

St. Joseph's N.S., Leitrim Village, Roll No:01125B Code of Behaviour

1. Introductory Statement

This policy was drawn up with collaboration between teachers, parents, Board of Management and pupils as considered appropriate. Consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment. This policy was reviewed between September and November 2014, between January and March 2016 and again between April and May 2018. In the most recent review parents' thoughts were obtained through feedback from a questionnaire issued to all parents. The Code of Behaviour together with class and school rules were discussed in classes and pupils from 3rd to 6th class were issued a questionnaire. The staff made suggestions for inclusion in the Code of Behaviour through a questionnaire and discussions at staff meetings. **This policy was further reviewed and updated by school management in August 2020 in light of the Covid 19 pandemic and its effect on the school Code of Behaviour.**

2. Rational

It was necessary to review the existing Code of Behaviour for the following reasons: -

- The existing policy is due for review
- To ensure an orderly climate for learning in the school.
- It is a requirement under DES Circular 20/90 on School Discipline.
- It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1).
- The publication of N.E.W.B. Guidelines on Codes of Behaviour.
- Audit checklist taken from N.E.W.B. Website highlighted areas needing review and inclusion.
- **The Covid 19 pandemic and its impact on schools with particular reference to the Code of Behaviour.**

3. Relationship to Catholic Ethos/Characteristic Spirit of the School

In St. Joseph's N.S., we aim to nurture each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are valued. This can only be achieved when there is a high level of respect and co-operation between staff, parents and pupils.

4. Aims/ Objectives

1. To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement.
2. To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make 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, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
5. To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.
6. To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.
7. To ensure that the systems of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

8. To enable teachers to teach without disruption.
9. To enable all staff and pupils to feel safe in school during these uncertain times of the Covid 19 pandemic and any future pandemics.

Content

In St. Joseph's N.S. we believe that positive acknowledgement is a very effective way of influencing and promoting good behaviour.

5.1 General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour

Pupils must treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable. Pupils must show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free. Pupils must take pride in their appearance, have all books and required materials and be in the right place at the right time.

Pupils must obey a teacher's instructions, work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.

Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be contacted. An absence sheet must be completed for each absence stating the reason for the absence.

5.2 Affirming Positive Behaviour

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions. We believe that this will, in the long run, give best results.

5.3 Strategies/ Incentives for Promoting Positive Behaviour

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment on a child's exercise book and/ or Homework Journal
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group (When and where relevant and appropriate)
- Individual, group or class merit awards, points, stamps, stickers or certificates.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege, such as being sent on a message
- Homework Pass at individual teacher's discretion.
- Written or verbal communication with parent.
- Positive feedback given at Parent Teacher Meetings.

A treat/ prize: - sticker, star, sweet, pencil, voucher, certificates, book tokens, extra time at an enjoyed activity, computer time etc.

5.4 The following behaviour will be expected of pupils in St. Joseph's N.S.

5.4.1 In the Classroom

Each September every class teacher together with the pupils will devise a set of classroom rules. Children will be reminded of these rules as the need arises. Each teacher will use a variety of classroom management techniques and a variety of activities and teaching methodologies to sustain pupil interest.

Children will arrive to class on time with all they need for school – pencils, copies, books, lunch and homework etc.

Children will hand up notes at the beginning of each day.

Children will, at all times, show respect for others: - teachers, adults and other children.

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Children will stand back to allow teachers, staff and visitors to the school pass
Children will not interrupt adults talking
Children will walk quietly on the left hand side of the corridor, in single file.
Children will show respect for all school property (it will not be marked or damaged).
Children will not throw litter but use the bins provided. (See school rules for more information.)

