

# *Code of Behaviour*

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## **Introductory Statement:**

The Code of Behaviour for St. Oliver's National School has been revised following a process of consultation between the Board of Management, teachers and parents. The code has been sanctioned by the Board of Management.

## **Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School.**

This code of behaviour will assist our school in its aim to promote learning in a safe and caring environment. It is based on the principles of fairness, co-operation, trust and respect.

### ***Aims:***

- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline
- To ensure that behaviour is managed in a consistent manner
- To create a safe environment where learning can take place
- To inform the whole school and to promote home/school links;
- To provide support for the staff
- To promote positive behaviour and self discipline recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community.
- 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.
- To ensure that the system rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner.

## **Guidelines:**

### **Pupils with Special Educational/Emotional Needs**

There is an expectation that pupils with special needs will adhere, to the best of their ability, to the school rules. Their role in the schools' Code of Behaviour will be discussed at the home/school meetings between parents, class teachers and support teachers and any necessary modifications to their programme of support will be agreed.

### **Strategies to Promote Positive Behaviour and Enhance Pupils' Self-Esteem**

St. Oliver's N.S. recognizes the effectiveness of rewarding good work/manners as a means to promoting good behaviour. Therefore, various strategies will be used to promote good behaviour and ultimately enhance pupils' self-esteem. While, in general, class teachers will adapt various strategies to suit their pupils, suggested rewards/strategies could include the following:

- Certificates/Commendations
- Student of the week
- Golden Time
- Stickers/Tokens
- Homework Pass
- Edible treats (healthy options where possible)
- Affirmation from other teachers and the Principal
- On the spot praise

Additionally, programmes such as Circle Time, Stay Safe, Walk Tall etc. will be taught and implemented, as necessary, in order to model positive behaviour for the pupils and to enhance their self-worth.

We also recognise the need to introduce and remind the children, of the school rules, in a way that is age and ability appropriate. Therefore, there will be 'Rules Talks' usually when the principal is on an administration day.

Class Teachers will involve their pupils in drawing up rules for their own particular class.

These rules will be taught in a manner which is age appropriate to the class-level and will be on display in the class room.

### **Recording of Behaviours**

- Recording in yard notebook.
- Note home to parents – copy of this note to be kept in pupil's own file
- Teachers own class notebook.
- Recording of complaints of bullying in line with Anti-Bullying policies.  
Recorded on Incident Recording Template.
- School template for recording serious, gross and ongoing incidents including acts of bullying.

We acknowledge the need to present a balanced record of a pupils' behaviour. Therefore, we strive to record both good and poor behaviour insofar as possible. Incidental good and poor behaviour is recorded in teachers own class notebook.

The recording of serious, gross and ongoing misbehaviours is vital. Ongoing, serious and gross incidents of misbehaviour will be recorded by a teacher in a standardised record system. The system will record incidents, interventions, and contacts with parents, any resulting meetings and sanctions imposed.

These records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (amendment) Act 2003.

Misdemeanours that occur on school-organised and supervised trips will be treated under the terms of this Code of Behaviour.

Incidents that occur before/after school when inside the school boundary and incidents that occur on the bus to and from school will be dealt with in accordance with this policy.

## **School Rules:**

### **Behaviour in class:**

#### **Pupils are expected to:**

- Show courtesy and respect for others in order to ensure a safe, happy and secure working environment.
- Co-operate fully with instructions given by the teacher.
- Complete, to the best of their ability, oral or written work assigned to them in school or for homework.
- Leave and return to classrooms in an orderly fashion.
- Bring all required books, copies and materials to school and home each day.
- Keep their own area and the classroom neat and tidy at all times.
- Remain seated and quiet in the event of the teacher having to leave the classroom.
- Keep the property of the school and other pupils with respect.
- Wear the correct uniform each day. (See uniform policy)

### **Behaviour in yard & school Environment:**

- Pupils must accept the authority of all staff members.
- For reasons of safety and to minimise accidents pupils will move about the school in an orderly fashion.
- Boisterous behaviour, rough play and dangerous games are prohibited.
- Pupils must remain within the designated area of the yard for their class groupings during break times.
- Permission must be sought to re-enter school buildings from supervising teachers.
- Drinks, games, gadgets and mobile phones are not allowed in the yard.
- Pupils must keep playgrounds litter free.
- A child with any injury must be reported to the teacher on yard supervision. This teacher must ensure that this injury has been attended to. The injury should also be recorded in the Yard Report Book. When necessary, parents may be asked to bring their child home or the child may be brought to a doctor or hospital.
- At break times on wet days, pupils must remain seated and not leave their seats without permission.

