

St. Mary's Parochial School

Western Road, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.

www.stmarysparochialschool.com

office@stmarysparochialschool.com

086-7038121



Code of Behaviour

Please read this Code of Behaviour and complete the slip at the end. This slip should be returned to the school. The Code of Behaviour is to be retained by you for your further perusal.

1. In devising the code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption – free environment.
2. Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school. The code offers a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are utilised by teachers.
3. The school places greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the long run, give the best results.
4. The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
5. It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, pupils and parents.
6. The rules are being kept to a minimum and are positively stated in terms of what pupils should do.
7. All efforts will be made to match the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and interests of each pupil. This should help reduce boredom, lack of interest or lack of progress.
8. The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal Teacher. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common

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responsibility for good order within the school premises. A pupil will be referred to the Principal Teacher for serious breaches of discipline and for repeated incidents for minor misbehaviour.

9. The safety and welfare of children is considered paramount in the Ethos of the school. The school will always contact parents directly about issues which affect their children unless a relevant Child Protection Authority advises or recommends otherwise.

The Code of Behaviour covers the following:

- Behaviour in class.
- Behaviour in the playground.
- Behaviour in the school environment.
- Attendance at school.
- Homework.

1. Behaviour in class

- (a) Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others, with the smooth running of the class and that affects the work of the class is unacceptable.
- (b) Pupils are expected to work to the best of their ability and to present written exercises neatly.
- (c) Pupils are expected to have required materials.
- (d) Pupils are to put up their hands if they wish to speak and to work quietly at their desks, except to borrow from or help someone beside them if necessary.
- (e) Pupils will sit properly on their chairs and look and listen quietly during explanations.

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- (f) Slippers are to be worn in the classroom and pupils are to remain in their desks while eating lunch.
- (g) A policy of healthy eating is promoted by the school. Sweets, chocolate products, fizzy drinks, cakes and crisps are not allowed.

2. Behaviour in the playground.

- (a) All pupils are expected to treat staff, their fellow pupils and visitors with respect and courtesy at all times.
- (b) In the playground pupils are to be kind; bullying, messing, hitting, throwing, shouting and foul language are not acceptable.
- (c) Pupils are expected to play fair, to be truthful and honest. Continuous arguing is not acceptable.
- (d) To promote safety children are not allowed to climb walls, gates, trees, poles or the bank.
- (e) Pupils are expected to obey signals at the end of break, to line up in orderly manner and walk in single file in the corridor.
- (f) On wet days pupils will remain in the classroom, reading, colouring, playing with toys etc.
- (g) Incidents will be recorded in the incident book. Parents will be informed of any bad accidents/fall.

3. Behaviour in the school environment.

- (a) Pupils must ask permission to leave the classroom for any reason.
- (b) One boy and or girl at the toilet at a time.

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- (c) Pupils must respect all school property and keep environment clean and litter free. Damage caused by pupils to such shall be replaced/paid for by their parents.
- (d) Pupils are expected to move around the school in an orderly manner.

4. Attendance

- (a) Pupils are expected to be in school for 9.10 a.m. The school will be open from 8.50 a.m. Infants are to be collected at 1.50 p.m. and all other pupils at 2.50 p.m. promptly. For the first week of Junior Infant pupils are to be collected at 1.00 p.m.

The school cannot accept responsibility for looking after pupils outside of the times mentioned above.

- (b) You must let the school know if your child is absent and the reason why. It is school policy that reasons must be given in writing. Please complete the absence form on the school website. www.stmarysparochialschool.com. The school is obliged to notify the Educational Welfare Board if a child is absent for 20 days or more or where the absences give rise to concern.
- (c) Any infectious illness should be notified to the school immediately.
- (d) Pupils are expected to dress appropriately for the school environment. Wearing of jewellery is discouraged for safety reasons.
- (e) Pupils are expected to wear runners for P.E. class. Old clothes are to be worn for Art class.

5. Homework

- (a) It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis. All pupils are expected to do homework of a competent standard equal to that obtained during the school day.
- (b) A note is required to explain incomplete homework.

