

Code of Behaviour

This code was prepared in accordance with the guidelines issued by the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB). It was drawn up by a representative group of staff, parents, students and board of management. The work of auditing and reviewing our existing code of behaviour was enriched by involvement of representatives from all of our school community. The representative group met on a regular basis from 17th November 2018 to May 2019 and continue to meet fortnightly. It carried out an audit of the existing code, compiled surveys and involved discussions and staff development. The Code was ratified by the Board of Management on 01/05/2019 and was reviewed and revised on August 25 2020 to take into account new measures related to COVID-19.

Introductory Statement

St Peter Apostle Senior National School is a co-educational senior national school with pupils ranging from 3rd to 6th class. A culture of care, concern, support, interest and friendliness has evolved over many years and permeates all aspects of the life and work in St Peter Apostle Senior National School. We strive in cooperation with the parents to provide a, caring and secure environment where each child is encouraged to achieve to the best of his/her ability.

Aims

The aims of the code of behaviour are:

- to create an atmosphere that encourages good behaviour
- to set high expectations for good behaviour
- to create a happy and safe place for teaching and learning
- to encourage students to take personal responsibility for their behaviour
- to build positive relationships and respect among students, parents and staff
- to ensure the standards are clear, consistent and widely known and understood
- that pupils see the code works in a fair way

Mission Statement

St Peter Apostle Senior National School is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin. While it is a school with a Catholic ethos it has due recognition for pupils of all other faiths or of no faith. Our school motto “Every Child is Valued” is inherent in everything we do. We are committed to creating a caring, supportive and respectful atmosphere at school where every pupil can achieve their full potential. Our primary aim is to promote the academic, moral, physical, social and emotional development of our pupils appropriate to their age and abilities in a caring, safe and nurturing environment. The ethos of the school is reflected in our Code of Behaviour with the emphasis on respect for self, for others and for the environment. We commit ourselves to creating an ethos of care, concern

support and respect throughout the school and we place an emphasis on the pastoral care of our pupils.

We welcome and encourage parents to our school where they can become involved in the home school community. We work together in partnership with them to ensure their children have the best educational experiences in our school.

Roles and Responsibility

The responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the partners in education i.e. the Board of Management, principal and teaching staff, pupils and the parents/guardians of the pupils in St Peter Apostle Senior National School.

Responsibilities of Board of Management

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- Ratify the code of behaviour
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.

Responsibilities of Principal

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the code of behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner and arrange for review of the Code, as required.

Responsibilities of Teachers

- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil and affirm good work.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Liaise/communicate with SNA's in relation to disciplinary issues.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

Standards of behaviour expected of pupils within the school

- Do one's best in class
- Attend school regularly and not miss days without good reason

- Arrive on time.
- Do not leave during the day without permission
- Respect all school property
- Wear the school uniform
- Show respect for yourself and others
- Avoid swearing and name calling.
- Avoid fighting and all types of physical aggression.
- Listen to messages given and do as requested.
- Participate in school activities
- Be willing to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- Keep the school tidy and litter-free.
- Do not bring personal communication devices to school.

Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

Schools need the support of parents with regard to good behaviour and discipline. Parents can help their children in the following ways:

- Parents should provide their children with positive models of behaviour
- Children need boundaries and rules about behaviour. Talk to your child about school rules. They help make the school a safe place where everyone can learn and nobody feels left out or threatened.
- Ensure that your child attends school regularly and on time.
- Be interested in, support and encourage your child's school work.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where your child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Ensure the school has up to date contact information for parents / guardians
- Ensure an ordered, structured day for your child with regular meal times and bed times.
- Check your child has all their needs for class i.e. books, copies pens, pencils, rubber, ruler, etc.
- Share information with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress / behaviour.
- Behave in a respectful manner
- Make a pre-arranged appointment when you need to speak to Class Teacher, SEN Teacher or Principal.

School Rules

The school's standards of behaviour describe the behaviour expected of all members of the school community, staff and pupils, parents/guardians and visitors. These values are put into practice through simple, clear and consistent school rules and routines which are built on:

- respect for yourself

- respect for others
- respect for your school

The school has four core **School Rules** and four **Yard Rules**:

School Rules:

1. I come to school every day, on time and prepared.
2. I have respect for people and for property.
3. I do my best in class and allow others to do the same.
4. I behave in a proper manner around the school.

