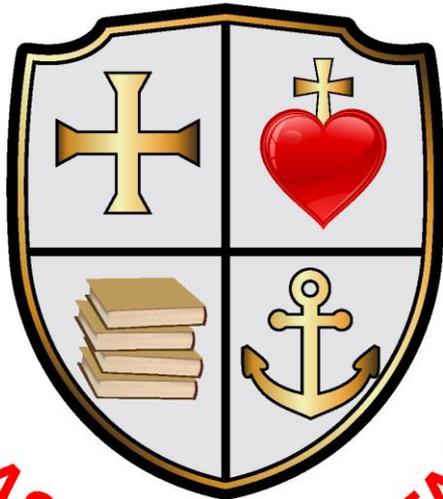


St. Mary's N.S.



EOLAS & MACÁNTAUGHT

**CODE OF
BEHAVIOUR**

St. Mary's N.S.,
Virginia, Co. Cavan

REVIEWED DECEMBER 2018

Code of Behaviour

This Code of Behaviour has been developed by the staff of St. Mary's N.S. in consultation with students, 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.

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 cognitive development.
- 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 and cognitive development.
- 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 and commitment from pupils and on high standards of behaviour.

The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the principal. She will be assisted by the behavioural support team. Members of the team are Jacinta Jordan, Rita Traynor, Ann O'Reilly and Concepta O'Reilly. Each staff member 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 *Incredible years* teacher classroom management programme of prevention and early intervention is being implemented within the school.

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.

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, doing homework, lining up properly. It also means no aggressive behaviour-hitting, punching, kicking or bullying, whether physical or verbal.

To promote positive behaviour we have a whole school compliments slip system in place. A member of staff may reward a class or individual student with a compliment slip. This is recorded on the class poster. When the class accumulates ten slips they choose a reward from the matrix. (See attached)

Other Rewards

- Praise and approval from Teacher
- Praise and approval from Principal
- Dojo points
- Choice activities
- Tokens
- Displaying work
- Stars on chart/stickers
- Positive comment to parent, written or verbal.
- Lucky dip
- Homework voucher
- Golden time

For the Code of Behaviour to work efficiently, co-operation between staff, parents and pupils is essential. The code of behaviour will be available to all parents on request. The Code will be reinforced regularly by all staff.

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.

Parents

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

- If a parent has a concern or complaint with regard to a behavioural matter, their first contact should be with the teacher who dealt with the incident either in the yard or in the classroom. They should make an appointment with the teacher concerned through the school secretary.
- Parents will be informed of instances of serious misbehaviour on the part of their children.

School Rules

- Children must enter and exit the school in an orderly manner.
- Children are expected to be quiet in the corridors. They must always walk on the right hand side in the corridors and in all parts of the school building.
- Chewing gum, glass bottles, correction fluids, mobile phones or other devices are not allowed to be brought into school.
- Children should address teachers in a civil and courteous way. Rude, offensive language or answering back is unacceptable.
- It is expected that children will accept correction in an agreeable manner.
- Pupils will show consideration towards other pupils and will have respect for them and their property. Aggressiveness, bullying or intimidation will not be tolerated.
- School property must be respected at all times.
- All children's belongings should be clearly marked e.g. coats, school bags, lunch boxes, drinks containers etc.
- No jewellery except watches is allowed and for health and safety reasons, only stud earrings should be worn.
- During the school day, children are not allowed to leave the school grounds without the permission of a teacher.
- **If a child leaves the school grounds without permission and refuses or is reluctant to return:**
 - ❖ A member of staff will follow the child and keep him/her in view.
 - ❖ A member of staff will contact the guards and the child's parents.
 - ❖ A follow up meeting will be arranged with the parents to discuss this behaviour.
 - ❖ Appropriate consequences will be discussed at this meeting.

Behaviour in the Classroom

- Pupils will enter and exit the classroom in an orderly manner.
- Pupils will be attentive in class and work to the best of their ability.
- Pupils will not disturb other pupils or cause any disruption which might hinder the smooth running of the class.
- 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

- In order to eliminate litter in the building and yard, children will not bring drinks or food wrappings into the school yard.
- 'Kind hands, kind feet, kind words' is a motto that is encouraged
- Children will use the classroom toilets before going out at break time. If a child needs to use the toilet during breaktime, they ask permission from the teacher on yard duty and use the toilets beside the lobby opposite Room 5. They will keep the toilets clean and litter free.
- A rota for supervision has been drawn up in order to ensure that children are supervised during all breaks. The teacher on yard duty is responsible for monitoring and dealing with any misbehaviour during break times and if required will meet with parents to discuss same.
- Occasionally, a teacher may remove a pupil from their play in a preventative capacity in order to discuss a particular behaviour. The child will be spoken to by the teacher in a problem solving approach.
- On fine days, children are not allowed into the school at break-time without permission from the teacher on yard duty.

- Children will respond instantly to the bell signalling the end of playtime. They will assemble in lines and proceed in an orderly manner back to class when instructed by the teacher.
- Our behaviour motto *Kind hands, kind feet, kind words* will be displayed in all yard areas to remind children of the kind of behaviour that is expected during play.

Behaviour for dismissal

- On dismissal from school, the class teacher walks the children in an orderly manner to the school gates.
- If the school bus is delayed, the children who travel by bus will be supervised until the bus comes.
- Children are expected to enter the school bus in an orderly manner and to be of good behaviour while travelling on it.

