



St. Joseph's Primary School

Macroom, Co Cork
www.stjosephsprimarymacroom.com

Roll Number 100471
Phone 026 41847
Email stjosephsmacroom@gmail.com

CODE OF DISCIPLINE

Vision

Our vision is that of a caring, loving Catholic School where all children, whatever their ability, race or creed are cherished equally for their uniqueness.

Ethos

The ethos of our school recognises the importance of a sense of community within the school and the existence of a high level of co-operation among teachers, ancillary staff, pupils, parents, the Board of Management and the Parents' Association.

Aims

As a staff our aim is to create a happy, secure environment for all our pupils, within which there is a sense of good order, effective teaching and an agreed approach to discipline.

These sentiments are contained in 7 Core / Golden rules for our school listed as follows.

1. **I will be gentle**—I will not hurt anyone.
2. **I will be kind and helpful**—I will not hurt people's feelings.
3. **I will be honest**—I will not hide the truth.
4. **I will listen**—I will not interrupt.
5. **I will look after property**—I will not waste or damage things.
6. **I will work hard**—I will not waste time.
7. **I will say sorry**—when I misbehave. The emphasis in St. Joseph's is on the positive. Our catch phrase is "*catch them when they're good*". At all times we stress that it is the undesirable behaviour and not the child, which is being rejected.

Principles of discipline policy.

If the school is to achieve a happy, secure environment in which children can develop to their full potential, it is necessary to provide a framework, which promotes constructive behaviour and discourages unacceptable behaviour. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to an education in a relatively undistruptive environment. The school code places a greater emphasis on

rewards than on sanctions, and the ideal is that pupils will acquire self-discipline.

There are times however when it may be necessary to impose sanctions in order to maintain good order and to discourage unacceptable behaviour

Good behaviour will be praised and rewarded. Unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated.

Behaviour has been subdivided into these main areas.

- General School behaviour.
- Classroom/ corridor behaviour.
- Playground behaviour.
- Out of school trips/ swimming, school tours etc.

General School Behaviour

- Bullying or being a party to bullying will not be tolerated under any circumstances. See anti bullying policy at the end of this document.
- Children should be in school on time. The school day is from 9.00 a.m. to 1.40 p.m. for infants and 2.40 p.m. for all other classes.
- No child should leave the school without the expressed permission of the school principal. Children who need to leave the school, during the school day for dental appointments etc. should be collected at the school reception



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and signed out by a parent and signed in by a parent when returning to school.

- Following all absences the parent should give an explanation in writing to the class teacher. Absences of more than 20 days will be reported to The Welfare Board.
- Full school uniform is to be worn every day. Only stud earrings are allowed. Make up is not allowed.
- The instructions of all staff are to be obeyed at all times.
- School property is to be respected and any deliberate damage to it must be paid for.
- Children in St. Joseph's are to be truthful and honest.
- All children are to help keep the school clean and litter free.
- Children are to enter and exit the school in an orderly fashion.
- Any type of threatening behaviour is unacceptable.
- Mobile Phones: (i) The use of mobile phones is completely forbidden

on school property or during school trips. (Health & Safety issues). (ii): If a pupil brings a phone to school, it must be turned off before entering school grounds. (iii): Phone must be put in a central location immediately on entering the school. (iv): Phones will be stored safely in the Principal's office and will be returned at home time.

Sanctions:

On the spot verbal correction to be given by any staff member to any child found to be misbehaving e.g. walk please.

Corridor rules:

1. I will always walk quietly, never run.
2. I will let adults pass.
3. I will not push or shove in the line.

Classroom rules:

1. I will sit on my chair and do my work.
2. I will listen. I will let others speak.
3. I will always walk and never run.
4. I will help to keep a tidy classroom.
5. I will use the toilet properly and wash my hands.
6. I will be kind and helpful and not hurt other people's feelings
7. I will not hit another child

The following are the sanctions that may be used to show disapproval of and discourage unacceptable behaviour. Any of the following may be used in any order depending on the behaviour.

