



Stonepark NS
Longford N39 T25
Phone 043 3346036 email stoneparkns@eircom.net

Code of Behaviour

Related Policies available on request:

1. Anti-Bullying
2. Health & Safety Statement
3. Admission and Participation (Enrolment) Policy
4. Child Protection Policy.

Introduction

Our School aims to provide a happy, secure, friendly, learning environment, where children, parents, teachers, special needs assistants, ancillary staff and Board of Management work in partnership. Each individual is valued, encouraged and respected for their uniqueness and facilitated to reach their full potential in a positive atmosphere.

This will enable the child to live a full life and will equip him/her to avail himself/herself of further education so that he/she may go on to live a full and useful life as an adult in society.

The staff are committed to the realisation of these Objectives. Our aim is to create a happy, secure environment for our pupils in which there is a sense of good order and a reasonable approach to discipline. In this way, a large group can be organised so that the school can operate smoothly for the benefit of all.

This revised Code of Behaviour comes into effect upon ratification of the Board of Management. The code is mindful of the Curriculum, the school's Health & Safety Statement, Anti-Bullying Policy, Admission and Participation Policy and Child Protection Policy.

Discipline for Learning (DFL)

In our school, we have a positive approach to teaching and learning. Positive rules for behaviour in class and out of class are learned by pupils at the beginning of their school year. Pupils are disciplined by being motivated to keep these rules.

The rules governing in-class behaviour may vary from classroom to classroom but the following are our five Golden Rules which are central throughout the school:

Kind Heart
Kind Words
Kind Thoughts
Kind Hands
Kind Feet



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We have many ways of recognizing good behaviour and effect including awards, stamps, positive cards, smiles, positive comments and homework passes. Good behaviour and achievement will be recognised. Consistent positive influences are the key to success in our school.

Restorative Practice

Restorative Practice in our school provides a focus on developing positive relationships between all members of the school community. It gives opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and learning. Restorative Practice is a process whereby children are given the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and how they and others have been affected by it so as to help heal broken relationships and prevent reoccurrence. Where suspension occurs, the school will use restorative practice involving all parties affected to help repair the harm done.

Restorative Questions to respond to Challenging Behaviour

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking about at the time?
3. What have your thoughts been since?
4. Who has been affected by what you did?
5. In what way have they been affected?
6. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

To help those harmed by other actions

1. What did you think when you realised what had happened?
2. What have your thoughts been since?
3. How has this affected others?
4. What has been the hardest thing for you?
5. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

General Guidelines for Behaviour

All pupils are expected to behave in a reasonable manner both to themselves and to others, showing consideration, courtesy and respect for other pupils and adults at all times. Respect must be shown at all times. Respect must be shown for the property of the individual and of the school at all times. Code of Behaviour

The code of Behaviour covers the following areas:

- Behaviour in class
- Behaviour in the playground
- Behaviour in the school environment and behaviour on school outings



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- Attendance at school/Education Welfare Act
- Homework after school and extra-curricular activities.

Behaviour in class

Courtesy and respect are essential. Disrespectful behaviour towards other pupils or towards other pupils or towards a teacher (e.g. defiance, cheek, insolence) are unacceptable. Pupils must respect the right of other pupils to learn. Any behaviour which interferes with the right (e.g. constant disruption of the class persistent distracting of others) is considered unacceptable behaviour.

In order that pupils benefit from their work in class full co-operation is required at all times. Pupils must co-operate with instructions given by the teacher.

The Essential Classroom Rules

1. Be ready for class
2. Good manners are expected at all times
3. Always do your best and allow others to do the same
4. Raise hand wait for attention and listen to the person who is speaking
5. Take good care of personal and classroom property
6. Ensure you are safe in class and make it safe for others

Behaviour in the Playground

Pupils should treat others as they would like to be treated themselves. Any behaviour which endangers or offends others is not permitted. Rough behaviour e.g. fighting, kicking, spitting, pushing is forbidden. Games or activities considered to be dangerous shall be prohibited.

Any behaviour which interferes with other pupils play is not permitted. Pupils may not leave the playground for any reason during breaks without permission of the supervising teacher, this includes re-entering the school building.

The Essential out of Class Rules

1. Stay within the boundaries in yard
2. Play safely and fairly. Treat others fairly, the way you would like yourself to be treated
3. Keep yard and school environment litter free and tidy
4. Stay clear of fire alarm and respect all school property
5. Line up quickly and quietly and leave and return to your classroom in an orderly fashion.