5.4.2 In the Toilet/Cloakroom Area

Children must behave in an appropriate manner at all times.
Children must enter their classroom first and then will be instructed to hang up coats.
Children must enter the classroom first after break and then ask to use the toilet.
Children must ask to use toilet.
Children will be allowed go to the toilet, one at a time.
Children will be encouraged to use the toilet prior to going to the yard – and again after yard time – with permission of class teacher.
Children must show respect for school property and the property of others.
Toilets and cloakroom will remain tidy.
Children will be encouraged to hang up any items seen to have fallen from a cloak hanger.
Children will be reminded that items of clothing are not toys.
Children in each classroom will be elected to monitor the paper hand towels.
Children must not put paper hand towels down the toilet but use the bins provided.
Children will collect coats from the cloakroom and go promptly to the yard at break time.
Children must adjust their behaviours based on health advice with regards to the Covid 19 pandemic – avoid going to the toilet during break times, store coats in schoolbags / classrooms etc.

5.4.3 On the Yard

Children must ask the teacher on the yard for permission before entering the other yard (Junior/Senior) or before entering the school building.
Children must behave in an appropriate and safe manner at all times.
Children must not participate in any form of rough play.
Children must not lift, carry, push or pull, spit at, bite or strike another child/children.
Children will be encouraged to participate in an appropriate game.
Children are not allowed play on the grass, go behind the shelter, behind the school or play in the small area between Junior Infants and Mrs. **Mc Elgunn's** classroom.
Children must obey the bell promptly, ending all games, hold the ball and line up in a neat and orderly line.
Children must enter the school quietly in single file.
Children on the senior yard will be allowed to bring a ball to the yard as per the ball rota
Children must not bring a mobile phone, I pod, MP3 player or any other type of electronic game to school. See school policy on Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices.
Children must not climb at any time on any object in the school grounds (bins, wall, trees etc)
Children must keep away from areas which are out of bounds. (Behind the school, shelter etc)
Children must show respect for all trees and foliage on the school grounds.
Monitors must show up for duty on the junior yard.
Children must stay on their assigned yard during breaktime and lunchtime – as outlined in new yard layout from September 2020.

The teachers on duty will administer basic first aid such as cleaning and putting a plaster on a minor cut, in line with our Accidents and Administration of Medicines Policy.

5.4.4 On Wet Days

Children must remain seated in classroom with the classroom door open. Children may be moved to another classroom if the teacher on duty feels it necessary for the safety of the child and others in the room.

On days where children from yard come in early due to rain: - each teacher, shall return to his/her classroom to help organise the class. Likewise, if the weather improves at lunch time each teacher shall return to his/her class and assist the teacher on duty to see all children exit the school in an orderly manner. See the school Supervision Policy for more details.

5.4.5. Morning and/ or After School Supervision

To avoid groups of adults and children congregating on the school yard, a staggered opening will be introduced from the 1st of September 2020. A number of doors will be opened at 9.10am to allow pupils to access their classroom in a safe manner. Morning school supervision is being provided in the school building from 9.10am by class teachers. Class begins at 9:20 am and ends at 1.55 p.m. for infants and 2.55 p.m. for all other classes. Children on school grounds before 9:10 am and/ or after 3 p.m. (2 p.m. in infant classes) will not be supervised by school staff. Children will be released on a phased basis – bus children, children who travel by car and finally those who walk or cycle. Each parent/ guardian is responsible for his/ her child/ children outside of school hours. Parents will be reminded of this throughout the school year via Communication letters.

5.5.5. Positive behaviours to avoid the spread of Covid 19

Pupils are expected to follow expert public health advice throughout the school day in relation to Covid 19. This includes:

1. Good hand hygiene through thorough washing and sanitising – on entry, after toileting, before eating and drinking, when hands are dirty and before exiting the building.
2. Good cough and sneeze etiquette – disposable tissue, bent elbow.
3. Maintaining social distancing – 1m / 2m depending on age and situation.
4. Avoiding unnecessary mixing with others outside of assigned pods and bubbles.
5. Following advice and routines established with class teachers and peers – lining up, exiting, entering the school buildings.

