

## Code of Positive Behaviour

### Introduction

St. Helen's Junior School's school discipline policy was formulated by the teaching staff, Board of Management and Parents Association.

The school's Code of Positive Behaviour is fundamental in developing the ethos of the school. We aim to nurture each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are valued. Children can best learn in an environment, which is positive, encouraging and respectful of each individual. This can only be achieved when there is a high level of respect and cooperation between staff, parents and pupils. It is with the combined efforts of all parties in reinforcing and praising good behaviour and in correcting misbehaviour that we will ensure pupils will be self-disciplined and respectful towards each other and taught in a caring harmonious environment.

### Aims

Our Code of Positive Behaviour aims to achieve the following:

**Harmony:** Good behaviour among our pupils means that learning can take place in an atmosphere of harmony in our school, where cooperation exists between pupils, teachers and parents.

**Respect:** In line with our mission statement, we aim to create good behaviour patterns based on consideration, respect, courtesy, tolerance and forgiveness of others. To recognise the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.

**Trust:** We expect to be able to trust our pupils with regard to their behaviour and to ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community.

**Understanding:** To assist pupils and parents in understanding the need and reason for rules of behaviour – namely, to foster an environment conducive to learning and development and for their own safety and well-being and that of all in the school community and to seek their cooperation in the application of these procedures.

**Responsibility:** To assist our pupils in gaining a sense of responsibility in terms of their own behaviour. Staff, parents and the Board of Management also have responsibility for upholding the Code of Positive Behaviour.

**Community awareness:** To help our pupils to become aware of their individual importance as part of their class and as part of the whole school community. Individual good behaviour has a positive effect on that community, just as individual misbehaviour can have a negative effect on all.

**Parental Support:** We rely on our parents to support the school's Code of Positive Behaviour and to help their children to uphold good standards of behaviour at school, just as at home.

**Consistency:** We will aim to ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner.

### **Guidelines**

In developing the code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of our school. St. Helen's Junior School is a primary co-educational junior school in a non-disadvantaged area. We cater for all children from Junior Infants to Second Class. Our school incorporates a unit for children with Autism consisting of a pre-school and two outreach classes.

*Guidelines for the Code of Positive Behaviour are as follows:*

- To ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption-free environment.
- 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 teachers.
- 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 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 cooperation among staff and between staff, pupils and parents
- The following are guidelines regarding behaviour that is expected from pupils:
  - Each child is expected to be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults in a respectful manner
  - Each child is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other children's belongings and their own belongings
  - Each child is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual
  - Each child is expected to do his/her best both in school and for homework
- The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal teacher. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises. A pupil will be referred to the Principal teacher for serious breaches of discipline and for repeated incidents of minor behaviour.

### **Role of the School Community**

### **Teachers' Role**

- The teacher will create a happy, inclusive and respectful atmosphere in each class. All classes will be taught the RSE, Walk Tall and Stay Safe programmes as per our SPHE policy.
- Teachers will record all serious incidents of misbehaviour (on Aladdin under the pupil's file) and keep the Principal updated on the same.
- Pupils who appear to have behavioural difficulties will be monitored.
- Teachers will liaise regularly with parents.

### **Pupils' Role**

- Pupils will be involved in creating their classroom rules with their teacher and are expected to behave in a manner which respects themselves, others and property at all times.
- Pupils will be encouraged to report problems when the situation warrants it.

### **Parents Role**

- Parents will educate their children to behave in an acceptable manner.
- Parents will impress on their children the need to respect the person and property of others.
- Parents will emphasise to their children the hurt caused by disrespectful behaviour.
- Parents will liaise with teachers and staff to help improve behaviour.

### **Role of Board Of Management**

- The Board will ensure that an atmosphere of trust, respect and happiness pervades the school.
- The Board will ensure that a clearly understood strategy to deal with unacceptable behaviour will be put in place.
- The Board will support staff in dealing with the pastoral care of children.
- A staged system of sanctions to change inappropriate behaviour will be put in place.
- A system of record keeping is in place (Aladdin)

### **Positive Behaviour Procedures**

The following is an outline of the procedures for the classroom, yard and general school environment that set a positive atmosphere in relation to pupil learning, behaviour and achievement.

#### **Yard**

Children must keep the 4 yard rules

- Kind hands and feet
- Kind Words
- You are not allowed to touch another person's body or clothes
- Respond to the 3 bells at the end of playtime

*Yard rules include:*

- Pupils must not interfere with fencing or the gates surrounding the yard.
- Pupils may not leave the playground without the permission of the teacher on duty.

- High speed running is not permitted during playtime in both yards.
- Rough play and games involving “chains” of pupils or “piggy-back “ type activities are not allowed.
- Food should not be taken to the playground.
- Pupils are not allowed to kick, push, punch, pull or hit another child on purpose in the yard or at any time during the school day. Any behaviour which endangers oneself or others is not permitted.
- Pupils must show respect to teachers and Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) when they are corrected for their behaviour during playtime.