1. Gesture warning—look/whisper.
2. Verbal warning.
3. Time out---time out chair/ table
4. Note in homework journal
5. Appropriate sanctions will be applied. These will include extra work/completion of a behaviour reflection form/lines/positive messages/withdrawal or deferral of privileges/temporary separation from other pupils/supervised detention.
6. If no improvement occurs the matter will be referred to the Principal who will speak to the pupil and to his parents/guardians. Where appropriate a behaviour action plan will be put in place
7. Loss of privileges (a) loss of DVD/ treat
(b) loss of playtime in class
(c) Shortened playtime in yard
8. Extra written work- reflection on their misbehaviour and it's consequences.
9. Principal informed- (a) Principal speaks to class regarding what is good behaviour



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10. Principal informed - (b) speaks to children individually.
11. Principal informed-(c) sends for parents/guardians.

Yard rules:

1. I will walk quietly in my line to and from the yard.
2. I will let others join in my games.
3. I will be gentle. I will not push, kick, punch or injure any child/teacher/supervisor.
4. I will not re-enter the school during break time without the expressed permission of the teacher/supervisor.
5. I will do what I am told when I am told.
6. I will not use bad language or call names.
7. I will be fair.
8. I will freeze and be silent when I hear the bell.
9. I will walk to my line when the teacher/supervisor calls my class.
10. I understand that I am not allowed to remain in my classroom at break time unsupervised.

Rewards for good behaviour.

Rewarding good behaviour is a very important part of our Code of discipline. The following strategies may be used to reward good behaviour.

1. Note in pupil's notebook to convey messages of approval from teachers.
2. Other treat at teacher's discretion.
3. Prizes for best behaviour on the playground on a class by class basis.
4. Some homework off if particular targets are achieved.
Extra privileges e.g. non-uniform day, DVD, extra PE/Art/Drama. etc.

Sanctions; any of the following may be used in any order, depending on the behaviour.

1. Gestural warning-- look/ whisper.
2. Verbal warning including advice on how to improve
3. Child walks with teacher during break time.
4. Temporary separation from peers. Child sits in designated area of the playground near supervisor.
5. Class teacher is informed.
6. Child is given a Yellow card, if he/she is misbehaving. If they get 2 Yellow cards, they do not get the full reward at the end of the week.
7. Child is reported to the Principal and the Principal cautions child.
8. Child's parent(s) are contacted and behaviour is discussed.
9. Withdrawal of privileges or extra work is given.
 - Steps are taken e.g. removal of child from yard/ detention.
 - School may seek relevant assessment from professional e.g. Psychologist etc.
 - A shortened day might be decided upon.

Note; although incidents of misbehaviour are recorded, the emphasis is on encouraging children to behave well and praise is given for commendable behaviour. Parents will be informed at an early stage if problems occur and not simply at the point where a crisis has arisen. At times, it is suggested by some parents that the matter to which their attention is being drawn to is of a trivial nature, and that there was no necessity to have informed them that their children were misbehaving. The response to this is that while the misbehaviour may appear to be of a trivial nature, it is the cumulative effect of such breaches of the rule that is important, and not the offence itself.

Out of school Trips/Tours, Swimming.etc.

It must be noted that when taking children on trips the same standards of behaviour that apply in school apply when out of school.



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1. The teacher/supervisor/guide/ bus driver must be obeyed at all times.
2. When travelling on a bus or in a car a child must be seated and belted at all times.
3. Rules of visiting areas, e.g. swimming pools and safety points are to be followed.
4. Pupils who misbehave frequently may not be allowed to participate in school outings for their own safety and that of other pupils.

Children with severe/emotional problems are dealt with on an individual basis in consultation with and support from Parents, SENO, NEPS psychologist and any other relevant outside agency.

Children with special needs made aware of the standard of behaviour that is expected of them. Specific behavioural targets are set out in their IEP's and are developed collaboratively among pupil, parents and teachers.

The Resource Teachers use a system of incentives and rewards for good behaviour as well as those laid out by the class teacher.

It is acknowledged that a certain degree of flexibility is necessary when dealing with pupils with special needs. However, where serious incidences of misbehaviour occur and where the safety of other children or staff is at risk, this Code of Behaviour takes precedence.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

Wet day arrangements: If the weather is wet/inclement, the children are supervised in their classrooms during "SOS" and Lunchtime.

Each class teacher is expected to have an activity organised for the children in her class on the days children stay in. This must be a sitting activity for Health and Safety reasons.

