



## Code of Behaviour Policy

### **Introduction:**

St. Paul's school and the Board of Management promotes a positive behaviour approach. In devising the code, consideration has been given to the particular needs of each student and to circumstances in St. Paul's School. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each student is accommodated, while acknowledging the right of each student to an education in a reasonably disruption-free environment.

In the belief that the most effective schools are those with the best relationship with their parent(s) and guardian(s), every effort will be made by the Principal and staff to ensure that parents/guardians:

- are kept well informed of school events
- experience a welcoming atmosphere
- are not only being told when their children have displayed behaviours of concern but when they have behaved particularly well.

### **Policy Statement:**

St. Paul's Code of Behaviour has been developed in keeping with the requirements of the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) and follows the guidelines set out in its publication, 'Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (2008)'.

This policy applies to all students, parents, guardians, and staff including all temporary and substitute staff. It has been drawn up in consultation with the Board of Management, Parents' Association and staff of St. Paul's School.

### **St. Paul's School Vision for Relationships and Behaviour in the School:**

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much", Helen Keller

Within the context and parameters of the Department of Education and Skills regulations and programmes, the rights of the patron (The Diocese of Cork and Ross) as set out in the Education Act (1998) and the funding of resources available, the Board of Management and staff of St. Paul's School support the principles of:

- Equality of access and participation
- Respect for diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, language and ways of life.

### **Aim of this policy:**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that St. Paul's School provides a positive environment for the school community of students, staff and parents/guardians and visitors.

All members of the community should feel safe, respected, fairly treated, listened to and involved.

Threatening or unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated.

The school climate and atmosphere are created by the actions and behaviour of everyone in the school. The behaviour of adults in a child's life will affect the child's own behaviour. A clear understanding among all stakeholders of the standards of behaviour required and procedures to be adopted when there are breaches of the code, will ensure all parties have clarity.

### **Rights and responsibilities:**

#### **Students rights:**

- to be treated fairly, consistently and with respect
- to be educated in an environment with minimal disruption
- to have their individual differences recognised and provision to be made for these differences
- to be assisted to make their voice heard, and to have their voice listened to with respect
- to have positive behaviour affirmed and misbehaviour to be addressed appropriately

#### **Students responsibilities:**

- to attend school regularly and punctually
- to work safely to the best of their ability
- to respect the right of other students to learn
- to show respect for all members of the school community
- to respect school property, the property of others and their own belongings
- to avoid behaving in a way that would endanger themselves or others
- to contribute to keeping the school clean and tidy
- to follow school and class rules and procedures and protocols
- to stay on school premises and within designated areas during school hours

#### **Staff rights:**

- to be treated with respect and dignity by all members of the school community
- to be able to teach and support learning in a safe, well-maintained environment, free from disruption
- to have the support and cooperation of all staff colleagues, parents/guardians, Board of Management, Department of Education and Skills, The National Education Welfare Board, The National Council for Special Education and the PDST (and any other necessary agencies) to help cater for the psychological, emotional and physical needs of their students
- to work in an atmosphere which encourages professional development
- to consult with parents/guardians informally and formally, when their professional judgement deems it necessary

#### **Staff responsibilities:**

- to consistently support and implement the Code of Behaviour

- to uphold the Dignity at Work policy at all times
- to create a warm, safe and welcoming environment for all students
- to develop and nurture a sense of self-esteem in each student
- to be aware that shouting at children will not be tolerated for any reason
- to adhere strictly to the Restrictive Interventions Policy
- to facilitate each student to reach their full potential, by recognising the individual talents, needs and differences of the students
- to be courteous, consistent and fair - while keeping opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum and addressing misbehaviour appropriately
- to keep records of serious behaviour of concern
- to use their professional judgement, to decide when it is necessary to communicate with parents/guardians and to provide reports on matters of mutual concern - through home/school diary/email/telephone/letter/meetings, when necessary
- to provide support to colleagues
- to engage in relevant Continuing Professional Development courses, when appropriate

### **Parents/Guardians rights:**

- to be treated with respect
- to have a safe and welcoming environment provided for their children and themselves
- to know that there will be a recognition of the individual differences among students
- to have fair and consistent approaches in the way that students are treated
- to expect contact, at an early stage, to discuss difficulties/problems
- to attend 2 meetings each academic year and to be involved in agreeing realistic targets for their children
- to have a representative Parents' Association, who will be consulted with and given information about, the school's policies and procedures
- to be able to communicate with staff by appointment on matters of mutual interest or concern