### ***Three Rings of the bell to finish each break-time***

1. First Ringing -- Children ‘**freeze**’ – no movement, no talk.
2. Second Ringing – Children walk to their line promptly.
3. Third Ringing -- Children cease talking and stand quietly in their line
4. Pupils proceed in **silence** from the yard to their classroom and must resume their seats promptly.

### **Approaching & Leaving School:**

- Pupils are required to attend school regularly and to be in time for school each day.
- St. Helen’s Junior school opens to receive pupils at 8:45 am. Arrival in class after 9:05 am can be disruptive.
- Pupils should be reminded regularly of the need for health and safety at all times when approaching and leaving the school.
- Pupils must use the footpaths and walk not run down the avenue. Pupils should never walk on the road.
- If waiting for brothers or sisters they should wait at the end of the avenue.
- Pupils are never allowed to leave the school unless accompanied by an adult during school hours. If a child is being collected early by a Parent, relative or childminder, a written note must be provided.

### **Classroom Behaviour:**

- Pupils should remain seated whenever the teacher has to leave the room and they are being supervised by another teacher.
- Respectful behaviour is expected towards others at all times.
- Classroom rules should be obeyed at all times e.g. no shouting, running around the classroom etc.
- Good listening skills are encouraged. Pupils should get permission to speak to teachers or other adults by raising their hands.
- Tables and floor area should be kept tidy at all times.

### **Outside of class and hallways**

- Pupils are encouraged to show respect for other children and adults by use of good manners.
- When meeting others on corridors pupils are encouraged to greet each other politely, possibly in Irish e.g. ‘Dia Duit, Gabh mo leithséal,’ and ‘Go raibh maith agat’ .
- Classes should always proceed in a “líne” without talking, at a walking pace.
- Children should walk down the corridors in a mannerly & calm fashion

- Individual pupils must always walk and take the shortest route. When bringing a message to another classroom they should knock on the door and then enter the classroom. Do not wait for the door to be answered.
- Fire doors and exit doors must always be closed when not in use
- Pupils should be encouraged to stand aside, when an adult is passing by.

#### **Ipads/School equipment**

- Ipads and school equipment should be carefully handled and treated with care and respect.
- Ipads should be in accordance with the Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) agreed by Parents, pupils, teachers and the Board of Management.
- No food or drink is allowed near any Ipads or school equipment.
- A clear distinction should be made between equipment and materials which are available for “free-play” or recreational type activities and that which is for use in a structured manner in formal learning situations.

#### **Mobile Phones/Electronic equipment e.g. camera watches**

- Pupils are forbidden to have mobile phones or any electronic devices such as tablet/ipod/DS on school property or at any school related event or between school drop-off and pick-up times. Such items will be confiscated and returned to the child’s parent only.

#### **P.E., Irish Dancing & G.A.A**

- Tracksuits and runners are compulsory. School tracksuits should be worn instead of uniform on P.E. & G.A.A. days.
- Children should be encouraged to wear suitable footwear for Irish dancing.
- Children should show respect & manners to visiting teachers/coaches etc.

#### **Bathrooms**

- Only one child at a time in each toilet.
- Children should be regularly reminded of the need for personal hygiene and of the need to care for the toilet area.
- Children are encouraged to use the bathroom before they come to school. Children will have their own wash/ toilet bag to maintain hygiene standards

#### **Visitors to Classroom:**

- Adult visitors who enter classrooms should be greeted in Irish (at normal tone and speed) by pupils and on departing the children should say “Slan leat agus Go raibh maith agat.”
- If a teacher is speaking to a visitor, pupils not working should be properly behaved and silent & respectful. Pupils should not be allowed to interrupt such conversations. (Only in exceptional circumstances).

#### **General tidiness:**

- Children should be encouraged to keep their own work space tidy & clutter free.
- Classroom floors should always be litter-free.

- Tables should be kept neat and uncluttered.
- All work areas and press tops etc. should be maintained in a neat tidy manner.
- All equipment should be stored in designated areas in a tidy manner e.g. P.E. press and the resource room.

#### **General Behaviour**

- All interaction with others must be based on respect, trust, care and consideration.
- The S.P.H.E. programme reinforces these values and children are made aware that any form of bullying is an unacceptable form of behaviour.
- All forms of genuine bullying are investigated and procedures followed. (Refer to Code of Anti-Bullying Behaviour).

#### **School Tours or Outings:**

- Children taking part in school related activities off the school premises, such as educational outings & sports events are required to act responsibly, to listen to and obey the instructions of teachers, supervisors & guides, to be courteous to others and to respect property of others.
- Pupils are forbidden to have mobile phones or any electronic devices on school outings.

#### **Uniforms**

- School uniforms should be worn each day.
- Uniform tracksuit should be worn on P.E./G.A.A days.
- Names should be put clearly on all items of uniforms, coats etc.

