



# Code of Behaviour 2022

The school motto sets the standard for expected behaviour of everyone in St. John's:  
*"In Saint John's School we try hard to learn and be kind and friendly to everyone"*

## Aims

The aims of the Code of Behaviour are:

- To set high expectations for good behaviour
- To ensure the standards are clear and consistent
- To create an atmosphere that encourages good behaviour
- To create a happy and safe place for teaching and learning
- To encourage students to take personal responsibility for their behaviour
- To build positive relationships and respect among students, parents and staff

The school's Code of Behaviour applies during school hours, at all extra-curricular activities, in the canteen, on school tours/outings and at all fundraising and events organised and supervised by St John's staff.

## Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the partners in education, i.e. the Board of Management, Principal and staff, pupils and the parents/guardians of the pupils in St. John's National School.

### Responsibilities of Board of Management:

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment
- Ratify the Code of Behaviour
- Support the principal and staff in implementing the Code

### Responsibilities of Principal:

- Promote a positive climate in the school
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner and arrange for review of the Code, as required

### Responsibilities of Teachers:

- Support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil and affirm good work
- Be courteous, consistent and fair
- Deal appropriately with instances of misbehaviour
- Liaise with SNAs and other ancillary staff
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour
- Provide support for colleagues

- Communicate with parents when necessary

### **Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians:**

St John's school expects the support of parents with regard to good behaviour and discipline. It is every parent's responsibility to do the following:

- Talk to your child about school rules. They help make the school a safe place where everyone can learn and nobody feels left out or threatened.
- Ensure that your child attends school every day and on time.
- Ensure adequate supervision for your child outside the back and front gates before 9 o'clock.
- Ensure that your child is collected on time every day. The school **does not** accept responsibility for pupils **before or after** school hours.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where your child's behaviour is causing difficulties for themselves and/or others.
- Ensure the school has up-to-date contact information at all times for parents/guardians. **If a critical incident occurs and parents are uncontactable, outside agencies such as An Garda Síochána/ TUSLA/ Emergency Services may be contacted.**
- Ensure your child comes to school with a healthy snack for little break and a healthy lunch/money for the breakfast club.
- Support your child where possible with reading and any additional homework tasks.
- Share information and reports from any outside agencies with the school in relation to any issues which may affect child's progress/behaviour.
- Behave in a respectful manner.
- Ensure an ordered, structured day for your child with regular meal times and bed times.
- Raise any concerns relating to your child **with the class teacher.**

### **Absences / Communication**

The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, Section 18, requires parents to notify the Principal of a school of the reasons for a child's absence. In compliance with these sections, the following procedures apply. For absences of pupils from school, parents must send a note upon the return of the child to school outlining the reason(s) for the absence.

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 21(4) requires a School Principal to inform an Educational Welfare Officer in writing if the aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent from school during a school year is 20 days or more.

### **Bullying**

In dealing with incidences of bullying behaviour, all parties should refer to the school's Anti-Bullying Policy which was drawn up in accordance with Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary Schools (2013). This policy is available to view on the school website.

## **Standards of Behaviour Expected of Pupils within the School:**

The school expects the highest standard of behaviour from its pupils including the following:

- Do one's best in class
- Attend school regularly and not miss days without good reason
- Arrive on time
- Do not leave during the day without permission
- Respect all school property
- Wear the school uniform
- Show respect for yourself and others
- Avoid swearing, fighting and name calling
- Listen to instructions given and do as requested by all members of staff
- Participate in school activities
- Be willing to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- Keep the school tidy and litter-free

## **Incredible Years**

St John's J.N.S. implements Incredible Years in partnership with Genesis and NEPS. This is an evidence-based programme which aims to enhance the lives of children in our area by providing them with problem-solving strategies that will ensure that they can cope with many different challenges, not just now, but also in the future. Our school is using four elements from the Incredible Years suite of programmes:

- The Teacher Classroom Management Programme
- The Classroom Dina programme
- The Small-Group Dina programme
- The Incredible Years Parent Programme

## **School Rules**

**Core Rules (taught as part of the Incredible Years programme):**

- ❖ Eyes on Teacher
- ❖ Hands to Self
- ❖ Inside Voice
- ❖ Listening Ears
- ❖ Walking Feet
- ❖ Working Hard
- ❖ Quiet Hands Up

**Yard Rules:**

- ❖ I stay in my own side of the yard.