5 School Rules

Children must obey the school rules at all times. These rules include: -

1. Children must show respect for others at all times: - teachers, staff, adults and other pupils.
2. All pupils must go into class at 9.20am. All notes from parents should be handed up at the beginning of each day.
3. A notification informing school of reason for leaving during school hours is required when: - (a) a pupil wishes to leave during school hours. (b) An Absence Sheet to be signed by parents when a child is absent from school.
4. Full, correct uniform must be worn at all times in school and on all school related outings and activities, unless otherwise instructed in writing. A written note must be provided if a child cannot wear the correct uniform. Children's names must be clearly marked on uniform jumpers/ cardigans. Shoes should be properly and securely tied.
5. In the interest of Health and Safety children with long hair will be asked to keep it tied back.

6. Pupils are required to be neat and tidy in appearance.
7. In the interest of health and safety the wearing of jewellery is discouraged. This includes wristbands.
8. Healthy lunches are advised. Junk food is discouraged. Chewing gum and fizzy drinks are **banned**. See the school Healthy Lunch Policy for more details.
9. Classrooms, toilets and schoolyard must be kept tidy.
10. Pupils must not throw litter about. Bins are provided.
11. Recycling is practised in our school and bins are provided for same.
12. School property must not be marked or damaged.
13. All children should respect the property of others.
14. No running is permitted within the school building.
15. **Under no circumstances** should a child leave the school grounds without permission.
16. Permission is required before pupils may enter rooms other than their own.
17. Children in infants are to be collected at 2.00p.m. and children in other classes at 3.00pm
18. The bell is to be obeyed promptly at all times.
19. 3 p.m. is not play time. Children must go to the school gate at 3 p.m. where they will either be met by a parent/ guardian, walk home, walk to the car or get on a school bus.

5.6 Dealing with unacceptable Behaviour

Teachers will use their professional judgement together with their knowledge of the pupil when dealing with unacceptable behaviour. The following strategies will be used for dealing with unacceptable behaviour: -

- Reasoning with the pupil.
- Reprimand (including advice on how to improve), maybe at break time. This may involve the action being recorded as a strike. Three strikes will result in the pupils having to complete detention at break time. Detention is outlined in section 5.7 *below*.
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others. (Pupils may be sent to another classroom or to the junior yard at break time, for a max of 15 minutes. If pupils are sent to another classroom they are assigned work to complete, Ms Kelly is notified and parents are notified via a note home)
- Loss of privileges, including detention at break time (to a maximum of half of total break time, [20 minutes in a day])
- Write an account/ essay of what happened and get it signed by parents
- Extra work at the weekend.
- Note in homework journal to inform parents.
- Referral to Principal Teacher.
- Communication with parents.
- Suspension
- Expulsion

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

5.7 Detention

Every class teacher will keep a record of pupil's behaviour in class/ in the school building and will record pupil misbehaviour as outlined below in section 5. 8. Teachers on yard will do

likewise and record the incidents in a yard book. Teachers can give pupils a strike for misbehaviour. All strikes are recorded. Parents are informed each time a pupil gets a strike by a note home (e.g. in Homework Journal). Parents are asked to sign these notes to show they have read the note and are aware the pupil got a strike.

Any pupils who receives three strikes will have to complete detention at break time. Detention will be supervised by a teacher. Parents will be informed by letter on the day their child completes detention. Pupils will have to write about why they are on detention and think about their behaviour. A record of all pupils on detention will be kept and the reason for being on detention.

Should any pupil be on detention twice during a school year his/ her parents will be asked to attend a meeting in the school with the principal during the school day. An immediate improvement in pupil behaviour is expected after this meeting and should the process of detention have to commence again the school will contact the pupil's parents and will consider suspending the pupil.

