

# St. Mary's N.S. Virginia

## CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

This Code of Behaviour has been developed by the staff of St. Mary's N.S. in consultation with parents and the Board of Management. It is based on the existing Code of Behaviour and conforms with all the relevant legislation.

### **Aims and Vision Statement St Mary's N.S., Virginia**

- To ensure a sound Christian formation
- To help our pupils realise their potential and be confident of their own ability
- To help them make decisions and develop a sense of discipline
- To encourage the uniqueness of each child and help them to develop worthwhile relationships with others around them.

### **St Mary's N.S. Vision Statement**

The staff at St. Mary's have evolved the following vision statement to secure the implementation of our stated aim.

We will work to sustain responsible educational success as a primary school.

We will conduct our teaching ethically and demonstrate leadership in satisfying our responsibility to the community of Virginia. Our work environment will be safe and productive and characterised by fair treatment, open communication, teamwork, personal accountability and opportunity for growth and development for all.

We will strive to have a school that our students, parents and teachers are proud of, committed to, and where all have an opportunity to contribute, learn and grow. We want our pupils, teachers and parents to feel respected, fairly treated, listened to and involved. Above all we want satisfaction from accomplishments, friendship, balanced personal and professional lives, and to have fun in our endeavours.

The aims of this Code are:

- To foster a sense of responsibility in all pupils suited to age and experience.
- To promote a secure and happy atmosphere in the school for all pupils.
- To enable all pupils to develop qualities of self esteem and confidence in themselves relative to their age.
- To foster qualities of respect for self as basis for respecting others in person, rights and property.
- In the classroom and at play, the children will be helped to develop the moral qualities of self discipline, perseverance, determination, patience, fair play, appreciation of the rights of others and to realise that there are limitations to their own freedom,
- The school acknowledges the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption-free environment. The school will be a place where pupils are educated in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere free from disruptive behaviour or bullying.
- The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences. Every effort will be made to match curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and interests of each pupil.
- It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and high level of co-operation among staff, pupils and parents. Teachers will insist, firmly but fairly, on honest effort, commitment from pupils and on high standards of behaviour.

The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the principal. He will be assisted by the Behavioural support team. Each teacher has responsibility for good order within the school premises.

The staff considers themselves responsible at all times for the behaviour of children within sight or sound of them, and will respond promptly to any instances of unacceptable behaviour.

The general principles of the Code of Behaviour will apply to children with special educational needs. However the Code will be implemented with regard to the particular special needs of each such child.

Most pupils are well behaved most of the time. It is recognised that the best method of deterring bad behaviour is to positively reinforce good behaviour.

- ◆ Good behaviour means being respectful to fellow students, to teachers and all school employees and visitors. It includes putting up hand/waiting turn to speak, helping other children, being punctual, doing homework, lining up properly. It also means no aggressive behaviour-hitting, punching, kicking or bullying, whether physical or verbal.

#### **Rewards.**

- **Praise and approval from Teacher**
- **Praise and approval from Principal**
- **Displaying work**
- **Stars on chart/stickers**
- **Positive comment to parent, written or verbal.**
- **Lucky dip**
- **Homework voucher**
- **Golden Time**
- **Compliment slips**
- **Incredible Years.**

For the Code of Behaviour to work efficiently, co-operation between staff, parents and pupils is essential. To this end, all parents will be furnished with a copy of the Code. They will be requested to read and discuss it with their children. Parents will be required to sign that they have read, understood and accepted the Code of Behaviour within the School, the Code will be reinforced through teachers regularly revising it with their classes, principal's announcements to classes/groups of pupils and at assembly.

Parents and students can get help if needed or desired. Firstly the principal and teachers will assist in explaining the Code or sorting any problems arising from it. The National Educational Welfare Board (N.E.W. B.) and the National Educational Psychological Service can also assist.

