
Code of Behaviour

St. Martin de Porres NS
Roll Number: 19617W

Date: 17th September 2020



Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement

This Code of Behaviour has been devised by the Principal and staff of St. Martin de Porres NS in consultation with the members of the Board of Management and parent representatives. It was devised during the first term of 2020/2021. It will be reviewed on 17th September 2021.

Rationale

The Board of Management of St. Martin de Porres N.S have decided to review the Code of Behaviour Policy to ensure that it is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in **Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB 2008, Túsla Strategy for School Attendance 2015 and The Child Safety Procedures 2017. It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1)** which refers to the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in Section 23(2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:

- A. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
- B. The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
- C. The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
- D. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and
- E. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

Mission Statement

"St. Martin de Porres N.S. is a Catholic Primary School under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin. It is a caring learning environment where children of all races and religions are cherished and encouraged to reach their full potential. Our school seeks to involve and ensure that all members of the school community work in partnership to ensure the full development of each child in our care. Together we will strive to provide an education that reflects Ireland in the 21st century by supporting the academic, physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the children using a child-centred, holistic approach."

At St. Martin de Porres NS, our mission is the provision of primary education of the highest quality for all our pupils in a happy, safe environment.

Home and school both play essential roles in the achievement of these standards; hence co-operation between parents and teachers is vital. School policy emphasises good conduct. It is based on respect for one's self, for the family, for fellow pupils, for school staff, for the community at large, for property and for the environment

Aims:

Our Code of Behaviour is designed to:

- Promote the school ethos and relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour and prevent unacceptable behaviour
- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of our pupils and of all persons in the school
- Create and maintain an efficient and stimulating learning environment
- Develop integrity and self-discipline in pupils based on consideration, respect and courtesy towards others
- Create clarity around expectations and procedures relating to behaviour in our school.
- Assist the parents and children in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the Code and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures
- Ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school
- Foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
- Enable teachers to teach without disruption.

Guidelines for Behaviour in the School

1. Politeness, respect for others and good manners are expected of all members of the school community.
2. Pupils should respect school property and the property of others and should keep the school environment clean and litter free. Pupils' possessions should be kept clean, neat and tidy.
3. Pupils will attend school regularly and punctually, will do their best in class and work to the best of their ability.
4. Pupils are expected to adhere to school rules and take responsibility for their own work and behaviour.
5. Good behaviour, manners and respect will be modelled, expected, praised and rewarded by staff.

Golden Rules

An emphasis will be placed on positive behaviour and reward of such. Our rules are written and communicated with positivity in mind.

Our main **GOLDEN RULE** throughout the school is:

We treat others as we would like to be treated.

In Class:

Teachers are encouraged to develop their own 'class rules', in consultation with the pupils, with individual classes from year to year. There is a general expectation that:

1. Pupils co-operate with instructions given by the teacher. (Do what teacher says).
2. Pupils work to the best of their ability and present work neatly. (Work hard–do your best).
3. Pupils stay seated in their place or in agreed work area unless told otherwise. This is particularly important when the teacher's attention may be diverted to another need. (Sit in your place).
4. Pupils should keep unhelpful hands, feet, objects and comments to themselves. (Be caring towards others).

Whole school rules:

1. The school **strongly discourages** students from bringing mobile phones to school. We accept no responsibility for loss or damage to phones. If a parent/guardian feels that a 5th or 6th class student needs to bring their phone to school, the parent/guardian must provide the school with a written note stating that the child has permission to bring the phone to school. The phone must remain switched off and inside the child's school bag at all times while on school property. Phones will be confiscated immediately if found to be switched on or out of the child's bag anywhere on the school grounds. The phone will be stored in Ms. O'Loughlin's office until the parent/guardian collects it. Children from infants – 4th class are not permitted to bring phones to school.
2. Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance. This includes wearing the correct school tracksuit and keeping neat and tidy. Jewellery is limited to one pair of stud earrings. Make up and false nails are not permitted.
3. Pupils adhere to our school's healthy eating policy.

Lunch Time Rules:

A set of rules have been created to allow consistency throughout the school. These rules should be taught and revised at regular intervals throughout the year. They are prominently displayed in every classroom, corridor and yard. They are also published on the school website:

Indoors:

1. We use our indoor voices – we do not shout.
2. We ask permission to leave our seat.
3. We line up quietly.
4. We walk to the yard – we do not run.

