

St. Andrew's N.S.



Code of Behaviour

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies.

Policy Ratified and reviewed

15th January 2010
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Terms and Acronyms used in this Policy

Terms/Acronyms	Explanation
D.E.S.	Department of Education and Skills
B.O.M.	Board of Management
S.E.N.	(Pupils with) Special Educational needs
N.E.P.S.	National Educational Psychological Service
S.E.N.O.	Special Educational Needs Organiser
S.N.A.	Special Needs Assistant
E.C.A.	Extra Curricular Activities
P.T.A.	Parent Teacher Association
H.S.E.	Health Service Executive
I.N.T.O.	Irish National Teachers' Organisation

Introductory Statement

The Department of Education and Skills (D.E.S.) issue all circulars mentioned or referenced in this policy to the chairperson of the Board of Management (B.O.M.) and the principal teacher. Circulars can be viewed on www.education.ie. While overall pupil behaviour in the school is of a high standard with good home school cooperation, it was decided to broaden the scope of the policy to reflect how the behaviour of all members of our school community can affect others. While the Education Act (2000), prompted the drawing up of our initial Code of Conduct, we are now required to revise it again in light of the further published guidelines *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, (2008)* National Education Welfare Board (N.E.W.B.) now called Tusla.

Steps adhered to when drawing up the policy:

- a. An initial audit and review of the school's Code of Behaviour was undertaken by the principal and deputy principal.
- b. This was subsequently used as a benchmark for more detailed discussion with the school staff at a designated staff meeting which focused on identifying existing good practice within the school and addressing areas which required attention or development.
- c. A committee of staff, parents and management was convened to provide a more objective evaluation of the draft policy.
- d. Following this, the Code of Behaviour was presented to, amended and approved by the B.O.M. on Friday, 15th January 2010.
- e. The approved Code of Behaviour was circulated to all families in the school accompanied by a letter inviting their support for the policy.

Review and Research

The existing school policy was reviewed in an endeavour to identify good practice within the school and to address current areas of concern among staff. Other organisational policies were consulted to ensure a consistent approach. These included:

- Child Protection Policy
- Social Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) Policy
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Pupil Attendance Policy
- Grievance Procedure Policies (included in School Booklet)
- Homework Policy
- Code of Conduct for Extra Curricular Activities
- Substance Use Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Internet Use Policy
- Learning Support Policy
- Home-School Liaison policy (included in School Booklet)
- Pupil Supervision Policy

Relevant literature was consulted and best practice was also researched within other schools. Literature included articles from the Irish National Teachers organisation I.N.T.O. publications and *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools* National Education Welfare Board (2008), *N.E.W.B.*

This policy has been reviewed and amended by the Principal and staff, and then ratified by the B.O.M. on 9th November 2022.

Rationale

Under the Education Welfare Act (2000), schools are required to prepare a Code of Behaviour in respect of all students registered at the school. It details in Section 23(2) that the Code of Behaviour shall specify:

- The standards of behaviour that shall be expected of each student attending the school.
- The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards.
- The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from St. Andrew's N.S.
- The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student.

Following the publication by the N.E.W.B. of '*Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*', it was decided that the existing school policy required benchmarking in relation to these guidelines.

Ethos

Our ethos is determined by custom and practice within our school, which in turn is informed by the Christian teaching of our trustee churches. Within this ethos, each individual (i.e. members of the staff, pupil and parents/guardians) is treated with respect, with their contribution towards school life being affirmed.

Equality Statement

St. Andrew's N. S. values all its pupils and their families equally, irrespective of:

- Gender
- Social background
- Family circumstances
- Physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive and emotional abilities
- Educational achievement
- Ethnicity
- Different religious belief or background

Aims

- To promote positive behaviour and to allow the school to function in a safe, orderly and harmonious way.
- To create a place of dedicated learning where children can progress in all aspects of their development.
- To promote a caring Christian environment within our school, where each child is nurtured and valued within a cooperative and respectful atmosphere among all members of the school community.
- To provide clarity with regard to the school's expectations of appropriate behaviour from each member of the school community.
- To highlight the positive contribution that good behaviour has in creating a harmonious school atmosphere.
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences among children and the need to accommodate these differences where possible.
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form the Code of Behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these.