### **Parents**

1. Parents are acknowledged as the primary educators of their children.
2. Parents provide the love, security, discipline and correction which children need to develop high standards of good behaviour.
3. Parents have a crucial role to play in shaping the attitudes which produce good behaviour at school times.
4. Close co-operation with parents is considered to be of the utmost importance.
5. The school needs the support and co-operation of all parents in order to meet legitimate expectations with regard to good behaviour and discipline.
6. Parents can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, by visiting the school when requested to do so, and by making sure that they allocate due time and effort to their homework.

7. Should a parent wish to discuss matters with a teacher, they should make an appointment with the teacher concerned through the school secretary. This avoids disrupting classes and allows a more worthwhile discussion.
8. Parents will be kept fully informed from the outset of instances of serious misbehaviour on the part of their children. The school considers it better to involve parents at an early stage rather than a last resort.

### **School Rules**

1. School hours are from 9.20am to 3.00pm. It is important that children come to school on time.
2. Junior and Senior Infants are dismissed at 2pm. every afternoon, parents collect the infants at this time.
3. Children must enter and exit the school in an orderly manner.
4. Children are expected to be quiet in the corridors. They must always walk in the corridors and in all parts of the school building.
5. Chewing gum, glass bottles, correction fluids, mobile phones or I pods are not allowed in school.
6. Children should address teachers in a civil and courteous way. Rude, offensive language or answering back is unacceptable.
7. It is expected that children will accept correction in an agreeable manner.
8. Pupils will show consideration towards other pupils and will have respect for them and their property. Aggressiveness, bullying or intimidation will not be tolerated.
9. School property must be respected, parents may be asked to pay for property deliberately damaged by their child.
10. All children's belongings should be clearly marked e.g. coats, school bags, lunch boxes, flasks etc., Pupils are encouraged to keep their books neatly covered.
11. No jewellery except watches and stud earrings.
12. If a parent/guardian wishes to collect a pupil during school hours, they must go to the office and sign the child out. The secretary will then call the pupil from their class and the child will go to the office.
13. Written permission from the parent/guardian must be given if a child is collected during school hours by anyone other than the child's parent/guardian.
14. During the school day, children are not allowed to leave the school grounds without the permission of a teacher.

### **Behaviour in the Classroom**

1. Pupils will enter and exit the classroom in an orderly manner.
2. Pupils will be attentive in class and work to the best of their ability.
3. Pupils will not disturb other pupils or cause any disruption which might hinder the smooth running of the class.
4. The following are examples of disruptive behaviour:
  - Disobedience – not doing what they are told.
  - Speaking without permission, out of turn, or interrupting others.
  - Making unacceptable noises, humming hissing, singing, tapping, banging.
  - Using bad language, name calling, fighting, and constantly hitting, punching, pinching, shouting at, screaming at others
  - Inattentiveness, looking around or looking out the windows
  - Rocking or slouching on chairs
  - Moving around the room without permission
  - Throwing items eg pencils, books, rulers, rubbers, boxes, chairs
  - Putting feet up on furniture
  - Eating during class
  - Writing notes or passing them to others
  - Fiddling/playing with toys or other items during their work
  - Defacing their own property, the property of others or school property

- Late coming to school
  - Homework not done (without note of explanation)
  - Unacceptable reactions when corrected e.g. protesting, sulking, back answering, making cheeky or threatening remarks or gestures etc.
  - Laughing/jeering at other children when they are corrected
  - Misbehaving when the teacher leaves the classroom
5. The classroom will be kept clean and tidy and chairs will be put on tables at home time to facilitate cleaning.

### **Behaviour at Break Time**

1. In order to eliminate litter in the building and yard, children will eat their lunches in their classrooms. They may not bring drinks, wrappers, bottles etc. out with them.
2. Children are encouraged to bring sensible and healthy lunches, because the school has a healthy eating policy
3. Children will use the classroom toilets before going out at break time. They will keep the toilets clean and litter free and observe the rules of hygiene.
4. On fine days children will leave the school building as soon as they have eaten their lunches. A written note from a parent is required if a child needs to stay in.
5. In the event of inclement weather or dangerous conditions in the school yard, children will remain in their classrooms at break time.
6. A rota for supervision has been drawn up on order to ensure that children are supervised during all breaks.
7. On fine days, children are not allowed into school at breaktime without permission.
8. Dangerous behaviour/games are not allowed.
9. The following misdemeanours are also considered to be in breach of discipline.
  - Kicking, fighting, name calling, bad language
  - Bullying, intimidation or victimising other children
  - Littering the school yard
  - Taking other children's belongings
  - Vandalism
10. Children will respond instantly to the bell signalling the end of playtime. They will assemble in lines and proceed in an orderly manner when instructed by their teacher