- ❖ I keep my hands and feet to myself
- ❖ I play safely and fairly
- ❖ I move sensibly to the line when the bell goes.

All pupils are taught these rules in Junior Infants and they are revised consistently. Teachers may wish to develop their own additional rules in their classroom as they deem appropriate.

## **Promoting Positive Behaviour**

Encouraging and rewarding good behaviour is the main goal of our Code of Behaviour. Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions. The school's SPHE plan and the Incredible Years Classroom Dina programme are both used to support the Code of Behaviour. Jointly, they aim to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving and conflict resolution skills. They also help to foster self-esteem, to enable children to accommodate and appreciate differences and to develop citizenship.

### **Promotion of School Rules**

The School Rules are promoted through the entire school community as follows:

- The school motto and Incredible Years rules are displayed prominently throughout the school on noticeboards.
- Assembly takes place once a fortnight. It plays a valuable role in our whole-school approach to developing self-esteem and promoting positive behaviour and effective discipline. Good work and achievements are highlighted, celebrated and rewarded. The school rules and specific routines for the classroom/yard are emphasized and explained.
- A newsletter is sent to home on a twice-termly basis to inform parents of events taking place in the school. The school rules will be occasionally highlighted in the newsletter and parents encouraged to reinforce these rules with their children.
- All parents/guardians are provided with a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour before enrolment as required by Section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. Parents are expected at enrolment to confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them and that they will make every effort to ensure compliance with the Code by their child.

### **Prevention Strategies**

The most effective methodology in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place. Prevention strategies used in the school may include:

- SPHE lessons
- Circle time
- Classroom Dina lessons
- Small Group Dina programme
- Fun Friends programme
- KIVA anti-bullying programme
- Therapies, e.g. Art Therapy, Drama Therapy, Play Therapy
- Use of Individual Behaviour Support Plans

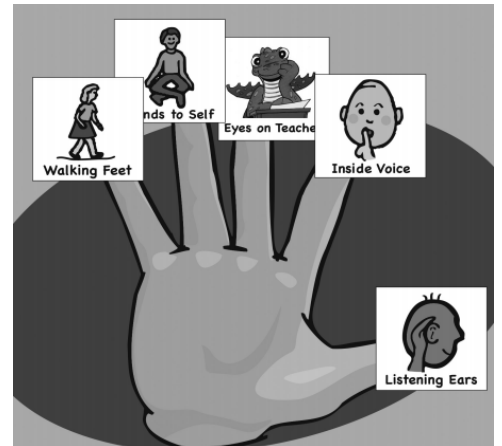
- Temporary separation from peers, e.g. thinking table, time out, withdrawal from class
- Nurture Room
- Sensory Room