Roles and Responsibilities

In St. Andrew's N.S. each member of our school community plays a role in ensuring that the school remains a dedicated place of learning and teaching, with individual members having more specific responsibilities. The principal teacher, under the direction of the B.O.M. has overall responsibility in ensuring that the school's Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and positive manner. This is achieved through the full cooperation of staff, parents and pupils in upholding the code.

Induction of New Families into the School

On completion of the school's Application Form, parents are required to agree to, accept and support the Code of Behaviour, a copy of which is available on the school's website at the time of application.

School Rules

'A positive school ethos is based on the quality of relationships between teachers and the ways in which pupils and teachers treat each other. This positive ethos permeates all the activities of the school and helps in forming a strong sense of social cohesion within the school.' (Department of Education and Science Circular 20/90)

School rules apply to all pupils during school time or during any school related activity.

1. Be a motivated learner

- Work to the best of your ability - Stick at it even when you find the work difficult – don't give up
- Give others a chance to learn – do not disrupt or interrupt lessons
- Complete and present all homework to the best of your ability

2. Be the best person that I can be

- Listen and respond respectfully when someone speaks to you
- Try your best - Give things a go
- Be honest, respectful, considerate and kind.
- Include everyone
- Be prepared for school and sports
- Before you speak, T.H.I.N.K. – Is it True, Helpful, Inspiring, Necessary, Kind.

3. Be Safe

- Keep your hands and feet to yourself
- Take care of your belongings and respect the belongings of others
- Walk quietly on the corridors
- Play safely in the yard – stay off the bank, no rough play, line up properly when the bell rings.

When we follow these rules we are showing that we can **Be Respectful, Responsible & Ready to Learn.**

Classroom Rules (Based upon the aforementioned rules)

At the start of the school year, each class teacher will draw up a set of classroom rules in cooperation with his/her pupils. Teachers will also devise their own approach to behaviour management within their classrooms in line with the whole school Code of Behaviour. These will aim to be both age appropriate and equitable.

Dress Code

- Pupils should be dressed neatly and appropriately for school at all times. Pupils will be instructed as to appropriate lengths of shorts/skirts in an age appropriate manner. Please speak with class teacher/principal if in doubt. Should pupils wear clothing or footwear which is deemed unsafe or inappropriate by the class teacher or school principal, contact will be made with home with a view to securing a change of apparel.
- Pupils must wear the school's uniform to school each day. Currently this consists of a navy blue school sweatshirt or cardigan, with our school crest embroidered on the left hand side, over a white collared polo shirt. School uniforms are available from our designated supplier. Please contact our school office as our designated supplier is subject to change.
- Pupils must wear flat soled, well-fitting shoes (no open-toed sandals, high heels, wedges or flip flops please). Footwear should be suitable for physical activity.
- Appropriate clothing should be worn on all Physical Education (P.E.) days. During the last term of each school year we try to do extra P.E. activities, so we suggest that pupils dress for physical activity every day.
- Stud type earrings only. Make-up, false eyelashes or false nails should not be worn in school.
- The school recommends that jewellery should not be worn in school. The school takes no responsibility for the loss of any jewellery worn into school.
- Long hair must be tied back to minimise the spread of head-lice. This applies to all pupils. Also, long hair must not impinge on the pupil's ability to engage with text and/or other school activities.
- Hairstyles must be such which does not adversely affect the pupils' ability to complete tasks unhindered.
- Sunscreen should be worn on sunny days.
- Pupils must bring weatherproof clothing to school each day, even during the summer term. Coats should be waterproof.

Pupil Property

- All belongings including clothing must be labelled with the pupil's name clearly visible. The school has a lost property box located near the front door. Items unclaimed after a month will be recycled. **It is not the responsibility of school staff to locate lost items.**
- Mobile phones should not be brought into school as they may be damaged, lost or used inappropriately. In exceptional circumstances pupils in 4th – 6th class may bring a phone into school if they are walking to or from school unaccompanied by an adult. Phones must be switched off and kept in schoolbags during school hours. Phones should never be taken to the swimming pool. Pupils may use school phones with permission and in emergencies only. Any breach of these rules will result in the confiscation of phones. Once confiscated, phones must be collected from the school office by parents/guardians.
- **Parents and other adults are requested not to photograph children while in school or other school related activities without permission. Please see school Photography Policy for further guidance.**
- Pupils may not take photographs while in school or on a school related activity except with the permission of their teacher. Inappropriate use of cameras, phones or smart watches ~~or phones~~ will result in their confiscation for personal return to parents/guardians.