Misbehaviour is seen to be made up of

- Minor misdemeanours
- Serious misdemeanours

Minor misdemeanours:

Continuous talking, fidgeting, inattention, pushing and talking in the line, kissing inappropriately, spitting, refusal to do work, writing and passing notes, name calling, **use of mobile phones by pupils is not allowed on the school premises in line with the school mobile phone and digital technology policy.**

Serious misdemeanours:

Abuse of any member of the School Community (pupils, teachers, employees) physical, verbal, or through the use of technology.

Bullying (in any form). Bullying should be defined as a repeated act of aggression (physical, verbal, emotional or through the use of technology). It includes behaviours such as exclusion, teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, extortion by one or more pupils against a victim/victims.

Abuse of school property or property belonging to any member of the school community, continued repetition of minor misdemeanours, rough play causing injury, serious fighting, stealing from others/teachers, lying, dishonesty, ongoing.

Disrespect, Hitting or other aggressive behaviour (unprovoked).

Bad/ inappropriate language directed at someone, Racist remarks, Biting.

Uncontrolled behaviour, Writing and passing notes. Any other behaviour not listed which the Staff, Principal and Board of Management deem to be a serious misdemeanour.



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Disciplinary procedures for serious misbehaviour: Stage 1.

Child's name and class recorded: nature of the incident is noted.
Report is given to the class teacher (if incident occurs in yard)
Principal is informed
Sanction is given to child.

Stage 2:

If these incidents continue, parents will be informed.

Stage 3:

If misbehaviour continues, parents will be requested to call to the school to discuss the child's behaviour with the Principal and class teacher.

Stage 4:

If a pupil misbehaves on a continuous basis, or if there is a serious incident of misbehaviour, it may be necessary to suspend a pupil. While the Board of Management has the authority to suspend, the Board of Management of St Joseph's has delegated this authority to the principal, for periods of up to three days. Procedures for the suspension of a pupil are as follows;

1. Parent is invited to discuss the matter with the class teacher and the principal.
2. If suspension is being invoked, the parent is informed, and then, confirmation of the duration of the suspension is provided in writing
 - The reasons for the suspension.
 - The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents.
 - The provision for appeal to the Board of management
 - The provision for appeal to the Secretary General of the DES.
 - Where the cumulative total of days reached 6, the NEWB will be notified.

A special meeting of the Board of Management is necessary to authorise a further period of exclusion up to a maximum of ten days to allow for consultation with the pupil's parents. In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Management may authorise a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed. Procedures for the suspension of a pupil are laid down in

"Developing a Code of Behaviour, Guidelines for Schools" from the N.E.W.B. (Chapters 11-12).

Formal written records will be kept

EXPULSION

Procedures in respect of expulsion.

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
- A recommendation to the BOM by the principal
- Consideration by the BOM of the principal's recommendations and the holding of a hearing.
- BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing.
- If BOM is of the opinion that the student will be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing, of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. The intention to expel a student does not take effect until 20 school days have elapsed after NEWB have received written notification. Consultations arranged by the EWO.

Confirmation of the decision to expel.

Parents/guardians will be notified immediately by the B.O.M. and informed re their right to appeal the decision to expel. The standard appeal form will be given to parents/guardians. A formal record of the decision to expel will be made.

Appeals

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act 1998 section 29) 5



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The appeals process under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 begins with the appointment of a mediator. An appeal may also be brought by N.E.P.S. on behalf of the pupil.

ANTI- BULLYING POLICY

The school believes that its pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, although not condoned, cannot be described as bullying. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing it is bullying. However, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, video image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those children who watch and less aggressive pupils can be drawn in by the group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up and it rarely sorts itself out.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

TYPES OF BULLYING

PHYSICAL: This includes punching, kicking, pushing, hitting or spitting etc. This also includes damaging property of a victim.

VERBAL: Verbal abuse can take the form of name calling, abusive language, slander, slugging, threats etc.

PSYCHOLOGICAL: This includes isolation - exclusion from discussions/ activities, use of the internet/e-mail/mobile phone to hurt, name call etc., extortion - obtaining (e.g. money, lunch, sweets etc.) from a person by force or threat etc.

IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED:

- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is **WRONG**.
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive - shout **NO**. Walk away confidently. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- Fighting back makes things worse- So don't fight back. **REPORT** to a teacher or parent(s)/guardians instead. If you need support find a friend and both of you speak to the teacher.
- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.
- The teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE ELSE IS BEING BULLIED:

- **TAKE ACTION** - Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult **IMMEDIATELY**. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

Advice for Parents

- Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard, ask for money or begin stealing money.
- Always take an active role in your child's education by enquiring how they are getting on.
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- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- It is important to advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.
- Tell your child there is nothing wrong with him/her. It is not her fault that they are being bullied.