### **General Guidelines for Behaviour:**

#### **General Procedure to deal with breaches of the Code of Behaviour:**

- Reasoning with the pupil.
- Verbal reprimand (i.e. speak to the child; remind him/her of rule which is being broken; reason with him/her)
- Removal from the group (in class – i.e. move child to another seat) but not outside classroom, except in gross misdemeanour incidents.
- Detention during breaks.
- Prescribing extra work.
- Withdrawal of privileges (i.e. child not allowed to collect the copies/loss of golden time)

- Refer to another Teacher (i.e. a fresh approach from a familiar teacher)
- Different Teacher and Class Teacher work together to encourage the pupil to improve their behaviour
- Inform Principal (i.e. inform Principal informally that the child is exhibiting challenging behaviour)
- Refer pupil to Principal/Deputy Principal
- Pupil removed to a safe place in instances of Gross Misbehaviour.
- Inform Parents
- Meeting between Parents and Class Teacher
- Meeting between Parents, Class Teacher and other involved Teacher.
- Meeting between Principal and Parent - (The Class Teacher may also be included. However, in some cases there may be some sensitive issues which the parent may only wish to disclose to the Principal).
- Formal report to the Board of Management.
- A behaviour modification plan may be used in certain circumstances as appropriate
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).

It should also be noted that the Principal/Deputy Principal may consider it appropriate to advise the parent(s)/guardian that a specialist/professional assessment of the pupil may be advisable in certain cases of unacceptable behaviour. The onus will be on the parent(s)/guardian to locate this professional to assess their child.

**A. Examples of minor misdemeanours include:**

- Isolated acts of unkindness to any member of the school community, being discourteous, being unmannerly
- Irregular instances of speaking out of turn, interrupting class work, interrupting others and being inattentive
- Isolated instances of being unable to abide by accepted conventions due to special educational/behavioural needs.
- Isolated acts which preventing others from learning.

*Sanctions to deal with minor misdemeanours include:*

- Reasoning with pupil
- Verbal reprimand
- Noting instance in yard book if incident happened during break time.

## **B. Examples of serious misdemeanours:**

- Regular acts of unkindness to any member of the school community
- Regular instances of speaking out of turn, interrupting others and being inattentive
- Regularly preventing others from learning
- Being unwilling to abide by accepted conventions
- Defacing or destroying other peoples' belongings or school property
- Directing abusive language at any members of the school community
- Acting aggressively, threateningly or with violence towards members of the school community
- Deliberately refusing to co-operate with instructions and advice.

Sanctions to deal with serious misdemeanours include:

- Note home to be signed by parent(s)/guardian ( yellow/red card system)
- Meeting between parent(s) and the class teacher
- Meeting between parent(s), class teacher and Principal/Deputy Principal
- In the event that efforts by the school to address serious misbehaviours are unsuccessful suspension may be considered.

## **C Examples of gross misdemeanours include:**

- Deliberately damaging school/other people's property
- Deliberately acting aggressively and violently towards other members of the school community
- Leaving the school grounds without permission

*Sanctions to deal with gross misdemeanours include:*

- Immediate contact between Principal/Deputy Principal and parent(s)/guardians to discuss behaviour
- Removal of pupil to Principal's Office/classroom.

*Gross misdemeanour, can be dealt with as follows;*

- Chairperson and Principal to sanction immediate suspension pending discussion with parents. 0-3 days 4-10 days – plus longer.
- The Chairperson and Principal may exclude pupil/pupils from the School for a maximum of three school days.

- The Board of Management may exclude pupil/pupils for a further period up to a maximum of 10 school days to allow for consultation with pupils, parents or guardians.
- The Board may authorise a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed.
- No pupils shall be struck off the register for breaches of discipline without the prior consent of the Patron and advising the Educational Welfare Officer.

## **PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION**

The Board of Management and Staff of St. Oliver's National School will follow the procedures for suspension and expulsion outlined in the Guidelines for School on Developing a Code of Behaviour (Chapter 10 – 12).

Fair procedures (i.e. the right to be heard and the right to impartiality) will be applied at all times. Accordingly, pupils and their parents will be fully informed about an allegation and the processes that will be used to investigate and decide the matter and they will be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation before a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed. In exceptional circumstances, the Principal/Board may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary when the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff of the school, or any other person (p73). The Board of Management will also follow the factors to consider before suspending a student (p72) and the factors to consider before proposing to expel a student (p82) In relation to suspension

- Communication to parents regarding the suspension of a pupil or the possibility of suspension will be in writing and copies of all correspondence will be retained. In some circumstances it may be necessary to contact parents by phone.
- The parent/guardians and the pupil will be invited to meet with the Principal and /or Board of Management to discuss the proposed suspension.
- The Board of Management has delegated responsibility for suspension to the Principal in the event that immediate suspension of a pupil is warranted (Guidelines p73). The parents/guardians and child will be invited to discuss the matter with the Principal and the procedures governing suspension will be applied.
- A written statement of the terms and date of the termination of a suspension will be given to parents/guardians. A suspension will not be for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is necessary in order to achieve a particular objection. The letter will confirm;
- The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- The reasons for the suspension.
- Any programme of study to be followed
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitment to be entered into the student and the parents (for example, the pupil and parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)

- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management the right to appeal to the Secretary general of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 Section 29).
- The suspension will be recorded on the NRWB 'Student Absence Report form' (when applicable).
- When a period of suspension ends, the pupil will be re-admitted formally to the class by the principal.
- Where a satisfactory resolution of a problem is achieved, a pupil may be re-admitted to school within a suspension period at the discretion of the Principal and/or the chairperson of the Board of Management.
- If a pupil continues to misbehave he may be suspended for a major fixed period (up to ten days) to allow for consultation with both the pupil and the pupil's parents/guardians to address the issues
- As outlined above, parents/guardians and pupil will be given the opportunity to discuss the issues with the Principal/Board of Management.
- The Education Welfare officer will be informed when a student has been suspended for six days or more cumulatively.
- Section 29 Appeal – when the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days the parents may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act and will be given information about how to appeal.

#### *PROCEDURES FOR EXPULSION*

The procedures outlined on pages 83 – 86 of the guidelines will be followed (see steps 1 – 6 below):

- Subsequent to the above suspension procedures and meetings with parents/guardians, if serious/gross incidents of misbehaviour continue, the pupil will be recommended for permanent expulsion by the Board of Management. In exceptional circumstances, pupils may be expelled for a first offence – see p. 81. Automatic expulsion will apply in the event that (particular named offence)

Step 1 – A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal

Step 2 – A recommendation to the board of Management

Step 3 – Consideration by the Board of Management of the principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing

Step 4 – Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing

Step 5 – Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare officer

Step 6- Confirmation of the decision to expel

- A record will be kept in the school of all instances of serious misbehaviour by pupils.
- Breaches of behaviour will be recorded in writing by the class teacher and if necessary by the Principal
- Other relevant school policies (e.g. Health & Safety) may be referred to
- The school's Anti Bullying policy is attached to this policy.

## **Absences from School**

The following procedures are to be used in the case of absences from school are concerned. The Education Welfare Act 2000 section 23(2) (e) and section 18 must be fulfilled. Therefore parents are requested to:

- Inform the school in writing about absences. Forms are provided for the parents to fill in and return.
- When possible teacher should be informed of an absence due to a pre-arranged appointment etc. prior to the absence.
- In case of short illness school should be informed, in writing, on return to school.
- In cases of longer absence due to illness school should be informed, in writing, by third day and by telephone on first day.
- Notes should be sent to the class teacher.
- Absence notes will be retained in the pupil's personal file.
- In the case of notifiable illness a doctor's certificate is required stating a return to school date. Pupils may not return to school prior to stated date.

## **Procedure for the Resolution of Complaints:**

Complaints are taken under guidelines laid down in agreement between CPSMA and INTO. Guidelines available in school or on internet.

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## **Success Criteria:**

- Positive feedback from the whole school community
- Observations of behaviour in the class, yard, toilets and corridors.
- School atmosphere
- The number of recordings in the yard book

## **Roles and Responsibility:**

### **Board of Management's Responsibilities**

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

### **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.

### **Teachers' 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.

### **Pupils' 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 behaving 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 to school.
- Follow school and class rules.

### **Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities**

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
- 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.

### **Involving Parents/Guardians in Managing Problem Behaviour**

Parents/guardians are valued as partners in the school community and as such will be invited to participate in promoting positive behaviour both in school and in the wider community. Class teachers will refer to repeated episodes of minor misbehaviour in the pupil's Homework journal which parents/guardians are requested to sign.

Parents of infants will receive a short note from the teacher. In cases where pupils are required to complete some extra work as a sanction, parents/guardians will again be requested to sign the relevant work. Class teachers may occasionally request parents/guardians to visit them in school to discuss some aspect of a pupil's behaviour. The Principal will be informed of these meetings and may be invited to attend.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to make appointments to meet with class teachers and/or the Principal at the earliest opportunity in an effort to prevent any escalation of

inappropriate behaviour. The school will remind parents/guardians of the procedures for contacting the school at every opportunity.

Where pupils are found to be involved in more serious misbehaviour or continuous misbehaviour the Principal may telephone or write to parents/guardians to request them to attend an informal/formal meeting at the school. Class teachers, teachers who witness misbehaviour while supervising on yard duty, the Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management may also attend these meetings. The pupil may also attend all or part of these meetings if deemed appropriate.

**General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour**

1. Pupils are expected to 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
2. Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
3. Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.
4. Pupils are expected to obey a teacher’s instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
5. Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing, stating the reason for absence.

**Implementation Date:**

From 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2014 onwards.

**Timetable for Review:**

Review at end of 2015 school year and each year thereafter.

**Ratification and Communication:**

- Ratified by the Board of Management
- Circulated to members of Parents’ Association
- Circulated to teaching staff, SNAs and ancillary staff
- Circulated to all parents/guardians at enrolment
- Class meetings with parents at beginning of school year.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management by:

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Date.....

*Chairperson St. Oliver’s National School*