Children with Special Needs

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place for these children in consultation with parents. The class teacher, SET and/or principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Children within the school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs to adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

Within the special class, positive behaviour is actively taught using the following strategies-

- *First, Then* schedule
- Visual schedule
- Social stories using soft toy Mike the Monkey
- Comic strip conversation strategy
- Regular movement breaks – use of the swing, sensory regulation activities, dancing, going on messages, social skills walks
- *Star of the Week* incentives
- Visuals in the playground and classroom of *Kind hands, kind feet, kind words*
- Visual in the classroom of sanction during yard time (standing/walking along the fence)

The following positive reinforcement strategies are used:

- Praise (i.e. verbal and non verbal thumbs up, smiley face sign etc.)
- Rewards – stickers, star on star chart (4 stars = a “choice”), blowing bubbles, visit to the Principal for praise and lucky dip and other child specific rewards to reinforce positive behaviour

Visuals of 3 steps of sanctions for misbehaviour is clearly displayed in the special class:

- 1) Teacher says in a cross voice “stop”.
- 2) Time out chair (& weighted blanket if necessary) for the duration of the egg timer. Teacher indicates this behaviour has made him/her sad.
- 3) Go to the safe space for the duration of the egg timer.

Depending on the needs of the child, it may be necessary that the child only attend the special class for part of the school day.

Breaches of Discipline

Warnings are given for minor breaches of the code of behaviour for Junior Infant to 6th classes.

If a child misbehaves,

- The child will be spoken to by the teacher in a problem solving approach. Acceptable behaviour will be discussed and the child will be asked to identify their own wrong doing
- The child will be reprimanded -including advice on how to improve, reminder of school rule and insistence on an apology where appropriate.
- If the incident happens in the yard, children Junior-2nd class may be asked to walk beside teacher/walk along the fence/kerb for 5/10 minutes. If the incident happens in the classroom, the child may be removed from their friends. The duration of the removal from play/friends depends on the age, cognitive development of the child and seriousness of the incident.
- For children 3rd-6th, the procedure for misconduct is as above. However, children of this age may have their name written into the warnings section of the "Purple Card" folder as a permanent record.
- For children 3rd-6th, if 2 warnings are recorded, a 3rd incident automatically means a purple card.

Purple cards are given for more serious breaches of the code of behaviour from 2nd to 6th classes

in the following circumstances;

- Bullying i.e 'unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person(s) and which is repeated over time'.
(*Eduction.ie Anti-bullying procedures, p.8, 2.1*)
- Inflicting physical pain/injury
- Vandalism i.e. defacing school property or the property of others.
- After the accumulation of 2 warnings and in the event of a third incident.

Children in classes 2nd to 6th who receive a purple card will also be separated from friends in the play area for a period of 1 day (eg. walk along the kerb). If a child shows instances of good behaviour, they may, at the teacher's discretion, have their purple card / temporary separation overturned. The child will be encouraged to discuss the incident with their parents. The purple card will be signed and dated by the parent. This signed purple card will be kept on file in the school.

- **First detention;** when a child has received three purple cards, they will remain inside during breaktime under the supervision of a teacher. Aggression or violence towards school staff or pupils or defiant refusal to follow instruction – may merit a detention, without the intermediate steps of purple cards. In such circumstances, 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.
- **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. There may also be a loss of privilege for the child eg DVD's in classroom, golden time.
- **Third detention;** a meeting between the parent/guardian and the principal, class teacher or a member of behavioural support team, will take place. There may also be a further loss of privilege for the child eg school tour, sports day.

Suspension

In extreme cases or where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, a suspension may be considered.

Procedures in respect of Suspension (as per pages 70- 77 of the NEWB Guidelines)

While the BOM has the authority to suspend, they have delegated this authority to the Principal together with either the Chairperson of the BOM or the Deputy Principal for periods of up to three days. The following procedures will apply:

- Investigation of the facts to confirm serious misbehaviour.
- Parents will be informed by phone or in writing about the incident.
- Parents will be given an opportunity to respond.

If suspension is still decided upon, the principal notifies the parent/guardian 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.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents.
- The provision for appeal to the Board of Management or Secretary General of the DES. (Only where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days.)
- Where the cumulative total of days reached 6, TUSLA (formerly NEWB) will be notified.

Records and reports.

Formal written records will be kept of:

- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- The decision-making process.
- The decision and rationale for the decision.
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

Expulsion (As per page 82 of the NEWB Guidelines)

Procedures in respect of expulsion.

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
 - Inform parents in writing of alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
 - Give parents and students the opportunity to respond before a decision is made.
- A recommendation to the BOM by the principal (see page 84 NEWB guidelines)
- Consideration by the BOM of the principal's recommendations and the holding of a hearing. (see page 84 NEWB Guidelines)
- BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing. (page 85 NEWB Guidelines)
- If BOM is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing, of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. The intention to expel a student does not take effect until 20 school days have elapsed after NEWB have received written notification. The NEWB should be notified using a *Notice of Intention to Expel form* which is available on www.schoolreturn.ie or from their helpline (1890 36 3666). This form should be completed and sent to *School Return Section, National Educational Welfare Board, 16-22 Green St, Dublin 7.*
- Consultations arranged by the EWO.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

Appeals

- A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act 1998 section 29)

The following policies should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Code of Behaviour for Sport
- Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)
- Procedures for Trips
- Complaints Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection Policy

Review and Ratification:

This policy was reviewed and updated by Jacinta Jordan and Rita Traynor and approved by the Board of Management of St. Mary's N.S. in:

April 2010

June 2011

December 2013

June 2014

June 2015

December 2018

Signed: Fr. Dermot Prior
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 11.12.2018

Signed Jacinta Jordan
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date 11.12.2018