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Behaviour in the School Environment & Behaviour on School outings

Respect and courtesy to others is essential. Any kind of verbal or physical abuse of other pupils is unacceptable. Use of foul language among pupils is unacceptable. Bullying or intimidation of other pupils is prohibited and is always regarded as a serious offence. Pupils must show respect for school property at all times. For reasons of safety and to minimise accidents, pupils should move about the school in an orderly manner.

Pupils are encouraged to be respectful of each other on their way to and from school. When on school outings pupils are expected to behave in an orderly manner and show respect for public property. They should always co-operate fully with their teachers and special needs staff.

Attendance/Education Welfare Act

Under the Education Welfare Act 2000, absences or lateness must be explained by a brief note written in school journal and signed by parent. Absences of 20 days or more must be referred by the school to Education Welfare Board. Any child wishing to leave school early must have a note signed by their parent. The Education Welfare Officer is available to support parents with attendance issues. Children with hospital or dental appointments on an ongoing basis should give a copy of appointments to office secretary. Parents/Guardians must sign out pupils who are collected early from school by calling to the principal/ deputy principal. Daily attendance and punctuality are required from pupils. School opens to receive pupils at 9:10a.m. each morning. The infant school day finishes at 2:00pm. All other classes finish at 3:00 p.m. Stonepark National School is not responsible for supervision of children before 9:10 a.m. and after 3:00 p.m. After a pupil has been absent, a note from the parents must always be brought to the class teacher upon the pupil's return to school. When a pupil has to leave school early, a note from parents must be brought to the class teacher stating the time at which the pupil is to leave.

Homework

It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis. The time taken for this will vary from child to child, but should in most cases take between 30 minutes and one hour. Homework is recorded in the pupil's journal. Parents should sign the homework journal to confirm that the work has been fully attempted.

If for some reason homework (or part of it) cannot be completed, parents are asked to note this in the homework journal.

Generally, homework is not given at weekends. Written work must be done neatly and carefully. Graffiti on textbooks and copy books is not permitted. School rental books must not be marked. Any school rental books that are marked must be replaced or cost reimbursed. Please refer to the school Homework Policy for further information.



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Jewellery

Students are permitted to wear stud earrings and watch only.

Mobile phones/IPods/Electronic Games

Use of mobile phones, IPods and electronic games during school hours is strictly forbidden. All phones must be switched off and handed to class teacher until home-time. Any infringement of this rule will involve the confiscation of the phone and any other electronic equipment and will only be returned to the parent or guardian of the pupil.

School Uniform

All pupils must wear the school uniform.

School journal

The school journal is an important communication tool between parents and the school. Please read and sign the journal each night. Please ensure the personal information page in your school journal is completed.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Unacceptable Behaviour in our school has been classified in three categories:

- Minor
- Serious
- Very Serious
-

Minor Unacceptable Behaviour

Examples considered as unacceptable are:

- Talking out of turn in class, leaving the seat without permission
- Disrupting lessons by causing a distraction, shouting and not working to the best of one's ability.
- Lazy in starting work or deliberately wasting time.



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- Being generally rowdy, aggressive, spitting, unhygienic in toilets, disturbing other children at work, being disobedient or defiant.

If there is a repeated pattern of these offences this is considered serious.

Serious Unacceptable Behaviour

Examples considered as serious are:

- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Making rude signs or annoying gestures
- Using vulgar or bad language
- Frequent lack of punctuality
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning (including copying work from others, not completing school tasks, being inattentive during class-work, not completing homework without a valid reason
- Entering building or classrooms without permission
- Littering in buildings or school grounds
- Leaving school /school activities without permission
- Bringing electronic device/ mobile phone to school and not handing it up to class teacher as previously outlined

Very Serious Unacceptable Behaviour

Examples considered as very serious are:

- Assault on a teacher or a pupil
- Stealing
- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment (including sexual), discrimination (including racial) and victimisation)
- Making abusive, insulting, offensive or insolent remarks
- Laughing or jeering at other's mistakes or disabilities
- Wilful damage to buildings, furniture, books, equipment or the property of others
- Fighting
- Bringing dangerous equipment to school
- Showing repeated disrespect for teachers or other school employees.
- Carrying alcohol, drugs, cigarettes.
- Use of electronic devices/ mobile phones during school hours

Bullying is repeated aggression, physical verbal or emotional conducted by an individual or group against another or others.