### Rewards and Incentives

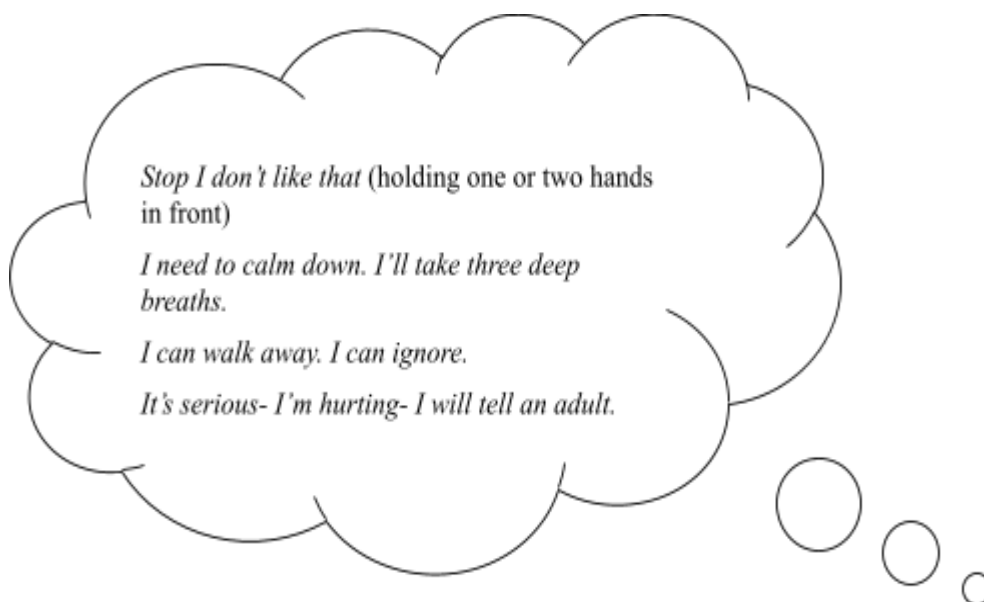
Our reward systems act as a positive reinforcement of good behaviour. Rewards are offered on an individual, group, whole-class or whole-school basis, at the discretion of each individual staff member. Green cards may be awarded to children in recognition of positive behaviour. Golden Time is a privilege awarded to children who have exhibited positive behaviour. It typically takes place on a Friday afternoon and allows the children to select an activity of their choice.

### Whole-School Strategies

- Staff throughout the school use the ‘Show Me Five’ strategy- holding up a palm as a visual prompt for children to demonstrate five of the rules at once:
  - Eyes on Teacher
  - Hands to Self
  - Inside Voice
  - Listening Ears
  - Walking Feet



- Staff supervising the playground at break-times will remind children of the problem-solving strategies Wally the puppet taught them in junior infants as part of the Classroom Dina programme.



### Specialised Supports

A small minority of pupils may exhibit particularly challenging behaviour. The school, in cooperation with the pupil's parents, will seek to avail of any local services that

may assist in responding to the needs of the student. These services could include the National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS), various therapists, relevant professional counselling services, etc.

Individual Behaviour Support Plans may be devised in consultation with parents, the class teacher, support teachers, learning support/resource teacher, HSCL Co-ordinator and SNA. Professional assessments (where available) may inform and shape the plan.

## **Dealing with Misbehaviour**

The school strives to solve issues at the lowest level possible. Teachers encourage, support and show pupils how they may be able to resolve issues themselves. Most issues will be resolved at this point. Where sanctions are imposed, they will be graded and reflect the seriousness of the behaviour. A child may lose privileges in a non-curricular area, such as school trips/tours, Golden Time, iPad time, yard time, Breakfast Club, etc.

### **Yellow and Red Cards**

The school operates a yellow and red card system. This system is in operation while the Code of Behaviour applies. Yellow cards are given for serious/disruptive misbehaviour. Red cards are given for grossly unacceptable behaviour. The school will inform parents if their child receives a yellow or red card. Upon receiving a red or yellow card. Yellow or red cards may be given for a single incident of misbehaviour (as outlined below). Staff will use their professional judgement to assess whether a red or yellow card is merited in each instance.

For minor misbehaviour the following steps will apply:

1. Verbal Warning – Reminder of the rule *“In our school we...”*
2. Yellow Card

### **IMMEDIATE YELLOW CARDS WILL BE GIVEN FOR SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOUR SUCH AS:**

- Defiance- refusal to do as asked by any member of staff
- Disrupting other children’s learning
- Throwing an object
- Damaging school property
- Threatening someone
- Fighting/hurting someone
- Name calling
- Answering back to a teacher
- Telling lies

If a pupil gets multiple yellow cards in any week, the pupil may be sent to the Principal/Deputy Principal. Parents will be notified of this and may be requested to attend a meeting with the Principal/Deputy Principal and the class teacher. An Individual Behaviour Support Plan may be drawn up.

