

# ***Code of Behaviour of St. Molua's N.S. Ardagh***



## **INTRODUCTION**

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of *St. Molua's N.S.* has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for its Pupils, Staff and Parents. This policy was prepared in consultation with school partners in the 2<sup>nd</sup> term of 2014.

### **The Code of Behaviour details:**

1. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school;
2. The whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour;
3. The measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards;
4. The procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
5. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil
6. The school's Anti-Bullying Policy;

## **AIMS OBJECTIVES OF THE CODE**

The aims and objectives of the code are:

- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences, recognising the rights of children to be educated in classes not disrupted by the behaviour of a tiny minority, and also the rights of teachers to work in conditions free from stress.
- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community
- To assist school staff, parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.
- To recognise and acknowledge that pupils with distinct or individual needs require an individual educational approach to behaviour management.

## **WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH**

The Board of Management recognises the importance of creating consistent values, policies, practices and relationships that support the Code of Behaviour. Such an environment may only be formed by involving the entire school community and in this respect the Board acknowledges the importance of the roles played by, the principal, teachers, ancillary staff and parents in the review and operation of the Code.

For avoidance of doubt any reference in the foregoing to Principal is to be construed as meaning Acting Principal or Deputy Principal in the absence of the Principal

## **STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR**

### ***General Behaviour***

Each pupil is expected to:

- be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and all Staff and visitors
- show respect for the property of, the school, other children and their own belongings
- attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual
- do his/her best both in school and for homework.

### ***Playground Behaviour***

Each pupil is expected to:

- play – safely avoiding any games or play that are rough or dangerous
- follow – the directions of the playground supervisor(s)
- remain – on school grounds at all times
- obtain – permission before re-entering the school building during break periods
- respect – the yard duty teacher and fellow pupils
- avoid – swearing, fighting or name calling

### ***Classroom Behaviour***

Each pupil is expected to:

- listen – to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking
- work – to the best of his/her ability value – school property and the belongings of fellow pupils, Staff and visitors
- follow – the direction of his/her teacher
- obtain – his/her teachers permission to leave the classroom
- respect – the teacher, other pupils and visitors to the classroom.

### ***Behaviour in other School Areas***

Each pupil is expected to:

- walk – in the school corridors
- Be courteous to all members of the school community.
- Respect school property
- Display good manners.

### ***Behaviour during School Outings/Activities***

Each pupil is expected to:

- follow – his/her teacher's directions at all times
- remain – with the teacher/supervisors and group of pupils at all times
- behave – politely towards those they meet on such trips
- observe – the rules of general good behaviour

## **Staff**

It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure the school's Code of Behaviour is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils. However each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school.

Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class.

They will:

- Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in an age appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year.
- Ensure the Class rules are understood in the classroom.
- Encourage self-discipline and positive behaviour.
- Ensure there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times.
- Implement the reward/sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner.
- Keep a written record of all incidents of continued, serious or gross misconduct. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and, the consequences of its repetition.
- Inform pupils when instances of misbehaviour on their part are being recorded.
- Report repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the Principal.

## **Parents/Guardians**

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive behaviour in school. Parents/guardians can assist the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, encouraging punctuality and regular attendance and by ensuring that homework is given due time and effort.

Should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child's behaviour they are welcome to make an appointment to discuss their concerns.

In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour parents will be invited to participate in the intervention process. It is understood by accepting a place for your child in the school, you are consenting to abide by the code and policies of the school.

## **PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**

As a general rule the school will endeavour to create an environment where positive Behaviour is reinforced through praise and reward. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school, so that positive behaviour is instantly recognised and positively rewarded. Special attention will be paid to pupils who have previously been associated with poor Behaviour so that not only good Behaviour but also improvement in Behaviour is acknowledged.

## **REWARDS FOR GOOD BEHAVIOUR**

Good behaviour must be seen to be rewarded and this will be up to the discretion of the teacher. For example, oral and written praise; yearly reports; small prizes; merit lists; merit stars; Certificates; and extra privileges such as jobs, video at Christmas, etc.

## **INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR**

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. The Code also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed.

### ***Level 1 : Minor Breaches***

- Failure to wear school uniform/tracksuit, except when excused for a good reason with a written note from parents/guardians, or on special occasions.
- Failure to get homework/notebook signed.
- Careless presentation of schoolwork.
- Failure to complete homework.
- Playing in the wrong yard.
- Careless about not putting litter in bins provided.
- Wilful damage of a minor nature, e.g. breaking another child's ruler, cheating.
- Failure to follow of the class teacher, ancillary staff or yard supervisor.