5.8 Examples of Misbehaviour, Serious Misbehaviour and Gross Misbehaviour

5.8.1 Inappropriate behaviour/ Misbehaviour

The following are examples of behaviour considered **inappropriate** and therefore regarded as **misbehaviours**. This list is not exclusive. These offences will be dealt with by using measures outlined in section 5.6 above. If no improvement in behaviour is observed, then suspension may be considered.

Misbehaviours

- To refuse to obey an instruction by a teacher.
- To breach any of the classroom rules
- To be disrespectful towards a teacher or other pupil.
- To make gestures to or behind a teacher signalling defiance
- To make rude noises or obscene gestures when teachers pass
- To use bad language at a teacher
- To turn away when spoken to by a teacher
- To give cheeky replies to a teacher
- To interrupt a class through constantly talking
- To disrupt class by making rude noises
- To disrupt class by throwing objects across the room
- To refuse to co-operate with teacher or other children in the general organisation of class work
- To play in areas of school grounds in which it is forbidden to do so.
- To break any of the school rules
- To engage in rough play of any type
- To push or skip in the line
- To ignore the school bell

5.8.2. Serious Misbehaviour

The following are examples of behaviour considered **serious misbehaviour**. Again this list is not exclusive. These offences will be dealt with using measures outlined in section 5.6 above. If no improvement in behaviour is observed, then suspension may be considered.

Serious Misbehaviours

To repeat any misbehaviours outlined above
To use bad language/ indecent words towards other children, teachers or members of staff (with malice)
To spit at, bite or strike other children
To bully, through threats or otherwise, another child
To make obscene drawings in notebooks
To cover notebooks, desks, bus, walls or grounds of school with graffiti
To deface school property in any way
To "mitch" from school
To deface other children's property
To fire missiles from elastic bands or catapults of any description.
To make, do, or say anything with the object of disrupting the efficient running of the school.
To interfere with school equipment, [computers, video, P.E., equipment etc.] without permission

Any misbehaviour related to Covid 19 which gives rise to a serious threat to the safety of staff and students is seen by the Board of Management as serious. These misbehaviours include: -

Spitting

Intentional coughing / sneezing within 2 meters of anyone in the school community: - ancillary staff, teachers and pupils.

Intentionally singing or shouting in close contact (within 1 metre) of another person with the intention of transmitting the virus.

Name calling of others and / or using the virus in derogatory terms to upset others.

Name calling of those wearing PPE – masks, shields etc

Threatening to spit, bite, cough, sneeze in close proximity of others (within 2 meters).

Touch / threatening to touch others and their property with the intention of infecting them with Covid 19.

The Board of Management may upgrade this behaviour to Gross Misbehaviour if it happens in more than once incidence.

5.8.3 Gross Misbehaviour

The following are examples of behaviour considered **gross misbehaviour**. The Board of Management shall authorise the Chairperson or Principal of the school to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the child's parents.

Gross Misbehaviour

To bring any dangerous articles [knife etc.] into school

To bring any dangerous or obnoxious substance, [alcohol, drugs] into school

To behave aggressively, threateningly or violently towards a pupil, teacher or staff member

To vandalise school property or deliberately break school property, furniture or equipment

Gross insubordination (in a moment of rage to refuse to comply with a staff member's commands)

Teachers shall keep a written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour as well as a record of improvements in the behaviour of disruptive pupils. Before resorting to serious sanctions e.g. suspension, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Parents will be involved at an early stage rather than a last resort.

Communication with parents will be verbal or by letter, depending on circumstances. The parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss the child's case. For gross

misbehaviour or **repeated** instances of serious misbehaviour suspension will be considered. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour, depending on circumstances.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, the Board shall authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the Parents.

5.9 Bullying

In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013)* bullying is defined as follows:

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying and
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to cooperate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

5.10 Fair Process

Fair procedures will be followed when proposing to suspend or expel a pupil.

Fair procedures have two essential parts: - *the right to be heard and the right to impartiality*. These will apply when investigating the alleged behaviour that may lead to suspension or expulsion and the decision making process.