Yard Rules:

1. I stay in my own yard and away from windows, doors and gates.
2. I use kind hands, kind feet and kind words.
3. I play safely and fairly
4. I line up as soon as the bell goes and walk in safely to class.

These rules are brought to the attention of the children through the class teachers on a regular basis

Behaviour that does not conform to one or more of these rules can be considered unacceptable.

The list of rules may vary slightly from time to time, depending on circumstances and as the need arises. For each rule we have certain expectations, and these are explained and taught to all pupils.

The success of the school’s code of behaviour depends on consistency in the implementation of these rules. This will be achieved as follows:

- Teaching of the School Rules
- Rewards and Incentives for keeping the rules
- Prevention Strategies
- Sanctions for Breaking the Rules
- Modelling the standards
- Have ways of ensuring that students with special needs understand what is expected of them

Promotion of the School Rules

All pupils are taught the School Rules when they start in third class and they are revised consistently throughout their remaining years in the school. Parents are given a copy of the rules at registration and they are encouraged and expected to talk to their children about the rules and to encourage their children to keep them.

Individual rules will be highlighted at regular periods (in the principal's memo and at assembly) for special attention.

The School Rules are promoted through the entire school community as follows:

- **Principal's Weekly Memo**

The Principal sends out a memo to staff each Monday to inform them of the week's events. Each week one School Rule will be highlighted for special attention and one child from each class will receive a certificate for Excellence in following the stated rule.

- **Noticeboards**

The School Rules are displayed prominently in each classroom and on noticeboards throughout the school.

- **Assembly**

Assembly takes place once a month. It forms a valuable role in our whole school approach to developing self-esteem, promoting positive behaviour and effective discipline. Good work and achievements are highlighted, celebrated and rewarded. The school rules are emphasised and explained. Specific school routines for the classroom and yard are emphasised and explained.

- **Newsletters to Parents**

A newsletter is sent to home on a monthly basis to inform parents of events taking place in the school. The school rules will be highlighted in the Newsletter and parents encouraged to reinforce these with their children.

- **PA Announcements**

- **Parent Information Booklet**

All Parents / Guardians are provided with a copy of the school's code of behaviour before registration as required by Section 23(4) of the Education (welfare) Act 2000.

Parents are expected at registration to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the code by the child.

Promoting good behaviour

Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of our code of behaviour. Our reward system acts as a positive reinforcement of good behaviour. Teachers will focus on and praise good behaviour rather than criticising poor behaviour. Teachers use rewards positively – once given, rewards will not be removed subsequently for unacceptable behaviour.

These are used to acknowledge and affirm good behaviour and good work and can consist of:

Individual Rewards:

Boy/Girl of the Week

- Certificate and picture on door
- Homework pass
- Pen licence
- Raffle tickets (Friday)
- Dojo points
- Jobs
- Note home in journal
- Stickers
- Climbing Wall – 5/6 children (target group)
- Passes (art & craft pass, music pass, garden pass, knitting pass)
- Bronze, Silver, Gold awards

Whole Class Rewards

- Golden time
- Homework off
- DVD
- Cookery
- Hot Chocolate

Group Rewards within the Class

- Table/row of the week
- Dojo points
- Lucky dips
- Jobs
- Points/stars/marbles
- Cookery pass
- Sweets
- Cushions on chair (for group of the week)
- Hot chocolate
- Homework pass
- Golden time

Whole School Rewards

- Pupil of the month
- Student of the week
- Extra yard time one day each week
- Steps for lining up (Friday)

Prevention Strategies

The most effective methodology in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place. Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions. The school's SPHE curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship.

It is important that we keep in mind that the behaviour expected in school may differ significantly from that accepted at home for some children. Recognising this, teachers will teach our pupils strategies that will enable them to meet the school's expectations.

Prevention strategies used in the school may include:

- Restorative Practice
- Circle time
- Organised football, skipping and other activities at break time
- Carrying out useful tasks
- Helping in the school garden
- Time Out
- Lunchtime Indoor Activity Groups
- Therapies e.g. Art Therapy, Drama Therapy
- Support team
- Use of individual behaviour plans

Additional Supports

Children with special needs may require assistance in understanding and respecting certain rules. Additional inputs and interventions may also be required to help some pupils manage their behaviour and to prevent them failing educationally. Such interventions could include

- Referral to another teacher or adult who can work with the student
- Involving the pastoral care team
- Individual Behaviour/ Classroom Support Plans may be devised in consultation with parents, class teacher, support teacher, learning support / resource teacher, HSCL Co-ordinator and SNA. Professional assessments where available may inform and shape the plan.