- The inappropriate use of camera phones / smart watches to photograph or record, especially in areas such as changing rooms, is considered as gross misbehaviour.
- Toys may only be brought to school for activities such as “show and tell” and should not be brought out to the school play areas.

Lunches/Break Times

- We encourage healthy eating in school. Please ensure that your child has a healthy lunch which he or she will eat. Chocolate bars, crisps, sweets, biscuits and cake are considered unhealthy so please do not include these in your child’s lunch except on Friday where pupils are permitted to bring in one small treat.
- Crisps, lollipops, hard sweets, chewing gum and fizzy drinks should not be brought to school on any school day.
- Only send food in containers which your child can manage independently.
- Drinks should be carried in a sealed plastic container/carton (no glass bottles).
- For reasons of health and safety please do not send hot drinks to school.
- Food should not be consumed in the playground.
- Pupils vacate classrooms during break times, weather permitting. Only children who are injured may remain indoors and must stay with the staff member on indoor duty. If a child is unwell they should not be sent to school. If they are well enough for school, they are well enough to go outside at break times. On rare occasions on foot of medical advice, pupils may be permitted to remain inside.
- Pupils must play in the areas of the playground assigned to them.
- The school field is to be accessed via the ramp or steps and not the banks. Senior classes use the step only under strict supervision by the teacher. Running and rolling on the banks or ramp is not permitted. This also applies to Extra Curricular Activities (E.C.A.)
- Rough or dangerous play is not tolerated.

Internet / Social Networking Sites

Whilst the school has no wish to police pupils’ activities outside of school hours, common sense and respect for all within the school community would suggest that any misuse of social networking sites by pupils towards other pupils, during or outside school hours, which may come to the attention of the school, may constitute bullying/gross misbehaviour and as such we would refer to the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy and Disciplinary Procedures.

Social Media

In the interests of child protection and the well being of our school community, we would strongly suggest that no child’s name or image appear on social websites. Similarly, no staff member should be identified by name or position on such sites. The school has agreed structures to handle grievances or indeed affirm school practice.

Pupils from 3rd to 6th Classes will also be required to agree to and sign a Social Media Contract. Please refer to our Acceptable Use Policy for I.C.T.

Staff

In our school we endeavour to treat all children with respect and dignity. We strive to create a strong sense of community and cooperation among staff, pupils and parents with a primary focus on the promotion and affirmation of positive behaviour. This will be achieved through:

- Treating children in a fair, consistent and respectful manner.
- Affirming good and helpful behaviour.
- Dealing with other adults in a professional and supportive manner.

- Using the school's S.P.H.E. Curriculum to support the Code of Behaviour. This programme 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 essential that the Code of Behaviour is understood and supported by everyone within the school community. Therefore, all new staff members and families new to St Andrew's N.S. will be supplied with a copy of the current Code of Behaviour and afforded an opportunity to discuss same.

Board of Management

'The Board of Management has a role to play in the maintenance of desirable standards of behaviour in a school. It should be supportive of the principal teacher in the application of a fair code of behaviour and discipline within the school.' (Department of Education and Skills Circular 20/90)

- The Code of Behaviour was presented, has been discussed and reviewed by the B.O.M on a regular basis over the years.
- The B.O.M. supports the implementation and review of this code in an open and inclusive manner.
- Ongoing professional development of staff is supported by the B.O.M. through funding attendance by staff at relevant courses and the provision of substitute cover for this as resources permit.
- The school has set out clear procedures for dealing with ongoing and serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour (please see section on suspension and expulsion).

Parents

'Evidence seems to indicate that schools which succeed in achieving and maintaining high standards of behaviour and discipline tend to be those with the best relationships with parents.' And *'Schools need the support of parents in order to meet legitimate expectations with regard to good behaviour and discipline.'* (Department of Education and Skills Circular 20/90).

The school regards the role of parents/guardians/families as being one of the most important factors in promoting positive behaviour. With this in mind, parents are encouraged to visit the school, to participate in school activities and to meet with teachers by appointment/prior arrangement. During school hours (8.30am-2.10pm) communication between parents and their child teacher(s) should be directed through the school office. (Please see school policy on home-school liaison contained in the School Booklet).