In the Yard:

1. We are gentle – we do not hurt others.
2. We are kind, honest and helpful – we don't hurt anybody's feelings.
3. We play together and look after each other.
4. We tell an adult if we are sad or lonely.
5. We line up quickly and quietly.
6. We have fun!

NB: All incidents of bullying will be dealt with as outlined in the school's Anti-bullying policy. (See separate policy)

School Rules and Children with Special Educational Needs

While all students are expected to adhere to the class and school rules, we recognise that some students may require additional and more frequent explanation of the rules. The staff involved in the education of children with special educational needs will endeavour to check that standards and rules are communicated in a way that children with special educational needs can understand.

Expectations for Pupils, Staff and Parents

Pupils can expect to:

- Be treated fairly, consistently and with respect
- Have their individual differences recognised and acknowledged when and if possible
- Feel safe, respected and secure
- Have positive behaviour reaffirmed
- Have misbehaviour dealt with appropriately

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Wear a neat school tracksuit
- Work quietly and safely to the best of their ability at all times
- Respect the right of others pupils to learn
- Show respect for all members of the school community
- Respect school property, the property of others and their own belongings
- Keep the school environment clean and tidy
- Have the correct books and materials in school
- Follow class rules and yard rules
- Move quietly and carefully around the school
- Stay on the premises and within designated areas during school times
- Do their homework to the best of their ability

Staff can expect to:

- Be treated with respect
- Teach in a well maintained physical environment relatively free from disruption
- Get support and co-operation from colleagues and parents in order to achieve the school's aims and objectives
- Be listened to and participate in decision making which affects their own work and that of the school in general
- Work in an atmosphere that encourages professional development
- Get support and professional advice from the Board of Management, Department of Education and Skills, the National Education Welfare Board, the National Council for Special Education and the National Educational Psychological Services to help to cater for the psychological, emotional and physical needs of their pupils
- Have grievances dealt with according to agreed procedures as set out in the CPSMA handbook and in compliance with the school's Management Complaints Procedure.

Staff are expected to:

- Support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour
- Be cognisant of their duty of care
- Create a safe, welcoming atmosphere for their pupils
- Develop and nurture a sense of self-esteem in each pupil
- Praise desirable behaviour
- Facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential
- Recognise and provide for individual differences as far as is reasonable
- Be courteous, consistent and fair
- Keep opportunities for disruption to a minimum
- Keep a record of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour
- Provide support for colleagues

- Report concerns regarding a child's safety to the school's DLP and file a report to Túsla as a mandated person

Parents can expect to:

- Be treated with respect
- Have a safe and welcoming environment for their child
- Obtain recognition for individual differences among pupils having due regard for the resources that are available
- Have fair and consistent procedures applied to the school's dealings with pupils
- Receive progress reports in accordance with agreed school policy (P.T. meetings and end of year reports)
- Receive information on school's policies and procedures.

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their children attend school regularly and on time and that they are collected from school on time
- Encourage their children to follow the school's Code of Behaviour
- Ensure their children wear the school tracksuit
- Ensure their children have the correct books and materials
- Have their children's belongings labelled
- Read written and electronic communication received from the school and respond appropriately
- Make an appointment by phone beforehand if they need to visit the school or see a teacher
- To treat all members of the school community with respect
- Provide an email or note of explanation for all absenteeism. Such notes and memos are an important part of the record keeping done to fulfil the requirements of reporting to Túsla
- Inform class teacher of any change to collection procedure for their children
- Help their children to learn and practice good behaviour and to have a positive attitude towards themselves, other people and towards the school
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulty to others
- Communicate with teachers any problems concerning another child
- Parents must never approach another child themselves to resolve a problem
- Communicate to the school problems which may affect their child's behaviour
- Attend meetings at the school if requested
- Help their children with their homework and ensure it is completed

The Board of Management is expected to:

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code
- Ratify the code

- Ensure the code is communicated to the whole school community.

Discipline and Sanctions

The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal. Each teacher is responsible for discipline in the classroom, for drafting their own classroom rules and for keeping records of misdemeanours. Children have to learn to accept responsibility for their own actions, follow the rules and face the consequences of their own behaviour.