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PHYSICAL: includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping etc.

VERBAL: name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates.

EMOTIONAL: threats or persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Threats to extort money or possessions. "Cyber/text" bullying.

The school takes particular care to intervene early in responding to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.

Further clarification of the school's anti-bullying stance is outlined comprehensively in the school's anti-bullying policy which is available on the school's website www.stoneparkns.ie

Should a parent/guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed with a teacher, all staff members are more than willing to facilitate a meeting, made through the proper channels i.e. a phone call to the office, or a note to the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties. The first person to be informed should be the class teacher.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying.

Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same manner as breaches of discipline – outlined below in our Code of Behaviour.

In the case where a parent reports a bullying incident, the school reserves the right to inform the relevant parties of the identity of the person making the complaint, when this is deemed necessary.

Sanctions and Strategies to Show Disapproval for Unacceptable Behaviour

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction 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.
- In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to: prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
- keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.



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The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the circumstances involved. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupil devise strategies for this.

1. Reasoning with pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class
4. Child completes the school incident form describing what happened, identify who was hurt (emotionally/ physically) and state what they could do differently next time. In infant classes pupils will draw their account of the incident. In senior classes, a written report will be completed
5. Loss of privileges
6. Detention during break
7. Communication with parents
8. Referral to Principal
9. Principal communicating with parents
10. Principal liaises with Chairperson of B.O.M. where all other avenues have been explored
11. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000)

Teachers shall keep a written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour as well as a record of improvements in the behaviour of disruptive pupils. Before resorting to serious sanctions e.g. suspension, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Parents will be involved at an early stage, rather than as a last resort.

Communication with parents will be verbal or by letter, depending on circumstances. The parents concerned are to be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. For very serious unacceptable misbehaviour, or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, suspension may be considered.

The principal asserts the right to implement sanctions for very serious unacceptable behaviour at his/her discretion.

Usually sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

Suspension and Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as detention, suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For very serious unacceptable behaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case.



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Where there are repeated instances of very serious unacceptable behaviour, 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 the principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of very serious unacceptable behaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils and staff, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding ten school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

Appeal

Parents of the pupil are informed of rights to invoke a Section 29 appeal under the Education Act 1998

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code 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.

Procedures in Respect to Expulsion

1. Detail investigation by school principal
2. Recommendation by principal to BoM
3. BoM considers Principals recommendation and holds hearing
4. BoM decision, is expulsion appropriate? If BoM recommends expulsion, the BoM will propose a date which will allow a 20-day cooling off period
5. Education Welfare Officer is informed of proposal to expel pupil and effective date of that proposal
6. Parents of the pupil are informed of rights to invoke a Section 29 appeal under the Education Act 1998
7. Education Welfare Officer arranges consultations
8. Confirmation of decision.

This procedure may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.



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Grounds for Expulsion

- Behaviour is persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- Continued presence of pupil constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- Pupil responsible for serious damage to property.

Automatic Expulsion

BoM may sanction automatic expulsion for certain prescribed behaviours:

1. Sexual Assault
2. Possession of illegal drugs
3. Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
4. Actual violence or physical assault
5. Serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff.

Children with Special Needs

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning support/ resource teacher, and or principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed child referred for psychological assessment without delay. Help will be sought, also, from support services within the wider community e.g. Community Care services provided by HSE. 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.

Communicating with Parents

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

The Education Welfare Act 2000 stipulates that the school must be notified of all absences and an explanation must be given. The methods to be used are; note in homework diary, phone call or in person. A doctor's cert is obligatory for long absences due to illness. Absences in excess of 20 days are automatically referred to TUSLA as required by the Education Welfare Act 2000

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life (in



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the past or present), which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following methods of communication are to be used within the school:

- Informal/formal parent/teacher meetings
- End of year school reports
- Through children's homework journal (infants do not have a homework journal, please check bags for notes)
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- Newsletters/school web-site/e-mails
- TextaParent service.

Conclusion

The essence of our code of behaviour is valuing people and encouraging them to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and to develop self-discipline.

Review

This Policy will be reviewed in September 2018

Ratification

This Policy was ratified by a member of the school Board of Management on 6th April 2016

Signed: Fr Michael McGrath

Chairperson of the Board of Management