Parents are welcome to discuss their child's progress or any issues of concern with teaching staff by prior appointment, outside school hours. It is not appropriate to engage a staff member in discussion about individual pupils during official teaching hours as all staff have a duty of care to supervise and teach the pupils during these times. As a school we also wish to give such important matters the time and attention they deserve. This is school policy as directed by the B.O.M.

In St. Andrew's N.S. we endeavour to teach children to treat both themselves and all others with respect. This characteristic spirit of our school must also apply to the interaction among all adults within our school community, i.e.

- Parent to parent
- Staff member to staff member
- Parent to staff member and vice-versa

- Adults to children

Within the School Booklet, the procedures for home-school communication are set out along with the agreed structures for the processing of grievances against teachers. These procedures, to which the school must adhere, were agreed between the school management bodies and teacher unions. Accordingly, parents are required to communicate any complaints or concerns to the relevant teacher in the first instance. Our Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A.) is not a channel for this and cannot be involved in any way.

Parents can support the school in the promotion and maintenance of positive behaviour through:

- Presenting a positive attitude towards our school to their children.
- Cooperating with the school in addressing incidents of misbehaviour, ongoing misbehaviour and gross misbehaviour.
- Discussing this policy with their child/children in an age appropriate manner.
- Informing the school in confidence regarding any factors within the home environment which may adversely affect their child's behaviour.
- Cooperating with the school in its attempts to address alleged bullying behaviour.
- Attending parent/teacher meetings as requested.
- Ensuring the child's regular and punctual attendance at school.
- Ensuring that homework is completed to an acceptable standard commensurate with the child's ability/aptitude.
- Ensuring their child/children has/have the necessary books and materials required for school.
- Ensuring that children who are unwell remain at home to recover fully.

Please contact the class teacher in the first instance if difficulty is being experienced with any of the above.

Approach to Promoting Positive Behaviour

Pupil behaviour should not be viewed in a vacuum as it can be influenced by many factors including the ethos and atmosphere which exists throughout the school. This bestows a significant responsibility on all adults within the school, whether staff, parents or management, to communicate both with each other and the children in a respectful, affirming and positive manner. As a school we recognise that the prevention of misbehaviour through effective classroom management and organisation plus the creation of a positive learning environment is a key element in attempting to manage challenging behaviour.

'The most effective methodology that teachers develop in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place'. (Managing Challenging Behaviour, Guidelines for teachers (2004) I.N.T.O., p. 5).

Strategies used throughout the school to promote good behaviour and to prevent misbehaviour may include:

- A set of agreed classroom rules/charter negotiated between teacher and pupils. These must be consistent with the school ethos as expressed in the Code of Behaviour and will work towards creating a positive atmosphere for learning.
- Periodic review of the above rules and clarification where necessary.
- A clear system of acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour. This could include a star chart, marbles/ tokens, stickers, Coderdojo and homework passes, as decided by each individual class teacher.

- An agreed whole school system of age appropriate sanctions (please see below).
- Classroom management techniques that ensure a variety of activities and methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation.
- Clear, consistent classroom routines, e.g. methods of lining up and transition from subject to subject. Please see policy on Pupil Supervision.
- A clearly documented system of pupil supervision by staff both in yard and on wet days, etc.
- Clearly defined playground areas are allocated for class groupings on a whole school basis supervised by staff members.
- Senior pupils within the school playing a positive role in the monitoring of pupils in the Infant classes during playtime.
- Incidents of misbehaviour which are in breach of yard rules or cause injury or upset to other pupils being recorded in the yard incident book. Such incidents are also reported orally to the class teacher (or Special Needs Assistant, S.N.A.) in the case of pupils with additional needs) by a staff member on duty.
- In cases of persistent misbehaviour or dangerous play, these pupils accompany supervising adults during playtime on a timeout basis for all or some part of break.

Pupils with Challenging Behaviour

The school recognises the variety of differences which exist among children and the need to accommodate these. The school also recognises that there may be a number of factors both at home and within school which can influence pupil's behaviour and interaction at any given time. In this regard, school staff devote a considerable amount of time liaising with families and the child's previous teacher(s) in an attempt to help address/prevent behavioural issues in as supportive a manner as possible.