#### **Wet day Procedure**

- When the weather is wet the children will not go to the yard. They will be supervised by the designated teachers in their classroom.
- During breaks children will not be permitted to leave their place unless directed to do so by the supervising teacher.

#### **Positive Responses to Good Behaviour & Strategies**

- In order to maximise the teaching and learning in a classroom all children are expected to cooperate with their teacher and their classmates.
- Positive reinforcement of good behaviours will be emphasised at all times.
- Rewards and sanctions may be used by teachers to promote good behaviour.

#### **The following strategies will be used to show approval for acceptable behaviour and disapproval for unacceptable behaviour.**

- Affirmation of good behaviour
- Praise and encouragement
- Stars, stickers and stamps
- Pupils may be sent to the Principal to show work well done
- Links between school and home regarding the improvement in pupil behaviour/work
- Certificates of good behaviour:- may be given in Assembly by class teachers

With regard to challenging behaviour incidents which may occur without intent to harm but which may occur as a result of behaviour induced by a condition we refer to our policy 'Behaviours of concern'. Every effort will also be made to have an emotionally disturbed child assessed without delay. Again, help will be sought from the support services provided by NEPS, HSE, NCSE and the Dept. of Education (DES).

#### **Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour:**

The teacher's discretion will play a role when inappropriate behaviour is being dealt with as the teacher will be fully aware of any special circumstances which should be considered when responding.

- Reasoning with the pupil
- Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
- Loss of privileges
- Prescribing additional work
- Referral to Principal Teacher
- Communication with parents/guardian
- Referral to Board of Management
- Anticipation of suspension
- Suspension (temporary)
- Expulsion

These strategies are not necessarily listed in order of implementation. Any or many of these strategies may be used in isolation.

#### **Methods for recording breaches of behaviour (In line with GDPR):**

##### ***In Class***

- Teachers shall keep a written factual record of all instances of serious misbehaviour on Aladdin under the pupils file.
- The Principal will be informed of the same and of repeated misbehaviour episodes.
- Parents will be contacted where a child is sent to the office for a second time for the same offence.
- However, if behaviour is deemed very serious, Parents will be contacted immediately.

##### ***In Yard***

- If a child behaves inappropriately, he/she will be asked to stand out in the time out box to consider their behaviour. The length of time the child will spend in the time out box will be at the discretion of the teacher on yard duty, as there may be certain circumstances which the teacher needs to consider.
- Serious misbehaviours will be referred directly to the Principal e.g. deliberately hurting another child, abusive language, non-compliance with a teacher's instructions.
- The teacher on yard duty informs the class teacher about the behaviour.
- Children who are not silent after the 3rd bell will be asked to stand out. In view of the age of our children every effort will be made to help the children to differentiate between general playground behaviour and hurtful behaviour.

### **Suspension/Expulsion Procedure**

- Communication with Parents will be verbal or by letter, depending on circumstances. The Parents 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 person will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour, depending on circumstances.
- 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 Principal teacher. If the Parents do 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. Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130 (5) of the Rules for National Schools. (amended as per circular 7/88 of the rules of National schools)
- In the case of gross misbehaviour the Board of Management will authorize the Chairperson or Principal teacher to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the Parents.
- Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with Rule 130 (6). (amended as per circular 7/88. Before expelling a pupil, the BOM –shall notify the local welfare Educational officer in writing in accordance with section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.) Arrangements will be made for “an emotionally disturbed child” to be referred for assessment by a NEPS psychologist. Help may also be sought from support services within the wider community eg. Community care services provided by HSE.

### **Communication between parents and the school**

- The school recognises that a good open relationship with mutual respect between Parents and teachers is of vital importance in promoting the proper development of each child in the school.
- It is important that Parents and teachers communicate in a friendly and open manner and always in an atmosphere of mutual respect. It is therefore requested that Parents become familiar with the school's policy document in relation to discipline. They cooperate with the school with regard to the implementation of its policy on discipline and that they communicate regularly with the school about factors likely to affect the behaviour of their children in school.

### **Conclusion:**

This policy is available on the school website [sthelensjunior.com](http://sthelensjunior.com).

A hard copy is also provided to the Parents of all incoming junior infants, who must agree to abide by the Code of Positive Behaviour as a condition of enrolment in the school.

St. Helen's Junior School promotes an environment where each pupil is valued and respected. We believe that the most effective schools are those where the parents and staff respect and support each other's roles in providing a safe supportive and secure framework in which learning can occur. In providing such a setting, each child is given the opportunity of realising their full potential in a harmonious and respectful climate.

### **Ratification**



This Code of Behaviour was revisited and reviewed by the Parents' Association, the Teaching Staff and the Board of Management in March 2015.

It was sanctioned by the BOM in April 2015.

This code is subject to revision at intervals

Review in process since January 2020 in consultation with the Parents, teachers, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), ancillary staff and the Board of Management.

This policy was ratified by the BOM in \_\_\_\_\_ 2020.