### **Parents/Guardians responsibilities:**

- to ensure their children attend school regularly and on time and
- to ensure that they are collected from school on time (if not on school transport)
- to notify school of all absenteeism
- to keep their child at home at the very first sign of illness
- to respect the decision of school staff when called to collect your child
- to appreciate that the school secretary is only relaying the message
- to label their children's belongings
- to provide personal care materials, feeding utensils and any other educational materials, when requested by school
- to keep school informed of any changes that may affect their children - medical needs, input from outside agencies, home situation etc
- to communicate with school in an appropriate manner - home/school diary, email, telephone
- to read all correspondence from school and respond appropriately
- to help their children develop their agreed targets, at home
- to respect the professional expertise of all staff members
- to respect the informed decision of staff members, including the school nurse, if a child their children are sent home
- to attend meetings at school, when requested and approach the school respectfully and without delay to resolve any issues of concern
- to support the respectful ethos of the school by setting a good example with language and behaviour towards all members of the the school community

- to support the school in implementing the Code of Behaviour. it is a condition of enrolment in the school that parents/guardians agree to comply with the school's Code of Behaviour (Education Welfare Act 2000, section 23.4)
- to not air grievances on social media and to respect the school's social media platforms - website, Facebook, Seesaw

### **Strategies to promote Positive Behaviour:**

- Ensuring that students are treated fairly, equally and firmly.
- A co-ordinated approach by all staff working with the student.
- A co-ordinated approach between the school and home.
- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- Matching work with a student's abilities. A prize/reward carefully noted by the teacher to ensure that all students at regular stages through the school year are rewarded for effort/ behaviour/ skill etc.
- Teachers and special needs assistants creating moments of success and then acknowledging them.
- A comment in the student's home/school note book.
- A visit to another member of staff or the principal for commendation.
- A word of encouragement in front of a group or class.
- Delegating some responsibility or privilege.
- A positive note in student's home/school notebook
- Recording improvement in behaviour of a student.
- Specific programmes designed for a particular student, designed with the help of the parent/guardian, Behaviour Therapist and Psychologist.

### **Commitment to a Positive Behaviour Approach:**

- 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 the staff members.
- The school places greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions, in the belief that this will, in the long run, give the best results.
- The school endeavours to develop high self-esteem in each student, through social skills programmes.
- The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- 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, students and parent(s)/guardian(s).
- The rules are kept to a minimum and are stated positively in terms of what students should do.
- All efforts will be made to match the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and interests of each student.

### **Challenging Behaviour:**

- The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom, while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises. A student will be referred to the Principal for serious breaches of discipline and for repeated incidents of minor misbehaviour.
- Communication between teachers and parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding successful behavioural strategies is considered vital to maintaining good discipline.

- Teachers will keep a written record of all instances of serious behaviour as well as record of improvements in the behaviour of disruptive students. Before resorting to serious sanctions e.g., suspension, the normal channels of communication between and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be utilised. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be involved at an early stage, rather than a last resort.
- Communication with parent(s)/guardian(s) will be verbal. The parent(s)/guardian(s) 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 student or staff member will be treated as a serious or gross misbehaviour depending on the circumstances.
- Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be requested in writing to attend the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal to discuss strategies to improve the student's behaviour.
- Every effort will be made to have a child with potential disturbance referred for psychological assessment without delay. Help will also be sought, with the agreement of the parent(s)/guardian(s), from support services within Cope Foundation and the HSE.
- In formulating this code, the Board of management considered a submission relating to the possible content of a code received from, and discussed with the body representing the parent(s)/guardian(s) of students attending the school.

### **School Rules:**

- Be kind to staff and other students
- Use good language at all times
- Have good manners
- Listen to and follow what staff ask you to do
- Walk quietly and carefully
- Take good care of school equipment

### **Good Behaviours:**

- Being kind, friendly, helpful and respectful to other students and staff
- Speaking quietly and nicely
- Listening to others
- Waiting your turn
- Walking calmly on the corridor
- Playing nicely and sharing
- Queuing, sitting and having good table manners in the dining room
- Have good manners (please, thank you, etc.)
- Telling a staff member if you have a problem

### **Unacceptable Behaviours:**

- Hitting, pulling hair, biting, spitting, kicking, pinching, scratching, headbutting
- Throwing objects
- Absconding from the class, the school or when out on trips
- Damaging your own, other people's, or school property
- Misbehaving on school outings
- Not co-operating with staff
- Verbal abuse of staff or other students
- Inappropriate touching of staff or other students as outlined in the Stay Safe Programme
- Bringing in inappropriate or dangerous toys / games / videos / DVDs to school

### **Serious Offences:**

- Persistent physical abuse of students or staff
- Persistent abusive/threatening language directed towards students or staff
- Persistent bullying
- Stealing or damaging school property / other people's property

**Suspension and Expulsion:**

In the event of very serious misbehaviour, the Principal, Chairperson and Board of Management will act in accordance with guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools* (2008), having regard to Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

**Supporting Documents:**

This Code of Behaviour should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct for Parents
- Code of Conduct for SNA's
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers

**Note:**

A copy of this policy will be made available to all parent(s)/guardian(s).

It is taken that all parent(s) guardian(s) agree with this policy unless contact is made by them to the Chairperson of the Board of Management explaining their concerns.

**Ratified by the Board of Management on: 30/03/2022**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Jerry Corkery**  
**Chairperson**