All pupils who attend our school are expected to adhere to the Code of Behaviour of the school. While the school will make every effort to support and accommodate children with challenging behaviour, this must be balanced against the right of other class members and staff to work in a safe and positive school environment which is conducive to learning and teaching. In cases where a child consistently displays challenging behaviour, the school will endeavour, with parental support, to seek support and guidance for the child. In such cases help and advice may be sought from support services within the wider community, e.g. Community Care Services provided by the Health Service Executive (H.S.E.) or other relevant agencies or professionals where appropriate. This may be with a view to developing behavioural modification programmes for the pupil(s) concerned.

Involving Parents in the Management of Challenging Behaviour

'Parents should be kept fully informed from the outset of instances of serious misbehaviour on the part of their children. It is better to involve parents at an early stage than as a last resort.' (Department of Education and Skills Circular 20/90).

St. Andrew's N.S. values the support of parents in the maintenance of the school as a learning community where learning is not interrupted through the misbehaviour of individual pupils. Apart from minor misbehaviour, parents are contacted at an early stage in the disciplinary process to ensure that a partnership approach is taken to mediate this misbehaviour. This is done either by telephone, through a note in the pupil's journal or verbally at an informal meeting. If misbehaviour persists a formal meeting is convened involving the parents, class teacher and the principal teacher (where appropriate) with the aim of drawing up an agreed plan to address the behaviour in question. If they have concerns regarding their child's progress or interactions within the school, parents should

contact the school office to arrange an appointment with the class teacher and state their area of concern to enable an informed and productive discussion to take place,

Managing Aggressive or Violent Misbehaviour

Children learn best in a calm, relaxed and non-threatening school environment. Within the school there is zero tolerance of aggressive or violent behaviour from pupils. Where this occurs parents are immediately contacted with a view to meeting with staff in order to devise appropriate strategies to deal with this. These may involve:

- Devising agreed behaviour modifications programmes for use at home and in school, with the support of outside agencies where necessary.
- Inputs from the school psychologist from the National Educational Psychological Service (N.E.P.S), the Special Educational Needs Organiser (S.E.N.O.), or other professionals from the H.S.E. or other child support agencies.
- Both class and support teachers work as a team within each classroom where they meet to discuss the learning and emotional needs of the children within their class or care. This enables collaboration to take place regarding the behaviour of individual pupils through the sharing of expertise.
- Where resources permit, individual teachers are facilitated in attending appropriate courses on a relevant topic.
- Given the B.O.M. and staff's duty of care towards pupils, the school reserves the right to permit staff to physically restrain those engaged in violent or threatening behaviour towards others. In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour which poses a risk to the safety of the pupil concerned, other pupils or staff, the school reserves the right to temporarily exclude the child concerned from the school pending the outcome of consultation with the S.E.N.O. or other appropriate bodies. The latter takes place with a view to putting in place strategies or resources to deal with the behaviour and/or identifying possible alternative and, if necessary, a more appropriate school placement for the child concerned.

Rewards and Acknowledgement of Good Behaviour

- Good behaviour is affirmed by staff members and is communicated to the class teacher if he/she is not present.
- Pupil achievement is celebrated within whole school assemblies or class assemblies by:
 - Pupils being encouraged to bring in awards gained from activities outside school.
 - Recognition of achievements that may arise from extra-curricular activities.
 - Presentation of awards from within school.
 - Presentation of certificates and trophies for sports day.
 - Presentation of graduation booklets and certificates.
 - Kind, considerate or helpful actions by individuals or classes.
- Specific rewards at certain class levels may include golden time, pupil of the week, homework passes and other such tokens which recognise positive behaviour and contribution to the class.
- The staff is committed to affirming pupil achievement and positive behaviour with parents and colleagues. This may be a note in the pupil's journal, through a parent teacher meeting or informally.

Sanctions Applicable to Unacceptable Behaviour

The Education (Welfare) Act (2000), Section 23, states that a school must outline *‘the measures that may be taken if a student fails to observe the standards of behaviour that the school has outlined’*.

Misdemeanours within the school are categorised under the following headings, which are

I. MINOR

II. SERIOUS

III. GROSS

Examples of Misbehaviour could include:

MINOR	Disrupting of class, non-completion of work through lack of application, breach of school rules.
SERIOUS	Bullying, bad language, persistent disruption of class, persistent non-completion of homework, disobeying staff members, displaying a lack of respect for others, assaults on fellow pupils or staff members/adults or persistently disregarding school rules.
GROSS	Stealing, serious assault, vandalism, extreme and ongoing verbal abuse, truancy, persistent bullying and drug/alcohol related incident.

