



## **Behaviour Policy**

### **St. Olaf's NS Code of Behaviour**

#### **Introduction:**

At St. Olaf's we aim to create a safe and positive environment that promotes teaching and learning. We will work with parents and the extended community to enable children to develop their full potential. Our code of behaviour is structured to underpin this process.

The aim of the Code of Behaviour is to ensure a happy and secure learning environment in which each child will be enabled to develop his / her potential to the full. This educational process is seen as involving partnerships of parents, teachers, Board of Management and the Christian and wider community helping the child to develop as a well-balanced person. The school acknowledges that parents/guardians are the primary educators of their children and it appreciates the important role parents play in supporting standards of good behaviour in school. Parents can support the development of their child by encouraging pupils to abide by school rules, by visiting the school when requested to do so by the principal or other members of staff and by ensuring that homework is allocated due time and effort by the child.

Our motto **Ar aghaidh le chéile**, which means 'Forward together', is a vision we have of pupils, parents, teachers and other school personnel working together to foster a secure and positive atmosphere in our school.

#### **Where and When the Code of Behaviour will apply**

This Code of Behaviour will apply to all school activities, regardless of timing and location. This will encompass the normal school day, activities that may extend beyond normal opening and closing times and all extra-curricular activities such as school tours, outings, performances and sporting pursuits. We take into account the fact that some children may not fully understand or may not be fully able to comply with set school rules. Consideration will be taken in individual circumstances with regard to sanctions given. However, the needs of all pupils must be taken into account and no one pupil's behaviour should compromise the education, safety or well-being of other pupils.

#### **Aims of the Code of Behaviour**

St. Olaf's NS Code of Behaviour aims:

- to create a safe, secure and positive environment where teaching and learning can occur
- to promote a friendly, happy atmosphere which will help every child to reach their full potential
- to foster an atmosphere of acceptance, respect and consideration for all
- to promote positive behaviour and self-discipline where the children take ownership of their own behaviour
- to help our children to realise that they have choices about the behaviours they exhibit
- to help our children to mature into responsible and full participants in a learning community
- to assist Parents / Guardians in understanding the expectations and procedures that underpin the Code of Behaviour

## **Responsibilities in Relation to Behaviour**

The teachers and adults encountered by the children in St. Olaf's NS have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other. Our example has an important influence on the children.

As Teachers and Adults we aim to:

- create a positive climate with realistic expectations
- promote, through example, honesty and courtesy
- model the good behaviour we expect from the children
- provide a caring and effective teaching and 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 or disability
- show appreciation for the efforts and contributions of all

The children in St. Olaf's NS can help enormously to make our school a positive, happy and effective learning environment by adhering to the school rules.

The Parents and Guardians of the children in St. Olaf's NS have the responsibility to ensure that their children abide by the expectations outlined in this Code of Discipline.

All Parents and Guardians should aim to:

- familiarise themselves with St. Olaf's Code of Behaviour and discuss same with their child
- encourage their child(ren) to abide by the school rules
- encourage punctuality every day
- encourage full attendance
- label their child's belongings for easy identification
- support their child with their homework
- inform their child's class teacher about illnesses / school absences in writing or via Aladdin
- ensure their child is wearing their full school uniform / tracksuit
- ensure their child is provided with a healthy lunch in accordance with our Healthy Eating Policy
- encourage good behaviour and respect for others at all times
- communicate with their child's teacher about factors likely to affect their child's behaviour in school

## **Guidelines for Positive School Behaviour**

The following standards of behaviour are expected of all members of the St. Olaf's NS community.

- Respect for self and others
- Respect for school property, buildings and the natural environment of the school
- Respect for other children's property
- Follow instructions from staff immediately
- Walk quietly in the school buildings
- Do their best in all activities
- Listen to those who are speaking, including visitors to their classroom
- Be kind and show a willingness to help others
- Show courtesy and good manners at all times
  
- Stand back at doors and stairways to let adults through

## **Classroom Behaviour**

Each teacher will have a set of expected classroom behaviours for his/her class level. The following general behaviours apply to all classes.