The *right to be heard* means that a student and their parents will be fully informed about an allegation and the processes that will be used to investigate and decide the matter; and that they will be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation before a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed.

The *right to impartiality* means that the decision maker is not biased towards the pupil. For example, if the child of the principal was accused of misconduct that might warrant suspension or expulsion, the principal would not be involved in the decision. Similarly, if the child of a member of the Board of Management was accused of misconduct, that parent would absent themselves from the Board for any consideration of the matter by the Board.

The principle of impartiality in decision-making means it is preferable that, where possible, the principal arranges for another member or members of staff to conduct the investigation and to present a full report on the facts of the case and any other relevant information to the principal. The principal is then free to take a view about whether the student did engage in the behaviour and about the sanction, based on the report of the investigation.

Where circumstances require the principal to conduct the investigation as well as making a finding and proposing the sanction, she will not only act fairly but be seen to act fairly. It is incumbent upon the principal to review the investigation to ensure that it has been fully and fairly conducted. It should be evident to the student, parents, staff and other students that the principal, as decision-maker, is basing her decision, in an objective way, on the findings of the investigation.

The person alleging the misbehaviour, or who is a victim, or a witness will not usually conduct the investigation.

Thoughtful application of professional judgement and knowledge of the requirements of fair procedures will generally guide decision-making about suspension and expulsion. However, in circumstances of particular complexity, school authorities may need to seek legal advice to support their decision-making.

5.11 Suspension

'Suspension is defined as requiring the student to absent himself/ herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.' *NEWB Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools* page 70.

As suspension and expulsion can have a huge impact on a child's education the Board of Management view these as serious steps warranted by very serious misbehaviours. Therefore, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised prior to the commencement of these sanctions. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter, depending on the circumstances.

The Board of Management will delegate the decision to suspend a pupil, for up to three days, to the principal. If a suspension for longer is considered necessary, the Board of Management will be informed for consideration and approval.

Suspension may be considered for gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

During the period of suspension, the pupil retains their place in the school. Suspension will be proportionate to the behaviour that is causing concern. Various factors will be considered before suspending a pupil: -

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date
- Whether suspension is a proportionate response
- The possible impact of suspension

Suspension will form part of a behaviour management plan and will: -

- Enable the school to set behavioural goals with the pupil and their parents
- Give the school an opportunity to plan other interventions and
- Impress on a pupil and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour

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In general, the class teacher will fully investigate the matter and give a report to the principal. If the principal thinks suspension may be necessary, she will inform pupil and parents about the complaint. The parents/ guardian will be informed either by phone or in writing, depending on the seriousness of the matter. The parents will be invited to attend a meeting with the principal. The parents and pupils will be given an opportunity to respond, before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed. If the parents fail to attend a meeting the principal will write to parents advising them of the gravity of the matter.

After reviewing the situation and discussing the matter with the parents and pupil the principal will make a decision as to whether suspension is appropriate or not.

If the principal decides to suspend the pupil she will inform the parents and pupil in writing of the decision to suspend and the letter will contain the following: -

- The period of suspension and the dates when the suspension will begin and end
- The reason for the suspension
- Any study programme to be followed
- Arrangements for returning to school (affirm commitment to Code of Behaviour)
- Provision for an appeal to the BOM
- Right to appeal to Secretary General of the DES

Suspension will not last more than 3 school days, except in exceptional circumstances. If a suspension of longer than 3 days is considered necessary, the principal must inform the BOM for consideration and approval. The BOM will place a ceiling of 10 school days on any one period of suspension

The BOM will review any proposed suspension which will bring the number of days the pupil is absent to more than 20 in any school year. Any such a suspension is open to appeal under section 20 of the Education Act 1998.

Parents may appeal any suspension made by the principal to the BOM. Parents may appeal any suspension made by the BOM to the patron. In the event that the total number of days that the pupil is suspended reaches 20 days the parents may appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Parents will be given details on how to make an appeal.

