



THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Purpose of Code of Behaviour

In order to function effectively any group of people must have a certain level of discipline.

For a school, teachers establish a routine which enables learning activities to proceed smoothly. These learning activities require an orderly environment. Routines are also used to assist in effective classroom management.

School reflects the same system of discipline found in our society, and in our homes, namely self- control (the ideal) backed up by persuasion, backed up by compulsion.

We, the teachers, in consultation with the parents' representatives and board representative have reviewed the code of behaviour and as a result of that audit have prepared this code. During this undertaking the relevance, meaning and positivity of each item was carefully considered. Students' views have been sought by teachers and parents were also welcome to present their child's/children's views. All parents were informed of the review and invited to provide their observations and opinions via the parents association. In addition all parties were encouraged to submit written suggestions via the 'suggestion box' facility provided.

This document has been informed by the views expressed and by the requirements in legislation s. 23 Education (Welfare) Act and the Guidelines for Schools, National Education Welfare Board (NEWB, 2008).

The code was considered by the Board of Management and adopted in October 2008.

How our code was developed

The need to review and audit the code of behaviour (adopted as part of the school plan in February 2002) to ensure compliance with the recent NEWB Guidelines was raised at the staff meeting on August 27, 2008. Following discussion it was agreed to adopt the following approach to the review:

A specific purpose sub committee was to be established and included principal, staff member, Board of Management (BOM) representative and parents' representative from Parents Association.

The views of students were to be established through class discussions, suggestion boxes and parental inputs.

The entire parent body would be informed of the review and encouraged to make their views known to the Parents Association, who would in turn inform the principal of the views expressed.

The members of staff were expected to provide their views at staff meetings or otherwise to inform the principal. Board members would have an opportunity to express views at BOM meetings or otherwise to contact the principal or chairperson directly.

Aims and Vision

- 1 To ensure that every child has an equal right to an education.
- 2 To ensure that no child would be deprived an education by the misbehaviour and or disruption of any pupil or group of pupils.
- 3 To govern children through their affections and reason and not by harshness and severity.
- 4 To provide for the safety and harmony of every child.
- 5 To ensure open and honest communication.
- 6 To foster parental interest in and support for the school.
- 7 To foster communication between home and the school.
- 8 To encourage and affirm good behaviour

Expectations of students staff and parents and how they will treat each other

All relationships at All Saints N. S. are expected to operate on the basis that a person will treat others as he/she would like others to treat him/her.

Principles of how students teachers and parents can help to promote a happy school

The principles underlying the code are

- 1 Happy environment. Children have the right to a happy environment, in which they can grow and develop to their own full potential. They are encouraged to have and to be able to express freely their own thoughts, ideas and preferences with manners, politeness and consideration for others. Bad language and bullying behaviour will not be tolerated.

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- 2 Mutual respect. Children receive respect from staff, pupils and visitors to the school. Children must show respect to others.
- 3 Cleanliness and tidiness. An awareness of cleanliness and hygiene is nurtured in the children. They are encouraged to keep their work, belongings and the school tidy and orderly.
- 4 Homework. Assigned homework is recorded in the homework journal. It is the parents' responsibility to check this notebook each evening and then examine the homework ensuring that the correct homework has been completed. This parental attention is of tremendous benefit to the children and to the school.
- 5 Punctuality: Arrival -Children should arrive to the school in the interval between 8.30 a.m. and 8.50 a.m. As instruction commences at 8.50 children's arrival time should be such that they are ready to start their class work on time. Departure-Children in the infant classes should be collected from the school at 1.10 p.m. and children in other classes should be collected or authorised to leave the school on their own at 2.25 Monday to Thursday and at 1.10 on Friday.

Roles and responsibilities of staff members in relation to behaviour

Teachers and other staff members will work to

- a) Create a safe, caring and positive classroom and school
- b) Promote good learning practices
- c) Commend good behaviour
- d) Be fair and approachable
- e) Keep parents informed of behaviour matters
- f) Keep records of each instance of serious misbehaviour and of instances of ongoing minor misbehaviour
- g) Inform principal where misbehaviour continues
- h) If the principal speaks to a child on a number of occasions regarding misbehaviour, the child's parents will be contacted and requested to attend a meeting with the principal and/or other staff members as appropriate
- i) Inform Board of Management of behaviour issues and in particular of instances of serious misbehaviour and instances of persistent misbehaviour.

Content of school rules

The framework rules for All Saints N. S. can be summarised in the following underlying principles

- Children are expected to work to the best of their ability.
- The golden rule is that children are expected to treat others as they would like to be treated.
- Children are expected to use appropriate language at all times.

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Specific rules

Children are required to work quietly while the teacher is working with another pupil or group of pupils.

Children are required to raise their hand quietly to ask or answer questions and to speak on turn.

Silence is required at times.

Shouting is forbidden.

Running in the school building is forbidden.

School property must be respected and children must use this without causing damage to it.

Other children's property must be respected and must not be damaged or defaced.