### **IMMEDIATE RED CARDS WILL BE GIVEN FOR GROSSLY UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR SUCH AS:**

- Physical violence towards another child/staff member
- Absconding/leaving school grounds without permission

- Deliberate destruction of school property
- Use of obscene/abusive language or gestures directed at another person
- Racist remarks
- Spitting at someone
- Stealing
- Intentionally setting off the fire alarm

**Red card incidents may be grounds for suspension.**

**Steps for Parental Involvement:**

1. The teacher will record the misbehaviour and the intervention strategies used (*Using the ABC - (Antecedents-Behaviour-Consequence) approach during specific times and situations can sometimes give useful insights into what triggers behaviour and the maintaining consequences are.*)
2. (*contact parent to inform of card as soon as possible*)
3. Parent(s) will be invited to discuss the issues with the class teacher, at an arranged time and to work towards a joint strategy for improved behaviour.
4. If the behaviour does not improve, a meeting will be held with the Deputy Principal/Principal, the class teacher and parent(s), to offer guidance on what other help is available (the HSCL co-ordinator may also be consulted).
5. If the misbehaviour continues, the suspension process will begin in accordance with the National Educational Welfare Board Guidelines.

**Incidents Posing a Significant Risk**

A staff member may need to use physical intervention in cases where:

- An individual poses a significant risk to self
- An individual poses a significant risk to others
- An individual causes/is about to cause damage to property that may result in significant risk of harm to self or others.

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents posing a significant risk:

1. On-scene involvement of Principal/Deputy Principal
2. Details of incident recorded by Principal/Deputy Principal
3. Principal/Deputy Principal communicates verbally or in written format with parent(s)
4. Principal/Deputy Principal meets with one/both parents
5. Chairperson of the Board of Management informed

The following actions may also be taken when dealing with misbehaviour:

- Denied Access to Breakfast Club
- Removal From Yard - If necessary for health and safety reasons, the pupil will be removed from the yard immediately. For repeated grossly unacceptable behaviour on the yard, arrangements may be made for the pupil not to go to the yard at break time or to go home for break time.
- Exclusion from School Tours and Outings- Pupils' behaviour on outings/tours must comply with the standard set down in the school's Code of Behaviour. Where it is felt that a child's conduct would pose a safety risk or inhibit the educational benefit for self or others, the school reserves the right to

refuse the child permission to travel on school trips/tours/outings. Parents will be advised of this in advance.

## **Suspension**

For the purpose of this document suspension is defined as ‘requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified limited period of school days’. During the period of a suspension, the child retains their place in school. In the case of grossly unacceptable behaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and/or to secure the safety of the pupils and/or staff, the Board has authorized the Principal to sanction a suspension for a period not exceeding three school days.

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person.

In circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, the Board of Management has authorised the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of up to five days, subject to the guidance concerning such suspensions.

### **Grounds for suspension**

Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked.

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as:

- The student’s behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- The student’s continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

### **Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)**

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

Prior to a child returning to the school, meetings must take place with relevant staff members and parent(s)/guardian(s). One member of staff will act as a scribe at the meeting. The school requires the full support of the parents in re-introducing the child to school. The parents must work in partnership with the school to devise a plan for their child going forward. Once in agreement, the child will then be invited to join the meeting where the plan will be discussed and explained to him/her. All parties, including the child, must agree and sign the plan before the child will be readmitted to the class.

If parents/guardians fail to support the school in this process, the school will have no option but to contact TUSLA/outside agencies. Being mindful of the school’s duty of care towards staff members, other pupils and the other children’s right to education, the child will be unable to re-join the school.

## **Expulsion**

Expulsion may be considered by the Board of Management in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rules for National Schools, NEWB Guidelines and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before expelling a pupil, the



Board shall notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

## **Review**

This policy has been reviewed and updated by the staff of our school and will be available on the school website. The Board of Management reserves the right to amend this policy as needs arise.

Reviewed by staff on 31st August 2021

Reviewed and revised by Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management