Specialised Supports

A small minority of students may exhibit particularly challenging behaviour. The school, in cooperation with the student's parents will seek to avail of any local services that may assist in responding to the needs of the student. These services could include the National

Educational Psychological Services (NEPS), CAHMS, Dóchas, Jigsaw, Beacon of Light, Pieta House, Cumas, Art Therapist, relevant professional counselling services, etc.

Sanctions for Classroom Misbehaviour

The school strives to solve issues at the lowest level possible. Teachers encourage, support and show pupils how they may be able to resolve issues themselves. Most issues will be resolved at this point. Where sanctions are imposed they will be graded and reflect the seriousness of the behaviour. *(See Appendix A for examples of behaviours)*

Yellow and Red Cards

The school operates a yellow and red card warning system.

- Yellow cards =Detention Step + Yellow Behaviour Reflection Sheet are given for serious / disruptive misbehaviours.
- Red cards are given for very serious misbehaviour and parents are contacted by phone.
- All warning cards are sent home to be signed by parents.
- Yellow or red cards may be given for a single incident of misbehaviour.

IMMEDIATE YELLOW CARDS GIVEN FOR:

- Defiance, refusal to do as asked by any member of Staff
- Intentional Bad/Abusive language or gestures directed at another person.
- Racist remarks
- Intentional throwing an object.
- Writing/Graffiti on school property
- Involvement in a fight
- Spitting at someone or on property.
- Threatening someone
- Fighting/hurting someone
- Persistent breaking of the rules outlined in our Healthy Eating Policy, Uniform Policy.
- Leaving the learning environment without permission.

IMMEDIATE RED CARDS GIVEN FOR

- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Unprovoked physical violence to another person
- Organising (planning), encouraging a fight.
- Unprovoked racist remarks.
- Deliberate damage/destruction of school property
- Use of obscene/abusive language to a member of staff
- Non-compliance with Yellow Card/Detention procedures.

- Purposeful sneezing, coughing, spitting or any behaviour which disregards COVID 19 healthcare advice in a malicious manner.

1. Dealing with Minor Issues

Where issues occur the class teacher may employ any of a number of strategies to respond to, or divert children's inappropriate behaviour in order to prevent it escalating into something more disruptive to learning and more difficult to manage. These strategies may include:

- Proximity
- Gesture / Look / Whisper
- Tactical ignoring
- Carrying out a useful task in the school
- Accompanied movement breaks
- Catch pupils being good- move them up the steps
- Rule reminder
- Teaching rule to class or class recitation of the rule
- Expressing disappointment or disapproval, or using humour.
- Change of place

2. Dealing with more Serious Issues

Disruptive behaviours waste time and impinge on the good order and discipline in the school. When behaviour issues arise that require a sanction either because of the level of disruption, upset or hurt caused, or the persistence of the disruption the following sanctions will be used in a graded system to show disapproval and to discourage such unacceptable behaviour. Deputy Principal/Principal may be involved in investigating incidents which happen in the classroom as necessary.

1. **Make Better Choices** – the teacher will indicate the behaviour and the rule broken
2. **Quiet Table** – Complete class task at a quiet table
3. **Removal** – Complete task at quiet table as removal is not possible in current circumstances.
4. **Detention/Yellow Card** – Pupil is detained in their own class with a reflection sheet and work. Reflection sheet on yellow card to be brought home, signed and returned.
5. **Contact Home** – Where a pupil receives 2 yellow cards in any 5 day period the teacher will also make contact with home by phone.
6. **Red Card** - Where a pupil gets 3 yellow cards in any 5 day period the pupil is sent to the principal and gets a Red Behaviour Reflection Sheet. Parents are contacted and a

meeting held with Principal and class teacher if necessary. Behaviour contract / Classroom Support Plan is drawn up. Improvement Challenge is given and monitored daily by teacher & sent home at the end of each day. **While one red card may lead to suspension, a number of red cards in a period of time will lead to suspension.**

7. **Suspension**

8. **Expulsion**

Sanctions for Break Times and School Yard

The school yard is always supervised during breaks and the teachers in charge deal with problems that arise during play using positive conflict resolution approaches where appropriate. The teacher records yard incidents and action taken in the Yard Folder which is sent to the Principal and appropriate sanctions decided.