### **Procedure in the Afternoon**

1. On dismissal from school, children leave their class as arranged and proceed in an orderly manner to the school gates.
2. If the bus is late, the children who travel by bus remain in line in the school yard until the bus comes.
3. Children are expected to enter the school bus in an orderly manner and to be of good behaviour while travelling on it.

### **Breaches of Discipline**

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

- a) Reasoning with a pupil
- b) Reprimand (including advice on how to improve, reminder of school rule and insistence on an apology where appropriate)
- c) Temporary separation from friends or group
- d) Prescribed additional work (the child may be required to write lines, or do extra work in other subjects)

**Purple cards;** will be given to any child who breaches the school rules, the behaviour code for the classroom, or for break time. If a child shows instances of good behaviour, they may, at the teacher's discretion, have their purple card withdrawn

- **First detention;** when a child has received three purple cards, they will do a detention (remain in class during breaktime with other children under the supervision of a teacher).

- **Second detention;** after a second detention has taken place, the parent/guardian will meet with the principal, class teacher or a member of behavioural support team to discuss the child's behaviour to date.
- **Third detention;** a meeting between the parent/guardian and the principal, class teacher or a member of behavioural support team, will take place. There will also be a loss of privilege for the child eg school tour, sports day, DVD's in classroom, golden time, place on school committees, etc.
- **Fourth detention** – possible suspension.

**Serious misbehaviour** – bullying, aggression or violence towards school staff or pupils, defiant refusal to follow instruction – may merit a detention, without the intermediate steps of purple cards. In extreme cases or where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour the chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested, in writing, to call to the school, to meet the chairperson and principal. If the parent does 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. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with Rule 130(5) of the Rules for National and the Education Welfare Act 2000 (see Appendix 3). In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents. Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule 130(6) in the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

#### Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

If a child leaves the school grounds without permission and refuses or is reluctant to return the procedure would take place;

Follow the child and keep him/her in view.

A member of staff will contact the guards and the child's parents.

Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130 (5) of National schools, and steps will be followed as advised in N.E.W.B. handbook "Developing a Code of Behaviour" (2008). A copy of these steps is available in the school, and will be provided to the parents of any child for whom the issue of suspension arises.

Occasionally, a pupil may need to be removed instantly from the yard or from a trouble spot. If so, they may be required to walk around with a teacher on yard duty or go to the first aid room.

The Code of Behaviour incorporates the school's anti bullying policy.

This Code of Behaviour applies within the school grounds and on all school activities outside the grounds e.g. the theatre/concerts, the church/nativity play, sacramental preparation, school masses, nature walks, sporting activities/football, swimming, athletics etc.

The Code of Behaviour is also required under the Education Act 2000 to state the means by which children's absences from school are notified to the school. St. Mary's N.S. procedure is that any absence requires a handwritten or typed note on the day the pupil returns to school. This may be in the pupil's homework journal or as a separate note.

If a parent has a concern or complaint with regard to a behavioural matter, their first port of call should be the class teacher and/or the principal.

The Code of Behaviour will be reviewed annually.

**Review and Ratification:**

This policy was reviewed and updated April 2015, updated June 2015, by the principal, Peadar Quealy and staff member Rita Traynor and approved by the Board of Management of St. Mary's N.S. on \_\_\_\_\_

It will be reviewed again in 2018.

I have read and discussed the Code of Behaviour and agree that my son/daughter shall abide by these rules.

**Name of Pupil/Pupil's:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_