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- (c) Parents are strongly encouraged to take an active interest in their child's homework. If homework causes worry for the pupil parents are asked to contact the teacher.
- (d) From 1st class pupils will have a homework journal. Parents should sign homework journal on completion each night.
- (e) Recommended time allocation for homework:

Infants	10 – 20 minutes
1 st and 2 nd	20 – 30 minutes
3 rd and 4 th	30 – 45 minutes
5 th and 6 th	45 – 60 minutes
- (f) We recommend that homework be seen as a liaison between school and home to benefit the child. Teachers will endeavour to prepare it well in school. It is seen to be good for a child to be able to work in peace and comfort at home and to receive praise when it is due.

6. Rewards for good behaviour.

Good behaviour will be seen to be rewarded in many ways such as:

- (a) Oral and written praise – pupil's journal or copy is used to convey messages of approval.
- (b) Extra privileges will be given to promote good behaviour.
- (c) Parent – teacher meetings.
- (d) Yearly reports will be issued to the parents of each pupil.
- (e) Homework off as appropriate.

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(f) Certificates of Merit will be given to each pupil at the end of the school year highlighting a positive aspect of each child's personality/performance during that previous school year.

7. The following strategies may be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour:

- (a) Reasoning with the pupil
- (b) Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
- (c) Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
- (d) Loss of privileges
- (e) Detention during a break & reflection (written or drawing) to be completed by child.
- (f) Referral to Principal Teacher
- (g) Communication with parents, details of conversation recorded in '*Meeting Form*' and signed by teacher and parent.
- (h) A teacher has the right to refuse to allow a child on a school outing/ tour if the child has misbehaved and is a possible threat to the safety of the other children.
- (i) Suspension (temporary)
- (j) Expulsion

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

Communication with parents will be verbal or by email/letter depending on circumstances. The parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension will be considered.

Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher will be regarded as serious or gross behaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson

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and Principal Teacher. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may have to be suspended for a temporary period. Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130 (5) of the Rules of National Schools, as amended by circular 7/88.

Every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed child referred for psychological assessment without delay. Help will be sought, also from support Services within the wider community, e.g. Community Care Services provided by the Health Boards.

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

Procedures:

The degrees of misbehaviour will decide what type of punishment is warranted. The three degrees of misbehaviour referred to in this document, in order of increasing seriousness are minor, serious and gross. The following principles and examples will be taken into account by the teachers and/or the Principal in deciding into which category of misbehaviour a particular incident or sequence of incidents falls and what the appropriate punishment is:

Examples of minor misdemeanours:

- Interrupting class work
- Arriving late for school
- Running in school building

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- Talking in class line
- Leaving seat without permission at lunch time
- Placing unfinished food or drink cartons in class bin
- Leaving litter around school
- Being discourteous or unmannerly
- Not completing homework without good reason
- Not having homework signed by a parent
- Endangering self or fellow pupils in the school yard at break time.

Examples of steps to be taken by teachers when dealing with minor misdemeanours:

- Verbal reprimand
- Reasoning with pupil
- Requiring pupil to apologise.
- Noting instance of yard misbehaviour in incident book.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with regular occurrences of minor Misdemeanours

Phase 1 (within the classroom):

- Write/ draw story of what happened (Reflection handout)
- Note in homework journal to be signed by parent
- Temporary separation from peers
- Send to Principal
- Denial of participation in some class activity.
- Warning to pupils whose name appears in incident book more than three times.
- Note to parents concerning further misbehaviour in yard.

(Misbehaviour in yard consists of any action that puts the safety of self/other pupil at risk).

Phase 2:

- Inform Principal.
- Class teacher meets one/both parents.
- Principal meets one/both parents concerning yard behaviour.