A suspension may be removed if the BOM decide to do so for any reason or if the Secretary General of the department of Education and Skills directs that it be removed

In exceptional circumstances the principal may consider an immediate suspension necessary. If the presence of the pupil in the school would represent a serious threat to the safety of other pupils or staff or any other person. Fair procedures will still be applied and an investigation will take place before the decision is made to make an immediate suspension. The parents of the pupil will be informed and arrangements made with them for the collection of the pupil.

After a period of suspension, the pupil will be given the opportunity and support to start fresh.

Relevant records pertaining to the investigation, decision making, rationale for the decision, duration of the suspension and any conditions attached will be retained in the school. The

principal will inform the BOM of all suspensions, with the reasons and durations. The principal will report suspensions to NEWB in accordance with NEWB reporting guidelines.

5.12 Expulsion

Expulsion of a pupil is a very serious step and will only be taken by the Board of Management of the school in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will undertake significant steps to address the misbehaviour to avoid expulsion such as: -

- Meeting with the parents and the pupil to try to find ways of helping the student change their behaviour
- Make sure the pupil understands the consequences of their behaviour
- Other options have been tried
- Seek the support of other agencies

There may be exceptional circumstances where the BOM forms the opinion that the pupil should be expelled for a first offence. This may include: -

- a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- actual violence or physical assault
- supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
- sexual assault.

Given the seriousness of expulsion the BOM will undertake a very detailed review of a range of factors in deciding whether to expel a pupil. These factors include: -

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date
- Whether suspension is a proportionate response
- The possible impact of suspension

The BOM will follow fair procedures when proposing to expel a student. The following steps will be taken in order to expel a pupil.

1. A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the principal.
The principal will inform the parents and pupil in writing. The parents and pupil will be given an opportunity to respond.

2. The principal will make a recommendation to the BOM
The parents and pupil will be informed that the BOM will be asked to consider expulsion. The principal will provide the parents and BOM with records of the allegations, investigation and written notice of the grounds on which the BOM is being asked to consider expulsion. Parents will be notified of date of BOM hearing and be invite to that hearing. Parents will be advised that they can make a written or oral submission to BOM. Sufficient notice will be given to parents to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

3. The BOM will consider the principal's recommendation and hold a hearing
The BOM will undertake its own review of documentation and circumstances. Neither the principal nor the parents will be present for the board's deliberations.

4. BOM deliberations and actions following hearing

If the board decides to expel the pupil the BOM must write to Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) and inform him/ her of its decision to expel the pupil and the reasons why. The pupil cannot be expelled before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the EWO received the written notification form BOM. The parents will be informed about its conclusions and next steps i.e. that the EWO was informed.

5. Consultations arranged by Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)

Within 20 days of receipt of BOM letter the EWO must make reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the principal, parents, pupil and anyone else who may be of assistance. He/ she must convene a meeting with those parties who agree to attend. Arrangements are made to continue the pupil's education, either at home, in another school or in this school.

6. Confirmation of the decision to expel

After 20 days the BOM confirm the decision to expel. Parents are notified immediately and informed about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills and supplied with the relevant forms. An appeal may also be brought by NEWB on behalf of pupil. A formal record of the decision to expel will be made and kept by the BOM.

5.13 Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science against some decisions of the Board of Management, including (1) permanent exclusion from a school and (2) suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year. Accordingly, schools will advise parents of this right of appeal and associated timeframe if it has been decided to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student (see Circular 22/02).

5.14 Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (2) (e) states that the code of behaviour must specify, "*the procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school*". Section 18 stipulates that parents must notify the school of a student's absence and the reason for this absence. We ask parents to inform the school on the first day of the absence and to complete and return an '**Absence Sheet**', on the pupil's return to school

6 Reasonable Accommodation

In some individual circumstances St. Joseph's N.S. may reach an agreement with parents to adopt a shortened school day for certain children as a reasonable accommodation mechanism for enhancing positive behaviour management or adaption to the school environment and routine.