The above only serve as examples. The degree of misdemeanours, i.e. minor, serious or gross, will be judged by the teachers and/or principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours.

At St. Andrew’s N.S. pupil behaviour is usually modified within the early stages of the disciplinary procedure. Minor incidents of misbehaviour are usually dealt with by the class teacher or other supervising adult. For both serious and gross misbehaviour the principal, parents and, where appropriate, the B.O.M. becomes involved following the procedures as outlined below.

For more ongoing and/or serious incidents of unacceptable/serious misbehaviour the following will apply:

1. Formal oral warning.
2. If misbehaviour continues pupils are given a visual warning. (yellow card)
3. A second warning
4. Should misbehaviour persist, pupils are given a final visual warning (red card) and is recorded in the teacher’s notes. A Behaviour Reflection Sheet is also given out at this point which the child completes in school, it is signed by the pupil, teacher and sent home to be signed by both parents.
5. On the 2nd Reflection Sheet, a meeting will be called with the parents by the class teacher. Sanctions will be decided at this meeting will be recorded.
6. If poor behaviour continues and following two more serious warnings, a meeting will be organised with parents, class teacher and principal.
7. The pupil will be placed on a report card.
8. A follow up meeting will be called if necessary.

For JI-1st we do not use the Reflection sheet, this is done orally with the pupil.

Depending on the seriousness of the misbehaviour and/or ongoing nature of the misbehaviour, some or all of steps 1-6 may be bypassed. In such cases, immediate referral is made to the school principal and contact made with parents/guardians with a view to placing the pupil on a report card or suspension/expulsion from the school where deemed appropriate by the principal and the B.O.M.

Report Cards

These are issued to pupils who display ongoing disregard of the school's code of behaviour. When a child is placed on a Report Card, his/her class teacher marks the level of his/her behaviour, effort and attitude to school throughout the school day. At the end of each day the child must have his/her Report Card signed by the class teacher, the principal/deputy principal and his/her parents. A Report Card is usually issued for an initial period of two weeks.

The behaviour of pupils is expected to vastly improve during the period of the report card. Should this not occur to the satisfaction of the school a second report card is issued. In this case the B.O.M. is informed.

Suspension/Expulsion Procedures

The Education (Welfare) Act (2000) stipulates that a code of behaviour shall specify '*the procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned*' and '*the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student.*'(Sections 23(2) c, d)

Suspension

Suspension is a rarity at St. Andrew's N.S. as pupils are generally well behaved and steps undertaken by staff with the support of parents result in positive outcomes. Suspension will, however, be considered in cases where the child's behaviour poses a threat to the safety and/or education of others. The purpose of this is to demonstrate the seriousness of the misbehaviour to both parents and the pupil concerned with a view to agreeing steps to modify the behaviour going forward.

Suspension Procedures

1. The child is informed about the complaint made against him/her and is afforded an opportunity to respond.
2. The manner of investigation is explained and a possible outcome i.e. suspension conveyed.
3. The matter is investigated by school staff and detailed records are kept of this.
4. Parents/guardians of the child concerned are requested to attend a meeting with relevant school staff where they are provided with details of the complaint(s) and are afforded an opportunity to respond.
5. In cases where parents/guardians do not agree to attend such a meeting, a formal letter will be issued by the principal teacher advising parents of the gravity of the matter and the importance of attending a rescheduled meeting. Failing that, the duty of the school authorities is to arrive at a decision in response to the pupil's misbehaviour.
6. Following the investigation and discussion with parents the Principal then addresses the matter at a B.O.M. meeting.
7. The parents are informed of the decision reached by letter and where possible by phone.

To ensure openness and accountability:

- records are kept of ongoing, serious and gross misbehaviour outlining a description of the behaviour, when it occurred and the attempted interventions by school staff and meetings held with parents/guardians and any outside agencies where appropriate.
- the B.O.M. authorises the Chairperson or principal teacher (or in his absence the deputy principal) to sanction an immediate suspension of a pupil for up to three school days following a preliminary investigation by the principal/deputy principal to establish the case for suspension.
- A formal investigation will follow the imposition of the suspension.