The emphasis is on promoting good behaviour and to support this football games and basketball activities are organised for all classes. The yard rules are taught to pupils at the start of each school year and pupils are constantly reminded of them.

1. Dealing with Minor Issues

For minor misbehaviour in the yard the following graded sanctions will apply:

1. Verbal Warning – Reminder of yard rule “In our School we..”
2. Sin bin for 5 minutes.
3. Name in book & longer sin bin time - to be followed up by the principal

2. Dealing with Serious Issues

For serious misbehaviour in the yard the following will apply

Name in Yard Book immediately

Yellow Card for:

- Defiance
- Racist remarks
- Bad/abusive language to another pupil
- Throwing an object directly at a person with intent to hurt them
- Writing/graffiti on school property
- Fighting/hurting someone
- Threatening someone
- Spitting at someone

Red Card for:

- Unprovoked racist remarks
- Planning, organising, encouraging a fight
- Use of bad language to a staff member
- Deliberate damage to school property
- Physical violence to another person
- Leaving school grounds without permission

Red card = Possible Suspension.

The following actions may also be taken:

- **Taken Off Yard** - If necessary for health and safety reasons the pupil will be removed from the yard immediately.
- **Football Ban** - For serious misbehaviour at football a pupil may also be banned from football for a period decided by the Principal in consultation with the teachers organising the football.

A single incident of misbehaviour may be grounds for suspension.

For repeated serious misbehaviour on the yard arrangements may be made for the pupil:

- not to go to yard at break time
- go home for break time

New Health & Safety Measures relating to COVID 19

Purposeful sneezing, coughing, spitting or malicious disregard for correct hand sanitising and general sneezing etiquette will result in a one day suspension for the first offence and a 3-day suspension for subsequent offences.

School Trips and Outings

Pupil's behaviour on tours will comply with the standard set down in the school's code of behaviour. Where it is felt that a child's conduct would pose a safety risk or inhibit the educational benefit for self or others, the school management reserves the right to refuse the child permission to travel on school trips / tours / outings. Parents will be advised of this in advance.

Inappropriate Sanctions

Inappropriate sanctions include:

- physical punishment or the threat of physical punishment
- ridicule, sarcasm, or remarks likely to undermine a student's confidence
- public or private humiliation
- applying sanctions to whole groups or classes in cases of individual or small group wrong doing

- leaving a student in an unsupervised situation (e.g. corridor) while in the care of the school
- persistent isolation of, or ignoring a student in class
- sanctions that are used in a discriminatory way

Suspension

Only in the most exceptional circumstances will suspension be considered. Having regard to the values of this school, attempts will always be made to bring out the best in pupils and to discriminate between disapproval of wrongful actions and the value of each individual in the school community.

Expulsion

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil. This authority is a reserved function of the Board of Management and is not delegated to the Principal. Before expelling a pupil, the school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a pupil.

When the code of behaviour applies

The school's code of behaviour applies during school hours, at all extra-curricular classes or events, at swimming classes, at all fund raising and social events organized by the school, on school tours, and at all events organised by, on behalf of, or in the name of St Peter Apostle SNS whether during school hours or outside of school hours.

Bullying

In dealing with incidences of bullying behaviour, teachers have regard to the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and are drawn up in accordance with Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary Schools (2013).

Absences / Communication

The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, Section 18, requires parents to notify the Principal of a school of the reasons for a child's absence. In compliance with these sections, the following procedures apply. For absences of pupils from school parents will send a note (in school journal) upon the return of the child to school outlining the reason(s) for absence or contact the school in person or by phone.

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 21(4) requires a School Principal to inform an Educational Welfare Officer in writing if the aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent from school during a school year is 20 days or more. Additionally, Section 21(4) authorises the School Principal to notify an Educational Welfare Officer if, in the opinion of the Principal, a child "is not attending school regularly".

Contact

Where any parent has a concern about any aspect of behaviour the school should be contacted either by phone, in person or in writing and the matter brought to the attention of the child's teacher or the principal/deputy principal as appropriate.

Review

Our Code of Behaviour will be next reviewed in March 2020

Reviewed and revised by Board of Management on _____
Date

Signed _____

Chairperson, Board of Management