- Co-operate fully with your Teacher's / SNA's / Substitute Teacher's instructions
- Complete your work to the best of your ability
- Present your work neatly in books and copies
- Aim to be in your line every morning at 8.50am
- Enter and leave your classroom quietly
- Ask permission before leaving your classroom
- Complete all Homework to the best of your ability

### **Behaviour on the Yard at Break-Times**

Children have the opportunity to play and socialise with each other at morning and lunch break-times. The following points will help to keep the children safe on the yard.

- Children are encouraged to treat others as they would like to be treated themselves
- All class groups have a designated play area and should remain in that yard within the yellow lines
- Children should never leave the school grounds
- Children eat their lunch in their classroom before / after yard times
- Children must ask permission from a supervising teacher / SNA to leave the yard e.g. going to the toilet
- Children with injuries will be treated in the Secretary's office
- Serious injuries (e.g. bangs to head, cuts, bruising) will be recorded in the Incident Form and a copy of this form will be presented to the principal. The class teacher will be informed of such injuries at the end of break by teachers on yard supervision. Parents will be contacted through Aladdin or a note in their Homework Journal.
- At the end of breaks the children will line up in their respective lines
- When the class teachers collect their lines, the children should walk in single file to their classroom
- Children are encouraged to be fair and inclusive when setting up their games
- Rough play and bad language are not allowed at any time
- Children are not allowed to play on steps, railings, rocks or flower beds at breaktime

### **Promoting Positive Behaviour**

There are a number of positive reinforcements and rewards which teachers use in their classes, both for work well done and for good behaviour. These include:

- Stickers and star charts
- Table points / Table of the Week
- Individual points / Class Dojo
- Positive notes home
- Prizes on Friday
- Pupil of the Day
- Pupil of the Week
- Golden Time at end of the week
- Certificates
- Model Good Behaviour
- Formal / Informal positive reinforcement
- Responsibility given for jobs outside the class

### **Unacceptable Behaviour**

Three levels of Misbehaviour are recognised: minor, serious and very serious. All everyday instances of minor misbehaviours will be dealt with by the class teacher or the supervising teacher at break-times.

#### *Minor Misbehaviours*

Examples of Minor Misbehaviours include:

- Interrupting work in the classroom
- Being discourteous / unmannerly
- Running in the corridors
- Rough play on the yard
- Leaving the classroom without checking with the class teacher
- Leaving the yard to go indoors at break times without checking with the supervising teacher / SNA

- Not wearing full school uniform
- Late in the mornings
- Unfinished Homework
- Keeping a mobile phone turned on in their bag during class time
- Scooting or cycling on school grounds

Class teachers will keep a running record of minor misbehaviours. If a pattern of minor misbehaviours appears, the class teacher may inform Parents/Guardians.

### *Serious Misbehaviours*

Single instances of serious misbehaviour will be dealt with by the class teacher in conjunction with the Deputy Principal / Principal. Any single incident may be brought to the Parent/Guardian's attention at the discretion of the Deputy Principal / Principal.

In cases of repeated serious misbehaviours Parents/Guardians will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the class teacher and Deputy Principal / Principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of Serious Misbehaviours include:

- Behaviour that is hurtful including threats, bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, and victimisation
- Using violent and/or aggressive behaviour towards others
- Verbal abuse of a teacher / adult
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning on a daily basis
- Damage to school property
- Theft
- Using a mobile phone at school / taking photographs / videos

### *Very Serious Misbehaviours*

Parents / Guardians will be informed immediately by the Principal if there is one incident of very serious misbehaviour.