The Period of Suspension

1. The principal/deputy principal shall inform the Education Welfare Officer, by notice in writing, when *a student is suspended from a recognised school for a period of not less than 6 days. (Sections 21(4) a).*
2. A student will not be suspended for more than three days except in exceptional circumstances where the principal considers that this is necessary in order to achieve a particular objective following a discussion with the B.O.M.
3. During the period of suspension the school will afford an opportunity to the parents/guardians and child to meet with the principal, relevant school staff and a representative from the B.O.M. with a view to agreeing procedures/strategies to be implemented on the child's return to school. This is formalised in writing.

After Suspension

A second period of suspension immediately following the initial period will only be applied if the pupil concerned engages in ongoing or serious misbehaviour that warrants suspension.

Expulsion (Permanent Exclusion)

Under the Education (Welfare) Act, (2000), '*A student shall not be expelled from a school before the passing of twenty school days following the receipt of a notification under this section by an educational welfare officer*' (Section 24). It is the right of a B.O.M. to take '*...such other reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school concerned and that the safety of students is secured*' (Section 24 (5)).

Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the D.E.S. against some decisions of the B.O.M., including permanent exclusion from a school and suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year. 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 D.E.S. Circular 22/02).

The principal and designated B.O.M. member will prepare a response if and when an appeal is being investigated by the D.E.S. (Section 12, Circular 22/02 – Processing of an Appeal).

Keeping Records

In line with the school's practice on record keeping and data protection legislation, factual records are kept in relation to pupils' behaviour and meetings with parents/guardians following a standard format. These are initially kept by the class teacher for the end of year

transfer and are stored securely within the school until the child has reached 21 years of age. After all hardcopy records are destroyed (this is for legal and data protection reasons). Pupil data is only available to parents/guardians and to pupils themselves when they have reached the age of 18 years. School staff will also have access on a need-to-know basis only.

Procedures for Notification of Pupil Absences from School

Please refer to Attendance Policy (copy available from the school office and on the school website).

Success Criteria

Practical indicators of the success of the policy involve:

- Observation of positive behaviour in classrooms, playground and the school environment.
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.

Roles and Responsibilities

The principal was responsible for leading the review of this policy in collaboration with fellow staff members prior to its presentation to the BOM for their consideration and approval.

Ratification and Review

This policy will be reviewed in 2023 or in the meantime as the need arises.

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management 9th November 2022.

Signed: 

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 9th November 2022

Signed: 

(Principal)

Date: 9th November 2022

Appendix 1

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 (D.E.S. web site www.irlgov.ie/educ). Also in C.P.S.M.A. Handbook
- Circular 22/02 Appeals Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 (D.E.S. website).
- Guidelines for Developing School Codes of Behaviour (National Education Welfare Board) *Draft edition published for consultation in 2007*
- Department of Education and Science Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post Primary Schools (1993) available on D.E.S. website.
- Report to the Minister of Education Niamh Breathnach, T.D. on Discipline in Schools. Maeve Martin, 1997. Ch. 4 p.56-61 Recommendations for Schools
- Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes
- Management Board Members' Handbook. Revised 2007. C.P.S.M.A.: A suggested Code of Behaviour and Discipline for National Schools
- I.N.T.O. (2004) Managing Challenging Behaviour: Guidelines for Teachers
- I.N.T.O. (2006) Towards Positive Behaviour in Primary Schools
- I.N.T.O. (1995) Enhancing Self Esteem
- The Education Act 1998. The Education Welfare Act 2000. Questions and Answers, I.N.T.O.
- The Principal's Legal Handbook Oliver Mahon B.L. I.V.E.A. 2002 Ch. 2 School Discipline
- Responding to Bullying. First Steps for Teachers. The Cool School Programme. N.E. Health Board
- Investigating and Resolving Bullying in Schools. The Cool School Programme. N.E. Health Board
- Stop it! Steps to Address Bullying. Wexford Education Network. Wexford Area Partnership. Phone: 053 23994
- Working towards a Whole School Policy on Self-Esteem and Positive Behaviour. Jenny Mosley. Positive Press 2001
- Working Together – to promote positive behaviour in classrooms, C.E.D.R., Mary Immaculate College of Education
- Achieving Positive Behaviour. A Practical Guide. Patricia Dwyer. Marino
- Classroom Management, Daphne Wood: An unpublished paper towards a Masters in Education (D.C.U.)

The B.O.M. of St. Andrew's N.S. reserves the right to amend, delete or add to the above rules. In such cases these changes will be notified to parents/ guardians either in a hard copy or electronically.