Examples of serious misdemeanours

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- Constantly disruptive in class
- Telling lies
- Inappropriate use of internet, Use of mobile Phone
- Stealing, Damaging other pupil's property
- Bullying
- Back answering a teacher
- Not working to full potential
- Using unacceptable language
- Bringing weapons to school
- Deliberately injuring a fellow pupil.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with serious misdemeanours:

- Inform Principal. Incidents recorded in Incident Book.
- Principal meets with one/both parents. Individual Behaviour Plan is to be implemented with the support of Special Education Teacher.
- Chairperson of Board of Management informed and parents requested to meet with Chairperson and Principal.

Examples of Gross Misdemeanours

- Setting fire to school property
- Deliberately leaving taps or fire hose turned on
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher, other staff member, a pupil or visitor to the school.
- Leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission.
- Any abuse of drugs, alcohol or cigarettes whether occurring on or off school grounds.

It should be noted that these lists consist of examples only: It is not meant to be a totally comprehensive list of misdemeanours and procedural steps.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with gross misdemeanours/repeated instances of serious misdemeanours

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(a) For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviours, suspension will be considered.

A proposal to exclude a student, through suspension or expulsion, is a serious step, warranted only by very serious misbehaviour. Schools are required, under section 23(2) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, to include their procedures for suspension and expulsion in their code of behaviour in accordance with NEWB guidelines and Dept. of Education circulars.

Fair procedures have two essential parts:

- the right to be heard
- the right to impartiality.

In a school, fair procedures apply to:

- the investigation of alleged misbehaviour that may lead to suspension or expulsion and
- the process of decision-making as to (a) whether the student did engage in the misbehaviour and (b) what sanction to impose.

SUSPENSION

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a student. The Board has delegated the authority to suspend, up to a maximum of 3 days, to the Principal who will give written notification to the Board of Management.

The grounds for suspension

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- the student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- the student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety

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- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

Forms of suspension

Immediate suspension: In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person.

'Automatic' suspension : The Principal may decide, as part of the school's policy on sanctions, and following the consultation process with the B.O.M., parents, teachers and students, that automatic suspension will be imposed on any pupil leaving the school premises without permission. However, a general decision to impose suspension for named behaviours does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures.

Procedures in respect of suspension

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school should observe the following procedures:

Written notification

The Principal should notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter should confirm:

- the period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed

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- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents (for example, 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).

Report to NEWB

The Principal is required to report to the NEWB suspensions of a certain length (i.e. 6 days or over) or suspensions which mean that the aggregate number of days of suspension in a school year is 20 or more.

Expulsion

A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Authority to expel

The Board of Management has the authority from both the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and from common law to expel a student. In addition to the procedures set out below, the Board of Management reserves the right to take action during any deliberative or decision making process to require that a student absent themselves from the school for a particular period whether on health and safety grounds or otherwise.

The grounds for expulsion

Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour. Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that should only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school should have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:

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- meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour
- making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist
- ensuring that all other possible options have been tried including additional training for staff members, appropriate assistance from the various support agencies etc.
- seeking the assistance of support agencies (e.g. National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education).

This procedure may be used in an extreme case, in accordance with the principles set out below and with Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Grounds for expulsion:

- The pupil's behaviour is a consistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- Continued presence of the pupil in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to the pupil's own safety and well-being.
- Continued presence of the pupil constitutes a real and significant threat to the safety and well-being of others.

Automatic expulsion:

The Board of Management may sanction automatic expulsion for certain prescribed misbehaviour:

- Sexual assault
- Possession of and/or supplying illegal drugs
- Actual violence or physical assault against another pupil or member of staff
- Attempted violence or physical assault against another pupil or member of staff

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- Attempted self-harm resulting in the occurrence of potentially serious physical injury where the school judges that it can no longer meet the pupil's needs by adequately providing for the pupil's health, safety and well-being when at school.
- Actual self-harm resulting in the occurrence of serious physical injury where the school judges that it can no longer meet the pupil's needs by adequately providing for the pupil's health, safety and well-being when at school.