Children must not act in an abusive manner to others- physical, verbal or any other form of abuse will not be tolerated.

Children are required to enter and exit the school premises in an orderly fashion.

Cycling is not permitted in the school yard.

School grounds must not be damaged.

Children must remain on the school premises at all times during the school day and may not leave the premises unless accompanied by a teacher or collected by a parent/ guardian or other person authorised by a parent/guardian.

When the bell rings for break time children must stand and walk to the yard. At the end of break children must walk into line and stand quietly until collected by the class teacher.

Class codes

As part of the implementation of this code each classroom will develop its own expectations as appropriate in view of age and stage of the children. The children will be actively included in deciding the class code, in accordance with their age and stage of development.

Rewards

All teachers will affirm and recognise good behaviour in accordance with the age and stage of development of the various classes. Reports of good behaviour will be communicated to parents both formally and informally.

Promoting good behaviour

All teachers will encourage compliance with the code through clear communication of code to children, developing competence through subjects such as SPHE, drama and role play etc. Parents are encouraged to discuss the code with their children and to support the child's efforts to abide by the code.

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Consequences of unacceptable behaviour

Examples of measures which may be taken where a child acts in an unacceptable manner include:

- Remind the child of the rule which has been infringed
- Verbal reprimand
- Removal from the group (in class)
- Child sent to another classroom for a period
- Refer the child to the principal
- Communication with parents
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Withdrawal from the particular lesson or peer group
- Carrying out a useful task in the school
- Detention (break time)
- Formal report to the board of management

Where serious misbehaviour occurs the sanctions of suspension and expulsion may apply. These sanctions may also apply where minor misbehaviour persists over time and interferes with the teaching and learning opportunities.

Anti-bullying policy

The school's anti-bullying code forms part of this code of behaviour and is included as Appendix One.

Application of code of behaviour at school and other places

The code of behaviour applies at all times during the school day and at all places where children may be as part of official school activities (e.g. church for assembly, sporting events, swimming, places where students may be as part of a school outing, concerts etc).

Suspension and expulsion policies

All Saints' National School complies with the NEWB Guidelines.

Summary of procedures for suspension

- Inform the student and parent about the issue, how this will be investigated and that suspension could be the sanction
- Students and parents will be given an opportunity to respond at a meeting. If the parents and student fail or refuse to attend such a meeting this will not prevent the board from reaching a decision on the matter.
- Communication (written) of the decision to the relevant parties – this may include the NEWB
- Inform parents of right of appeal where an appeal is available

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Summary of procedures for expulsion

- A detailed investigation is carried out under the direction of the principal
 - Information to parents and student of the allegation(s), the investigative process and possible outcome may be expulsion
 - Parents and students given opportunity to respond. (Failure to respond will not prevent board from making decision.)
- A recommendation is made to the board of management by the principal
- Consideration by the board of the recommendation and the holding of a hearing
- Board's deliberations and determination following the hearing
- Consultations arranged by the educational welfare officer
- Decision to expel/ not to expel

See page 66-68 and 80- 87 of the Guidelines for further details

Notification re school absences

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 18, requires the parents to notify the principal of a school of the reasons for the child's absence from school. Section 23 of the Act requires the Code of behaviour to outline the procedures to be followed relating to a child's absence from school. In compliance with these requirements the following procedures will apply.

- 1 For absences of a period up to a maximum of 3 days, parents must send a written letter/note upon the return of the child to school, outlining the reason for the absence.
- 2 For periods of more than 3 days the parents are required to contact the school to indicate that the child will be absent for more than 3 days and indicate the expected duration of absence. Upon the return to school the parents will provide a written note/ letter outlining the reason for the absence.
- 3 The Education (Welfare) Act section 21 (4) requires the principal to inform the Educational Welfare Officer in writing if a student is absent from school for a total of 20 or more days from school in any school year.

Procedures for raising a concern or bringing a complaint about a behaviour matter

It is recognised that where staff and parents work together to promote good behaviour and eliminate unacceptable behaviour success for all at school is more likely. Communication between parents and teachers is a fundamental tenet of the code of behaviour. All parties have been involved in the development of the code and all parties must co-operate in the implementation of the code.

Where there are concerns the teacher may make contact with the parents or the parents may make contact with the teacher.

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Where parents have a concern the first step is to make contact with the class teacher. In the event that the matter is not resolved at this stage either the teacher or parents or both may refer the matter to the principal. In the event that the matter remains unresolved a complaint may be made to the board of management.

Parents should be aware that comments by children at home may not be fully accurate and matters should be discussed with the teacher in order for the parents to be fully informed about the issue.

Parents should work in partnership with staff to resolve behaviour problems.

Parents are required as a condition of registering the child as a student in All Saints N.S. to give a written undertaking that the code of behaviour is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure their child's compliance with the code of behaviour.

Where parents are contacted about a child's misbehaviour parents will be required to give an undertaking that their child will behave in future.

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