

Code of Behaviour- Junior School



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**School Patron/s: Board of
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Code of Behaviour Policy

Mission Statement and Guiding Principles

"We nurture, inspire and empower our students to strive for excellence in all that they do as responsible global citizens."

We are committed to:

- Fostering a sense of identity and self-worth in each of our students.
- Developing life-long learners with skills, attitudes, sensibilities and personal initiative that will allow each to grow into a well-rounded, confident adult.
- Promoting the well-being of the whole person in a caring, inclusive, innovative, safe and secure multi-cultural environment.
- Striving for high academic standards and promoting rich co-curricular opportunities and in so doing we seek to support and challenge each of our students to recognise and maximise their full potential.
- Promoting respectful intercultural relations, increasing tolerance and acceptance of difference and fostering in our students the ability to perceive, welcome and respect diversity, while at the same time fostering an appreciation of Irish culture in which the school is rooted.
- Promoting awareness of and facilitating our students' ability to participate in, and contribute to, contemporary issues at local, national and global levels as informed, engaged, responsible and responsive global citizens.
- Honouring our duty of care to and protective responsibility for all students in achieving the realisation of the rights of the child.

BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOL

Good behaviour in School is an essential element in facilitating the process of education. We recognise that learning good behaviour is also a vital part of the social education of children where they come to view their behaviour in relation to others. Gradually, children learn to appraise their behaviour in terms of what is right and wrong or appropriate and inappropriate, in contrast to "approved of" and "disapproved of". In other words, children are helped to become responsible for their own behaviour and to behave responsibly. Responsible behaviour includes all children being sensitive to the needs of others, recognising others' points of view, and being aware of the consequences of their actions.

In Sutton Park Junior School, we seek to encourage a restorative approach to behaviour. We believe good behaviour is based on positive relationships and co-operation between pupils, teachers, parents

and the school. Great emphasis is placed on giving each child every opportunity to develop patterns of good behaviour. Thus, the emphasis of the Code of Behaviour is on encouragement and reward – where the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education in a safe and disruption-free environment.

1. RESPONSIBILITIES

- The **Board of Management** has ultimate responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.
- The day-to-day responsibility for the overall behaviour of the school rests with the **Principal and Deputy Principal**.
- Each **Teacher** has responsibility for the maintenance and promotion of good behaviour and good order within their classroom, while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour throughout the whole school.
- **Pupils** support the Code of Behaviour by contributing to the development of Class and School Rules/Expectations and by doing their best to abide by them at all times.
- **Parents** support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules and to follow them at all times, and by communicating relevant concerns to the School in an appropriate and timely manner.

2. AIMS and OBJECTIVES of the CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Sutton Park Junior School's Code of Behaviour has **two overall aims**:

- i. The development of pupils' sense of responsibility and self-discipline based on consideration and respect for others.
- ii. The maintenance of good order throughout the school so that an effective and stimulating learning environment exists for the education and development of every child.

Specific objectives of the Code include:

- a) To promote self-esteem and positive relationships.
- b) To foster caring attitudes to one another.
- c) To engender respect for the school environment.
- d) To develop an understanding of what is right and wrong in our students.
- e) To enable teachers to teach without disruption.
- f) To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- g) To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour.
- h) To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the communication of the Code of Behaviour to all relevant parties.
- i) To promote an ethos of open communication and to encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

3. CLASSROOM ETHOS

All staff in the Junior School have a responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with one another - as their example has an important influence on the children.

At the beginning of each academic year, each class teacher draws up a list of class rules/expectations for their classroom with their pupils. Class rules are kept to a minimum and are articulated in a positive manner.

All staff treat pupils with kindness and fairness and at all times deal with pupils through understanding and reason.

Thus, all teachers aim to:

- Agree classroom rules/expectations in an effort to create a positive, caring and effective learning environment.
- Promote positive behaviour through example, courtesy and affirmation.
- Encourage relationships based on respect and understanding of the needs of others.
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability and disability.
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.
- Discourage negative behaviour.

5. SCHOOL RULES / EXPECTATIONS

In the Junior School, all rules, regulations and expectations are clearly communicated to the children and are enforced consistently, fairly and wisely. School rules are stated positively and in language appropriate for the age of the child. The rules are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. The School Rules/Expectations are:

1. Respect and Courtesy:

- We treat all members of staff, pupils and visitors with respect.
- We recognize that as an International School we have responsibilities to our international community and students of many cultural backgrounds.
- We are kind and willing to help others.
- We demonstrate courtesy and good manners.
- We try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict.
- We respect the views and opinions of others.
- We are honest and always tell the truth.
- We try to forgive others when they make a mistake.
- We never use bad language.