Procedures in respect of expulsion:

1. Detailed investigation of incident(s) by school Principal including interviews with all relevant parties, witnesses and the alleged wrongdoer.
2. Provision of written report by Principal to Board of Management outlining the facts of the matter as ascertained by the Principal and the Principal's recommendations for the range of appropriate sanctions or recommendations for a particular sanction.
3. The Principal's report should be furnished to the parents of the pupil at least 5 working days before the hearing referred to below or any rate sufficient time must be allowed to them to review the report and be aware of what allegations are being investigated as part of this process. If statements have been taken as part of the investigation or evidence gathered, the parents are entitled to copies of such statements (unless the statement has been given in confidence and on the understanding that it will not be shared with the pupil and/or their parents) and details about the evidence which will be considered by the Board of Management.
4. The Board of Management considers the school Principal's report and recommendation and holds a hearing at which the child's parents/guardian can make submissions.
5. The Board of Management considers if the expulsion is appropriate in light of the following factors:
 - 5.1 The nature, scale and persistence of the behaviour in question
 - 5.2 The effect of the behaviour on the school community (staff and pupils)
 - 5.3 The previous behaviour and conduct of the pupil

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- 5.4 Any contrition or attempts by the pupil to reform their behaviour
 - 5.5 Attempts (short of expulsion) made by the Principal and staff to divert, correct or check the behaviour and the effectiveness of those attempts
 - 5.6 The duty of the school to provide an education for its students and whether the continued enrolment or the student affects or limits the Board's ability to discharge this duty
 - 5.7 The duty of care owed by the school to its employees, pupils and to visitors to the school and whether the continued enrolment of the student affects or limits the Board's ability to meet this duty of care.
6. Based on the foregoing considerations, any submissions from the parents and the Principal's Report, the Board then makes a decision as to whether or not to exclude the pupil.
7. If the Board of Management recommends expulsion, the Board of Management will propose a date on which the expulsion will become effective which will allow a 20- day period from the date on which the Education Welfare Officer is notified of the proposed expulsions.
8. The Education Welfare Officer is informed of the proposal to expel the pupil and the effective date of that proposal.
9. Parents of the pupil are informed of their rights to invoke a Section 29 appeal under the Education Act 1998.
10. The Education Welfare Officer arranges consultations with the appropriate parties.
11. Confirmation of the decision of the Board of Management (and if relevant, the effective date of the expulsion) is sent in writing by registered post or a recorded delivery method to the parents of the pupil.

Policy on mobile phones

Mobile phones are not allowed in school. If a parent wishes a child to have a phone with him/her, it is necessary to notify the school in writing and the turned-off phone will be kept by teacher until going home time.

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If a phone is found without prior authorisation, it will be taken and returned to the child at the end of the day.

Procedures for dealing with Bullying (See Anti-bullying policy):

1. All reports of bullying will be recorded, investigated and dealt with by teachers.
2. Parents of victims and bullies shall be informed of incidents.
3. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour answers to the questions of what, where, when, who and why will be sought. A record of these answers will be kept.
4. If it is concluded that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it shall be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the Code of Behaviour and Discipline. The unacceptable nature of the behaviour and the consequences of any repetition shall be made clear to the bully and his/her parents
5. A plan of action to be taken by the school will be decided upon and implemented.

This school policy aims to prevent and not just control bullying by creating a school climate which encourages and requires respect, trust, caring, consideration and support for others.

Pupils are encouraged to report incidents of bullying and to see it as responsible behaviour, not telling tales.

This Policy was reviewed by the Board of Management in 2023. It will be next reviewed in 2025.

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Please sign and return to school.

Code of Behaviour:

We have read and agree to comply with this Code of Behaviour.

Father/Guardian: _____ Mother/Guardian : _____

Child/Children: _____ Date: _____

Medical Consent Form:

In the event of an accident or medical emergency, every effort will be made to contact parents. If parents cannot be contacted please state whether or not you give your permission for your child/children to be brought to a doctor/hospital.

I do/do not give permission for my child/children to be brought to the doctor/hospital in the event of an accident or medical emergency.

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

Consent for Photograph

I give permission for my child/children's photograph to be taken in school and shared on school website and school social media sites.

Signed: _____ Dated: _____