Make sure your child is fully aware of the School Policy concerning Bullying, and that they will not be afraid to ask for help;

Combating Bullying and the Action towards Prevention:

Role of Staff

- The principal and staff exercise constant vigilance in the matter of misbehaviour. Our aim is to prevent misbehaviour rather than control. Positive behaviour is always recognised, affirmed and sought.
- Any complaints of bullying are dealt with quickly, firmly and fairly.
- The principal is informed of any instance of bullying.
- Awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour is addressed in the classroom, at school assemblies, through the school policy on pastoral care and other informal occasions when the opportunity arises. Pupils are taught skills and encouraged to report any incident of bullying.

Procedure for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying:

In any incident of bullying, the teacher will speak separately to the pupils involved, in an attempt to get both sides of the story. All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned.

Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide useful information in this way:

1. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the teacher will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
2. If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually and then the individuals are met as a group. Each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone is clear about what everyone also has said.
3. If a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the Code of Behaviour.
4. In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, a meeting or discussion will take place with the parents/guardians of the two parties involved as appropriate to:
 - explain the actions being taken and the reasons for them, referring them to the school policy
 - Discuss ways in which they can re-inforce or support the actions taken by the school
5. Parents/Guardians of victims and parents/guardians of bullies will be informed by Principal/Deputy Principal earlier rather than later so that they are given the opportunity to discuss the matter. They will then be in a position to help and support their children before a crisis occurs

MONITORING AND SUPPORT

Follow-up meetings (incidental) will take place with the bully and the victim separately, to ensure there is no further bullying and the situation will be monitored at regular intervals. If the bullying re-occurs, the pupils and the parents/guardians will meet with the Principal to discuss the matter and sign a pledge of behaviour. Sanctions implemented aim to encourage positive behaviour and support the esteem of the child. These sanctions may include a period of suspension during which there will be ongoing consultation with the parents to decide on appropriate action(s) to be taken in the best interests of the child. Suspension for any period of time will be reported in writing by the Principal to the Chair of the Board of Management.



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COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Should a parent/guardian wish to make a complaint, it should be done in accordance with the following procedures. In the vast majority of cases, problems will be resolved at Stage 1 or Stage 2. In the case of a serious complaint, the concerns should be specifically detailed in writing to enable the matter to be examined and a reply made.

- Stage 1: Contact the Class Teacher.
- Stage 2: Contact the Principal.
- Stage 3: Contact the Chairperson of the B.O.M./Manager.
- Stage 4: B.O.M./Manager investigates the complaint.
- Stage 5: Decision of the B.O.M./Manager.

Access to Records

Parents are entitled to an account of their child's progress in school. 1st. to 6th classes participate in a National Standardised Assessment (in English and Maths) every year. Parents are informed by the class teacher of progress of their child at the annual Parent/Teacher meetings. Parents who wish to access their child's school records must do so in writing to the Principal Teacher. The Principal teacher will then collate all available records and an appointment time will be confirmed with the parents. St. Joseph's Primary School retains all school records in a safe place for nine years after the child leaves 6th class.

Custody/Separation Policy

The BOM and staff of the school encourage parents experiencing separation to come and speak **confidentially** to the teachers and/or principal. It is our aim to handle such matters with sensitivity and compassion, and ultimately our primary concern is for the well-being and overall development of the child. When the child spends time in two homes it is requested that the school be provided with both sets of emergency/contact numbers. Regarding the collection of children from school, it is requested that the school be informed of any changes in the collection arrangements by note. It is school policy to offer the option of separate parent/teacher meetings, if so desired. It is assumed that when we wish to communicate with parents regarding their child, the parent contacted (i.e. the parent with whom the child principally resides) will inform the other parent of meetings, arrangements etc. Special arrangements for separate communication can be accommodated. In the absence of a custody arrangement, both parents will be treated as equal partners in terms of parenting rights and responsibilities. The school cannot be asked to withhold a child from either parent, in the absence of a custody arrangement or court order. The BOM and staff of St Joseph's Primary School will endeavour at all times to deal sensitively and caringly with children experiencing separation.



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