### ***Level 1 :Sanctions:***

- Correction by class teacher, other teacher, ancillary staff or special visitors.
- An apology from pupil.

***Repeated Minor Breaches:*** Repeated instances of the above.

**Further Sanctions:**

- Further correction by class teacher, other teacher, ancillary staff or special visitors.
- Note to parents/guardians.
- Detention.
- Lines or writing out of a page, to be signed by parent/guardian.
- Referral to Principal.
- Temporary separation from peers, removal from privileges.

**Level 1 Supportive Interventions**

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

Classroom-based interventions, such as Circle Time or class meetings, with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members)

Discussion of behaviour with the child

Informal notes regarding incident/intervention/date. This information would be useful should a problem persist.

**Level Two****Level 2: More Serious Breaches**

- Use of foul or offensive language.
- Careless use of school property.
- Rough play.
- Repeated failure to complete homework.
- Disruption of class.
- Disrespect towards staff/ancillary staff.
- Disrespect towards visitors to school or towards other children.
- Bullying.
- Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin.
- Use of a mobile phone by a pupil on school grounds during school hours.
- Being in possession of a personal mobile-enabled device during school hours (For example, a watch which has the functionality to take photos and record videos or audio) or any other device.
- Make abusive or disparaging comments or use images/videos about pupils or staff of St. Molua's N.S. on social media or online in general.
- Possession of any item likely to be injurious to the child or others, or likely to damage school property. e.g. knives matches, cigarette lighters, etc.

**Level 2: Sanctions**

- Referral to principal.
- Lunchtime detention on yard.
- More formal contact with parents/guardians if a child is in detention four or more times in a month.
- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Confiscation of dangerous items.
- Confiscation of mobile phone during school hours and/or a letter home to parents.
- Written apology from pupil.
- Cleaning up so as to restore school buildings, grounds or furnishings to correct state, where applicable.

**Level 2: Supportive Interventions**

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Deputy Principal or Principal.

**Level Three *Level 3: Gross Misbehaviour***

- Repeated instances of above after warning regarding future conduct.
- Use of threatening language or behaviour towards teachers or others.
- Any act of wilful violence towards other pupils, teachers, ancillary staff or special visitors.
- Stealing.
- Possession/supply and/or use of alcohol, cigarettes, illegal drugs and/or other harmful substances.
- Repeated Bullying.
- Wilful damage or attempted wilful damage of school property, property of teachers, ancillary staff, other pupils or special visitors.
- Leaving school grounds during school hours without permission of principal and notification from parents/guardians.
- Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions towards another person or group involving race, gender, religion disability or ethnic origin

***Level 3: Disciplinary Actions***

Immediate contact with parent(s)/guardian(s)

Written assurance of proper behaviour from child and parent(s)/guardian(s)

Behaviour at Level 3 may involve suspension from school and contact with the Garda Siochana after parental involvement if illegal activity was involved. The length of the suspension will depend upon the severity and frequency of the specific Behaviour. Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension is contained in this document.:

***Level 3: Supportive Interventions***

Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Education Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education.

Referral for a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent).

**Level 3 responses:**

**Suspension from school for one to five days:**

This response may occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour or Level 2 behaviour of significant severity. The Principal of St. Molua's N.S. in consultation with the Chairperson has the authority to suspend a student for a maximum of 3 days where deemed necessary except in exceptional circumstances.

**Suspension from school for five to ten days:**

This response will occur with the repeated incidence of Level 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this Behaviour. A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management.

*The rules will also apply to all and any school-related activities either within or outside the school, during normal school hours or outside these hours if the school-related activities necessitates this, e.g., sporting fixtures, educational trips, etc. Breaches by pupils from Junior Classes will be treated on a level more appropriate to their age, but the general expectation of good behaviour will apply to all pupils.*

## **SUSPENSIONS & EXPULSIONS**

Before serious sanctions such as detention, suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communications with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

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 attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a 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 the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

### **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.

#### **Before/After School**

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before 9 a.m. or after the official closing time of 1.40 p.m. (infants) 2.40 p.m. (other classes except where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the Board of management. Pupils involved in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with school behaviour policy during these times.

Implementation Date: April 2024

This Policy will apply from Monday April 15<sup>th</sup>

Ratified by the Board of Management on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024.

Date 15/04/2024.

Signed Martina McGrath  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 15/04/2024

Signed Thomas Greaney  
Principal