every effort will be made by the principal teacher and staff to ensure that parents are kept well informed, that the school provides a welcoming atmosphere towards parents and that parents are told not only when their children are in trouble but when they have behaved particularly well also.

***Reviewed and Ratified by the Board of Management in October 2020***

***Signed: \_\_\_\_****Fiona Whelan* ***\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (principal)***

***Signed: \_\_*** John Doolan ***\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (chairperson)***

**Appendix to Discipline Policy:**

**Code of Conduct for Parents**

Parents are expected to:

* Ensure their children attend school and are punctual
* Equip pupils with appropriate school materials, a sufficient healthy lunch 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 pupils 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.