Rewards and Sanctions

There is an emphasis on consistency and firmness, yet fairness and understanding in relation to discipline. A positive attitude permeates the code and its implementation. So that pupils will be prompted to do their best and so that they may develop self-discipline, greater emphasis is placed on encouragement and rewards than on sanctions. Good behaviour is encouraged and rewarded.

Rewards can include:

- Praise and encouragement (Oral or written)
- Stickers or stamps
- Homework passes
- Awards/certificates
- Prizes
- Golden Time
- Visit to Ms.O'Loughlin for commendation
- Class behaviour rewards (block points at lunch time)
- Assemblies to acknowledge good behaviour

(This list is not exhaustive)

Sanctions:

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and to discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to the age and emotional development of the child. Sanctions should always be focused on achieving the desired behaviour.

Some of the sanctions below can be utilised:

1. Verbal reprimand in the appropriate forum, including advice on how to improve.
2. Temporary separation from peers, friends and others e.g. time-out in another area of the class, yard or school.
3. Loss of certain privileges
4. Reflection sheet
5. Prescribing extra homework/tasks to be completed at home or during the school day
6. Referral to Principal.
7. Communication with parents
8. Temporary removal from own base class and placement in another class/other area in the school. This may be carried out in response to serious misbehaviour.
9. Exclusion from the school premises at break and/or lunch times.
10. Suspension
11. Expulsion

Whole School Approach:

All teachers will be implementing the following staged approach to discipline in the classroom and in the school yard when dealing with misbehaviour.

This ensures a fair and consistent whole school approach:

Stage 1: Verbal reminder of the desired behaviour

Stage 2: Verbal warning

Stage 3: Separation/ Time Out

(A possible note to parents at this stage. If misbehaviour occurs in the yard, class teacher to be informed.)

Stage 4: Referral to Principal

Stage 5: Formal meeting with parents

Teachers will record all incidents of serious misbehaviour by pupils. These records are shared with the principal and/or parent/guardian(s) as appropriate.

Classification of Misbehaviours

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised:

1. Minor
2. Serious
3. Gross

Minor Misbehaviour:

Examples: Breaking of classroom rules (e.g. distracting others, disrupting lessons, incomplete homework etc.)

All misbehaviour of a minor nature is dealt with by the class teacher. Repeated or ongoing minor misbehaviours will be treated as serious misbehaviour.

Serious Misbehaviour:

In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour, parent/guardian(s) will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the Principal to discuss their child's behaviour. A conference may be held with the relevant parties (children, parent/guardian(s), teachers, other staff) to address the issue.

Examples of such behaviours may include:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Behaviour that persistently interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft

Gross Misbehaviour:

In cases of any single instance of Gross Misbehaviour parent/guardian(s) will be asked to meet the teacher and/or the Principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of such behaviours may include:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil
- Serious theft
- Serious damage to property
- Possession of a dangerous or offensive weapon or device

Suspension

Suspension by the Board of Management for a fixed period –in line with NEWB guidelines.(It is important to note that in the event of any child being suspended, this suspension will be notified to the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB), as appropriate, in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines. Where a student is suspended for a period of not less than six days, the principal shall notify an educational welfare officer. Suspension will be for a period not exceeding three days, except in exceptional circumstances when it is considered by the Board that a longer period of suspension is necessary in order to achieve a particular objective.

In the event of a suspension of up to three days being warranted, the Board of Management has delegated responsibility for suspension to the Principal. Fair procedures governing suspension, as per NEWB guidelines, will be applied. The Board of Management is made aware of the suspension. Note: The decision to suspend is not one which is taken lightly.

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will observe the following procedures:

- Inform the pupil and his/her parent/guardian(s) about the complaint, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension -with reference to the Code of Behaviour and procedures detailed therein.
- Give parent/guardian(s) and pupil an opportunity to respond.
- In the case of an immediate suspension (e.g. for reasons of safety of the pupil, other pupils, staff or others) parent/guardian(s) must be notified and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected. The formal investigation will then follow the imposition of the suspension.

The Principal will notify the parent/guardian(s) and the pupil in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm:

1. The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
2. The reasons for the suspension
3. Any study/homework programme to be followed, if applicable
4. The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parent/guardian(s) (e.g. the parent/guardian(s) might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)
5. The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
6. The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act 1998, section 29).