2. School Property and the School Environment:

- We show respect for all school property.
- We endeavour to keep our school environment clean and litter-free.

3. Behaviour in Class:

- We work to the very best of our ability at all times and take responsibility for our work.
- We come to class with all of our books and required materials.
- We follow teachers' instructions and keep to our class rules.
- We listen attentively to our teacher and our classmates.
- We take care of our belongings and respect the property of others.
- We complete all of our homework.

4. Behaviour Online:

- While online, we fully abide by our Acceptable Use Policy which is signed on admission to the school.
- Mobile phones, Smart Watches or other devices are not to be used on the school grounds during the school day.

5. Outside Class:

Within the school grounds, in the Playground and at Extra Curricular Activities and Clubs:

- We follow instructions and directions given by the teacher/coach on duty.
- We are respectful and considerate of all our fellow students.
- We line up in an orderly manner at the end of each break.
- We walk (not run) quietly in the school building.
- We follow our healthy eating policy.

On School Outings/Tours:

- We follow the school expectations (as above) when on a school tour/outing or when representing our School at a match or at an event.
- We follow teachers' instructions at all times.

6. Punctuality:

- We arrive to class at 8.25am for class to start promptly at 8.30am.
- We return to class promptly after each break.
- We arrive on time for break times, extra-curricular activities, Clubs and for all out-of-classroom lessons.

7. Uniform

- We wear our correct and full School uniform at all times.

6. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

6.1 Rewarding Positive Behaviour

Children are consistently encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by noteworthy personal improvements and achievements.

The following are examples of how praise is given:

- A quiet word or gesture, or a word of praise in front of the class.
- A positive comment in the pupil's copy or homework journal.
- A visit to the Principal or other members of staff for commendation.
- Delegating a special responsibility or privilege.
- A written or verbal communication with parents.
- A special mention at Assembly.

Some teachers also operate an organised whole-class, group or individual Reward System such as Class Dojo; Star Charts; Golden Time, etc.

NOTE: Participation in School tours and special events is reserved for pupils who consistently strive to behave well.

6.2 Negative Behaviour

Two levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor and Serious.

Examples of minor misbehaviour include:

(Please note, this is not an exhaustive list)

- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning – e.g. continuous disruption in class; distracting other pupils; talking out of turn.
- Rowdiness/horseplay.
- Ignoring teachers' instructions.
- Bringing a mobile-phone/smart-watch to school without permission.
- Not wearing appropriate uniform.
- Chewing gum.

Examples of serious misbehaviour include:

(Please note, this is not an exhaustive list)

- Use of bad language, offensive or inappropriate language or inappropriate gestures.
- Behaviour that hurts, insults or humiliates another pupil on an ongoing basis - including exclusion; name-calling; negative comments; harassment etc.
- Leaving school/school activities without permission.
- Taking something which belongs to another pupil or to the school.
- Intentional physical hurt to another person including pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping, etc.
- Inappropriate physical contact with another pupil.

- Damage to school property.
- Bringing any inappropriate, illegal or dangerous substances or equipment to school.
- Showing/viewing of inappropriate material such as pornography or graphic violence.
- Persistent bullying behaviour

NOTE: Bullying is defined in Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying and Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools as targeted behaviour, whether online or offline, that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social, and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society. The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

Please refer to separate Junior School Bí Cineálta Policy.

6.3 Sanctions for Negative Behaviour

As noted above, the Code of Behaviour operates in a framework of positive motivation and encouragement. However, the following strategies may be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour. The list is not exhaustive as teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the circumstances involved.

- Reasoning with the pupil.
- Verbal correction which includes advice on how to improve.
- Temporary separation from peers e.g. removal from break-times; or temporary removal from class.
- Loss of privileges.
- Letter of apology.
- Completion of a Behaviour Reflection sheet.
- Referral to the Principal or Deputy Principal.
- Communication with parents.
- Being sent home for the remainder of the School day.
- Suspension – either internal or external.
- Expulsion.

Overall, the purpose of any sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by helping the pupil, in ways appropriate to their age and development, to:

- Understand that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- Recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others.
- Understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences.
- Learn to take responsibility for their behaviour;
- Devise strategies to improve their behaviour.

Sanctions may also:

- Reinforce the boundaries set out in the Code of Behaviour.
- Signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.
- Prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning.

- Keep the student, or other students, safe.

6.4 Procedures for Dealing with Negative Behaviour

Clear structures are in place for dealing with misbehaviour.

In the first instance, as outlined above, all everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher, or the supervising teacher at break-times. The teacher will discuss the issue/incident with the pupil and may apply any of the sanctions as laid out above.