Examples of Very Serious Misbehaviours include:

- Physical abuse of a teacher / adult / other child
- Serious aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour (including online learning platforms) towards a teacher / adult / other child
- Bringing dangerous implements to school
- Leaving St. Olaf's NS without permission
- Serious damage to property e.g. structural damage to school building or breaking windows
- Bullying over a prolonged period of time after earlier interventions
- Carrying drugs / alcohol / cigarettes / dangerous substances

### **Sanctions for Unacceptable Behaviour**

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by helping children to:

- learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- see that their behaviour affects others
- understand that they have choices about their behaviour
- understand that their choices have consequences
- learn to take responsibility for their choices / behaviours
- discuss and devise strategies to prevent the behaviour occurring again

Sanctions should:

- reinforce the Code of Behaviour
- signal to other children that their wellbeing is being protected
- prevent serious disruption of Teaching and Learning
- be clear so that the child understands why the sanction is being applied
- make it clear that changes in behaviour are needed to avoid further sanctions
- make a clear distinction between minor and major offences
- relate to an individual and not a group

- focus on the child's behaviour not on the child himself/herself

The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. Individual teachers may put alternative measures in place depending on the circumstances involved and the age of the child. This list is not exhaustive.

The Class Teacher will:

- ask the child to stop the behaviour
- discuss behaviour and reason with child
- advise child on how to improve the behaviour
- loss of privileges e.g. golden time / free play / activities / representing the school / attendance on a school trip / tour
- ask the child to write down their account of behaviour
- inform the Principal / Deputy Principal about on-going behaviour
- communicate with Parents/Guardians in Journal
- make an appointment with Parents/Guardians
- make an appointment with the Principal and Parents/Guardians

Other measures, more appropriate to the misbehaviour, may be introduced by the class teacher if they are deemed necessary.

When all of the above has been exhausted then the matter will be referred to the Board of Management where;

- BOM will consider Suspension
- BOM will consider Expulsion

### *Suspension*

Suspension is defined as 'requiring a student to absent himself / herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days' (NEWB Guidelines)

Exclusion for part of a school day or asking Parents/Guardians to keep a child from school, as a sanction, counts as suspension. Suspension will be considered as part of a range of sanctions where a child has engaged in a serious or very serious misbehaviour. While suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern, a single instance of serious misbehaviour may be grounds for suspension. The decision to suspend will be based on the following grounds:

- The seriously detrimental effect on the Education of the other children of the child's behaviour to date
- Whether the child's continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to Health and safety
- The child is responsible for serious damage to property

The purpose of the suspension is to give the child / Parent / Guardian / Staff time to consider the child's actions and to consider the implications for the other children in the class group. It will also provide the school with time to devise ways to help the child improve the child's behaviour in the future.

The Principal can suspend a child for periods of up to three days. If a longer suspension is proposed, the Principal should refer to the Board of Management for consideration and approval. Reports to the Board and to the relevant authorities should be made in line with NEWB Guidelines.

### *Expulsion*

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a child. This authority will be exercised in line with the procedures outlined in the Development of a Code of Behaviour Guidelines for Schools NEWB.

### *Appeals*

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, Parents / Guardians are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills against some decisions of the BOM, including suspension and expulsion.

## **Behaviour Outside of School**

For breaches of the code of behaviour outside school, of which the school is made aware, for the most part the discipline policy of the school will not be imposed. Rather, parents will be notified and asked to deal with the issue themselves.

Pupils are also reminded that at all times they are expected to behave in a manner that is socially acceptable and that they should support one another in promoting good behaviour.

## **Bullying**

Please refer to St. Olaf's NS Anti-Bullying Policy

## **Communicating with Parents and Guardians**

Communicating with Parents/Guardians is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy which can be implemented at home and at school. A high level of co-operation and open communication is an important factor which encourages positive behaviour in the school.

St. Olaf's NS encourages Parents to talk in confidence to teachers and/or Principal about any significant development in their child's life which may affect their child's behaviour.

The following methods of Communication are used:

- Messages through Aladdin
- Informal / formal Parent / Teacher Meetings
- Notes in Homework Journals
- Letters / notes to and from St. Olaf's NS
- St. Olaf's NS website and the Twitter account
- Email / text messaging

## **Monitoring/Evaluation/Review**

A copy of this Code of Good Behaviour is made available to all parents. All parents are asked to study the code and to sign and return the form attached, indicating their agreement with its terms.

It is a condition of attendance at this school that pupils abide by the rules and procedures in this Code of Good Behaviour.

Review and Approval of the Code of Behaviour for St. Olaf's NS by the Board of Management

Signed Donal Rochford

Date 21/11/21

Date of Review

21/11/21