Levels of suspension:

Immediate Suspension: The Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the pupil in the school would represent a threat to the safety of pupils or staff of the school or any other person.

Automatic Suspension: A pupil who is continuously disruptive or who commits a serious breach of discipline may be suspended by the Principal for an initial period of up to three school days.

Further Periods of Suspension: If there is no improvement after suspension, further periods of suspension may be imposed.

Expulsion: Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, 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/guardian(s) may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/guardian(s) must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the 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 and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

Expulsion

The Board of Management of the school has the authority to expel a student.

It is a very serious step, and one that will only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
- A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal
- Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing.
- Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
- Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer
- Confirmation of the decision to expel

Before/After/Outside School

While the school has no legal responsibility or control over pupils travelling to or from school, pupils are nonetheless expected to behave in a manner that is in keeping with school standards, especially when wearing the school tracksuit.

The staff/Board of Management of the school cannot accept responsibility for pupils before the official opening time, at which time all pupils should go to their classrooms.

When on school outings or at school-related events outside the school, pupils are expected to behave in an orderly and courteous manner and to show respect for others and for public property. They should always co-operate fully with their teachers and designated staff/helpers. They must strive to always represent the school well.

Misbehaviour in the Yard

The staged approach to discipline will be used by all teachers on yard duty.

The role of the teacher: Their role is to consistently apply the yard rules and follow the agreed staged approach to discipline.

The role of the SNA: The role of the SNA on yard is the child(ren) they've been assigned to. They also act as a support to the teacher on yard. Their role should not require them to get involved in matters of yard discipline. However, a common sense approach needs to be taken if they are the nearest adult to an incident that needs immediate action.

Involving Parents/Guardians in Managing Problem Behaviour

It is the role of the parents to work in co-operation with the school. Parents can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school expectations and by visiting the school and by talking to the members of staff.

We urge parents to reinforce, at home, the messages about learning and behaviour that are conducive to a happy school and to instil a strong sense of pride in the school.

It is School Policy to inform parent(s) / guardian(s) at an early stage, if problems occur and not simply at the point where possible suspensions are involved. To maintain good standards of behaviour, the school must rely on the support and co-operation of the parent(s) / guardian(s).

Parents should be encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour.

Aggressive or Violent Behaviour

Violent or aggressive behaviour will be viewed as a serious breach of the school's Code of Behaviour. All incidents of aggressive or violent behaviour will require the teacher to go straight to stage 4 of the stages of discipline. The principal will decide on a case by case basis what further measures need to be taken.

Incidents Involving Children Fleeing or Leaving the Class Group Without Permission

Incidents of children leaving the class group without permission will be dealt with on a case by case basis. At all times the safety and wellbeing of all children is our priority. If a child leaves the class group without permission, the class teacher should remain with the class and request assistance immediately by contacting the principal. In some cases, two adults may be designated the duty of following the child from a safe distance. In some circumstances a call may have to be logged with the Gardaí regarding an incident of fleeing, for example if a child leaves the school grounds. Parents will be called immediately and notified of this contact with the Gardaí. The principal and class teacher, in consultation with parents, may deem some cases of fleeing to constitute gross misbehaviour. Such cases may result in suspension.

Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science against some decisions of the Board of Management, including (1) permanent exclusion from a school and (2) suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student. (See Circular 22/02)

Procedures for Notification of Pupil Absences from School

Under the Education Welfare Act 2000, absences or lateness must be explained by a brief note, signed by the parent/guardian and sent to the school (via the class teacher). Absences of 20 days or more will be referred by the school to National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB). Túsla will automatically be notified.

Success Criteria

This policy will be deemed to be successful when the following are observed:

- Positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils

Review

The code will be discussed at staff meetings and reviewed periodically.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on **17th September 2020**. The policy will be posted on the school website and all parents notified by text message. Any parent who does not have access to the internet will be advised to call to the school to obtain a hard copy.

Upon enrolment, all parents are provided with a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour and are informed that by enrolling their child in St. Martin de Porres NS, they are automatically agreeing to adhere to the Code going forward.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the success of this code will depend on the wholehearted co-operation of parents, teachers and the Principal in the interests of the children.

Signed: Antoinette Thompson

Date: 17/09/2020

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: Valerie O'Loughlin

Date: 17/09/2020

Principal/Secretary, Board of Management