Where misbehaviour persists, or for a serious breach of discipline, pupils are referred to the Deputy Principal or Principal.

Pupils will be asked to give an account of what happened. Pupils are at all times encouraged to be completely honest and reminded of the importance of being truthful in their account of an incident.

The Teacher, Deputy Principal and/or Principal will then discuss the issue/incident with the pupil and may apply any of the sanctions.

Where incidences require the intervention of Deputy Principal/ Principal and liaison with the parents, concise records will be kept.

The Teacher, Deputy Principal and/or Principal has the discretion to give the child “a first chance” – on the understanding that such behaviour will not be repeated. However, in cases of persistent misbehaviour, the child’s parents will be informed.

In cases of serious misbehaviour, once a full account of what has happened has been gathered by the Teacher and Deputy Principal/Principal, parents will invited to meet to discuss their child’s behaviour and agree appropriate action.

Should there continue to be no improvement following intervention and/or sanctions, a behaviour management plan will be drawn up involving the child, parents, class teacher and Principal/Deputy Principal.

NOTE: The School recognises the variety of differences which exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences and thus all sanctions contain a degree of discretion and flexibility.

7. SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION (EXPULSION)

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, formal suspension or expulsion may be considered. This policy outlines the school’s approach to suspension, both internal and external, and exclusion and has been formulated taking due consideration of the rights and responsibilities inherent in the Education Act 1998, Education Welfare Act 2000, Equal Status Act 2000 and the principles of fairness and natural justice. A student can be suspended for up to 2 days without report to the Board of Management (BOM). After 2 days, the suspension will be reported to the BOM.

Suspension Procedure

Any suspension procedure will be preceded by an investigation, to establish the full facts involved in any disciplinary situation.

A student may be asked to remain at home or to be sent home while a situation is being looked in to, as deemed appropriate by the school in the best interest of the students' wellbeing.

If the Principal/Deputy Principal exercises their authority to suspend a student for a fixed duration the following procedure will be used:

1. The parents/guardians of the student will be informed.
2. The student will be informed of the precise grounds that gave rise to a potential suspension.
3. In cases where the suspension is to take effect immediately, parents/guardians will be initially informed by telephone, and subsequently in writing.
4. Students will not be sent home during a school day unless collected by a parent / guardian.
5. Information regarding appeal rights and procedures will be provided where a suspension has been notified to the Board of Management.
6. Requirements to be met for the student's return to school may be stated.

Internal Suspension Principles

If a student commits a violation of school's Code of Behaviour they may be internally suspended. In this case they will be removed from class and placed under supervision to complete work allocated to them.

The primary purpose of suspension is one of corrective support rather than punishing students for misbehaviour. It is the intention of the school that internal suspension allows students the time, under supervision, to reflect on their unacceptable behaviour; to accept responsibility for the behaviour that led to the suspension and to change their future behaviour to meet the expectations of the school.

External Suspension Principles

In certain cases of breaches of the Code of Behaviour it will be in the best interests of the school community, and / or the student involved, to remove the student from the school for a period of time. The School Principal has the authority to suspend a student from attending school for a period of up to and including 3 days. Suspensions beyond 3 days are the responsibility of the BOM.

The Principal / BOM will exercise this authority in a fair and non-discriminatory manner having regard to their responsibility to the whole school and to the principles of natural justice.

Students may be precluded from attending school trips because of negative behaviour(s). This may result in a monetary loss for the family of the student concerned.

Suspension Removal

As the principles of natural justice demand that there should be available a right of appeal to a higher authority, a student and his/her parents may appeal the Principal's decision to suspend to the Board of Management. Such an appeal must be made in writing to the Chairperson of the BOM stating the grounds on which the appeal is being made. However, the school may insist that the student remain

at home while the appeal proceeds. If an appeal is successful, the suspension will be lifted and if the suspension has already been served, it will be expunged from the student's record.

Note:

An appeal of a suspension decision may also be made under Section 29 of the Education Act where a student has been suspended for 20 days or more. Information regarding this right of appeal will be provided with formal written notification of the suspension, if applicable.

Suspension Completion

Upon completion of a suspension, the following procedures may apply for the formal re-introduction of the student into the school:

- Parents/Guardians may be requested to attend with the students.
- The student may be required to enter a contract of good behaviour or other conditions that may be specified before returning to school. The terms of the contract may state that a student will have to reapply to the school at a given time.

Following a period of suspension, the parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that the suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the School Code of Behaviour 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.

Expulsion Principles

In an extreme case, expulsion of a pupil may be considered by the Board of Management.