The rationale is that the educational needs of such children ARE different from other children and in some circumstances certain children with special needs are unable to tolerate periods of instruction as would usually be expected in any school.

A “reasonable accommodation” can be where a child may not attend school for the normal full school day and where it is clearly not designed as a “sanction” for the child but a way of tailoring and accommodating the school day to meet their particular or complex needs.

The use of a shortened day in this context is not designed as a suspension or exclusion but as a reasonable way of accommodations a child’s particular and complex needs to ensure their successful participation in school rather than becoming stressed, frustrated or distressed and as a result engaging in extremely challenging and difficult behaviours which means that they are not able to participate in the education programme or school activities anyway and their behaviours is adversely impacting on the teaching and learning of other pupils and the effective operation of the school.

The use of reasonable accommodation as set out here may then be taken as a proactive step in the prevention of suspension and expulsion being evoked as sanctions for unacceptable behaviour as outline in this Code of Behaviour. It may also be used to reinstate a pupil following a period of suspension in a positive and successful way as they readjust to the normal school environment and routine.

7 Reference to other Policies

Many other school plans are policies have a bearing on the code of behaviour including: -

- SPHE Plan
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Admission Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Healthy Lunches Policy
- Accidents and Administration of Medicines Policy
- Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices Policy
- Homework Policy
- Equality Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Others

7 Success Criteria

Observation of positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment. Practices and procedures listed in this policy will be consistently implemented by teachers. Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils will also help to assess the effectiveness of this policy.

8 Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 Board of Management’s Responsibilities

Provide a comfortable, safe environment.

Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.

Ratify the Code.

8.2 Principal’s Responsibilities

Promote a positive climate in the school.

Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.

Arrange for review of the Code, as required.

8.3 Teacher's Responsibilities

Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.
Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
Recognise and affirm good work.
Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
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.
Provide support for colleagues.
Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

8.4 Pupil's Responsibilities

Attend school regularly and punctually.
Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
Show respect for all members of the school community.
Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
Avoid misbehaving in any way which would endanger others.
Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name calling.
Include other pupils in games and activities.
Bring correct materials/books and homework to school.
Follow school and class rules.

8.5 Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities

Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
Ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually.
Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
Sign their child's/ children's Homework Journal every night homework is given.
Be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and support its implementation. Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour.

9 Implementation and Review

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Rules will be kept to a minimum, emphasise positive behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

A copy of this Code of Behaviour will be given to the parents/ guardians of every child enrolled in the school. All prospective pupils will be given a copy of the Code of Behaviour in the Information Pack, prior to enrolment. The Code of Behaviour will be discussed with all new parents on Induction Day. Parents of children already enrolled in the school will receive a copy of the policy in the next Communication packet following ratification by the BOM.

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis at staff meetings and will be amended as the need arises.

10 Ratification and Communication

The school Code of Behaviour was last ratified by the Board of Management on Thursday 14th June 2018. It will be uploaded to the school website and all parents will be informed about this. It will have immediate effect.

11 Reference Section

- Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 Section 23(1 -5), 24 (1-5)
- Education Act, 1998 Section 15 (2(d))
- Circular 20/90 on Discipline (DES web site www.irlgov.ie/educ). Also in CPSMA Handbook
- Circular 22/02 Appeals Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998. (DES website). Deals with appeals under the following headings:
 - Permanent exclusion from a school
 - Suspension
 - Refusal to enrol
- Guidelines for Developing School Codes of Behaviour (National Education Welfare Board) *Draft edition published for consultation in 2007*
- Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes
- Management Board Members' Handbook. Revised 2007. CPSMA: A suggested Code of Behaviour & Discipline for National Schools
- The Education Act 1998. The Education Welfare Act 2000. Questions and Answers, INTO
- DES *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013)*