Exclusion is the ultimate sanction imposed by the school on a student and as such, will only be exercised by the Board of Management in relation to cases of extreme indiscipline. In cases where the Principal judges that a student's actions are such that exclusion should be considered, the Principal will refer the matter to the Board of Management. Given the severity of the potential sanction, the school, in accordance with the principles of natural justice, will investigate extreme indiscipline cases thoroughly in advance of any hearing that could result in exclusion.

For example, in cases where the indiscipline of a student is so pervasive that teaching and learning become extremely difficult. Such cases include but are not limited to:

- The student being so disruptive that they are seriously preventing other students from learning.
- The student's behaviour is uncontrollable, and they are not responding to any form of school discipline or authority.
- Parents/Guardians being unable or refusing to exercise their responsibility for the student.
- The student posing a danger to themselves or to others.
- When guarantees of reasonable behaviour following repeated suspensions are not forthcoming or not being met.
- The student's conduct is acting as a source of serious bad example and having an adverse influence on other students in the school.
- The student is deemed to be involved in illegal activities.

- The student harms a member of staff.

First time offences of a serious nature are also grounds for exclusion. Such cases may include but are not limited to:

- Vandalism
- Assault
- Arriving in school under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Serious burglary or theft
- Causing major damage to school property
- Gross insubordination to the Principal or other staff members
- Brandishing of a weapon

In the interest of ensuring a fair and even-handed system for the imposition of an exclusion, the Board of Management will, among other things, take account of the following factors

1. The age and state of health of the student.
2. The student's previous record of behaviour at the school.
3. Any mitigating circumstances unique to the student that might be considered in connection with the behaviour leading to the suspension.
4. The degree to which parental, peer, or other pressure might have contributed to the behaviour.
5. The severity of the behaviour, its frequency, and the likelihood of recurrence.
6. The extent to which the behaviour impaired or will impair the normal functioning of the student and others in the school community.
7. The degree to which the behaviour was a breach of the Code of Behaviour.
8. Whether the incident leading to the suspension was a result of the student acting alone or as part of a group.
9. The degree to which the student recognises and accepts that their behaviour was unacceptable and is prepared to exhibit genuine contrition.

Exclusion Procedure

Except in exceptional circumstances, exclusion will only be resorted to after the Principal has:

- Ensured that all discipline options under the Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented.
- Ensured that discussion has occurred with the student and parents/guardians regarding specific misbehaviour that the school considers unacceptable and that may lead to permanent exclusion.
- Provided formal verbal and written warnings at appropriate times dealing with such behaviours and provided clear expectations of what was required of the student in the future.
- Recorded all action taken and copied all correspondence.
- Informed the parents/guardians of their intention to recommend exclusion to the Board of Management.
- Invited the parents/guardians to the Board of Management hearing.
- Invited the parents/guardians to make a written submission in advance of the Board Meeting.
- Provided in advance of such a meeting the parents/guardians with a full, written description of the allegations against the student and the case being made at the Board of Management, together with copies of all documentation, statements, and other materials relevant to the case.
- Made a formal recommendation to the Board of Management with full relevant documentation following these actions by the Principal, exclusion will still only occur after the Board of Management has:

- Heard the Principal's case against the student, which should be made in the presence of the parents/guardians
- Heard the response of the parents/guardians, which should be made in the presence of the School Principal
- Examined all the documentation
- Considered the student's record in the school
- Ensured that the Head of School and Principal are not present for the Board's decision of the matter.
- Discussed the case in detail
- Considered all the commitments made in the Code of Behaviour
- Made a final decision to exclude
- Communicated the decision to exclude to the parents/guardians formally by registered letter
- Informed the Education Welfare Officer under Section 24(1) of the Education Welfare Act 2000

The formal letter of notification will include:

- Notice of the exclusion
- Effective date of the exclusion
- Reasons for the exclusion
- A statement that the Education Welfare Board has been informed of the exclusion
- A statement that the student is under the care and responsibility of the parents/guardians for the period of 20 days required by the Education Welfare Officer to examine alternative provisions for the education of the student
- Information and documentation on appeal rights

Exclusion Appeals

Parents/guardians have the right to appeal a decision of the Board of Management to exclude a student to the Minister for Education or to an authority delegated for such appeals by the Minister under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

8. HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as a key component in encouraging positive behaviour and the School seeks a high level of support from staff, pupils and parents in the implementation of the discipline policy.

Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life which may affect the child's behaviour. Should a parent have any concerns which need to be discussed - the first person to be informed should be the class teacher and/or the Principal.

| Author | BOM Approved: | BOG Approved: | Next Review Date |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Kate O Connor | *November 2025 | *December 2025 | *November 2026 |