

St. Paul's S.N.S.



Code of Behaviour

Introduction

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of St Pauls SNS has drawn up and made available a Code of Behaviour for its Pupils, Staff and Parents.

The Code of Behaviour details:

1. The standard of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school;
2. The whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour;
3. The measures to be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards;
4. The procedures to be followed before a pupil is suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
5. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed on a pupil
6. The school's Anti-Bullying Policy (Bí Cineálta Policy);
7. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

The Code of Behaviour of St Paul's SNS has been developed in accordance with 'Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools', National Educational Welfare Board, 2008.

Aims

In devising the code, consideration was given to the particular needs and circumstances of St. Paul's. The aim is to create an ordered and orderly environment in which pupils can, through developing self-discipline, feel secure and make progress in all aspects of their development.

Every effort will be made, by all members of staff, to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school. **Respect** is the key word to all our activities.

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, on the yard, in the canteen, on school tours/outings and at all fundraising and events organised and supervised by St Paul'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. Paul'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/Deputy 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.
- Support and advise staff in relation to behaviour
- Communicate with parents when necessary
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Responsibilities of Year Heads:

- A Year Head is in charge of behaviour in each class band.
- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner and review the Code in collaboration with staff.
- Support and advise Class teachers in relation to behaviour.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour and log actions taken.
- Communicate with parents when necessary.
- Report serious incidences of misbehaviour to Principal/Deputy Principal.

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 Paul'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 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.**
- 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.
- 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 the 'Bí Cineálta' policy 2024. This policy will be available to view on the school website.

Standards of Behaviour Expected of Pupils within the School:

St. Paul's 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.

Promoting Positive Behaviour in St. Paul's

All children deserve encouragement to attain their personal best. Our reward systems seek to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by all adults in St. Paul's. Praise for good behaviour should be as high as for good work.

The following are examples of how praise will be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment in child's copy / Homework Journal.
- A visit to another staff member for commendation.
- Words of praise in front of class / bualadh bos.
- Words of praise/ award at assembly.
- Awarding Class Dojo points.
- Delegating some special responsibility of privilege.
- A mention to Parents/Guardians, written/verbal communication.

Rewards and Incentives for Positive Behaviour:

Our reward systems act as a positive reinforcement of good behaviour. Rewards are offered on an individual, group, whole-class and whole-school basis at the discretion of each staff member.

- Class Dojo points
- Golden Time
- Extra P.E/Art Time
- Homework Passes
- Certificates/Prizes
- Pupil/Class of the Week

Specialised Supports

All children are required to comply with the spirit of the Code of Behaviour. St. Paul's recognises that a small minority of children 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), Educational Welfare Officer (EWO), various therapists and relevant professional counselling services.

Individual Behaviour Support Plans may be necessary at times. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Behaviour Plans will be put in place in consultation with the class teacher, Parent/Guardian, S.E.T teacher, SNA and HSCL Co-ordinator. Professional assessments may inform and shape the plan. All will work together to make sure the child receives all the support they need.

Procedures for Dealing with Disciplinary Matters

Minor Misbehaviours	Serious Misbehaviours	Gross Misbehaviours
• Interrupting classwork • Misbehaviour in class line • Running in the corridor • Not wearing correct uniform • Incomplete homework • Chewing gum • Being discourteous • Littering	• Constantly disruptive in class • Constantly back-answering adult • Damaging school property or another person's property • Refusal to follow instructions which leads to the inability to guarantee the safety of the student and other students /adults • Bullying • Stealing • Inappropriate use of I-pads • Threatening and injuring a pupil/adult • Use of recording devices on school grounds • Having unauthorised mobile phone at school • Vaping • Racist/Homophobic insults or verbal abuse • Inappropriate language/ physical contact • Leaving school premises without permission	• Deliberate aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards pupil/adult • Deliberately setting off fire alarm • Setting fire to/damaging school property • Serious theft • Bringing dangerous weapons to school

The degree of misdemeanour i.e. minor, serious or gross, will be judged based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours. It should be noted that these lists are examples only. It is not meant to be a totally comprehensive list of misdemeanours.

Steps to be taken when dealing with Misbehaviours

The following steps are listed in order of severity with one being for a minor misbehaviour and (4 - 6) being for serious or gross misbehaviour. Communication with parents/guardians through Class Dojo/phone call or meetings will occur where necessary so that parent/guardians are involved at an early stage rather than as a last resort.

Step 1: Verbal reprimand/reasoning with pupil (including advice on how to improve)

Step 2: Temporary separation from peers within class/another classroom/schoolyard

Step 3: Loss of privileges

Step 4: Referral to Year Head

Step 5: Referral to Deputy Principal/Principal

Step 6: Suspension

Actions to be taken when dealing with Misdemeanours

- Denial of participation in some class activity only if the behaviour of said student would endanger him/herself under Health & Safety.
- Temporary separation from peers of said student.
- Denied access to Breakfast Club (reviewed on case by case basis)
- Removal from yard during lunchbreaks. 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 to go home at 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 and others, the school reserves the right to refuse the child permission to travel on school trips, tours or outings. Parents will be advised of this in advance.
- Reduced School Day -where it is felt that a child's conduct would pose a health and safety risk or inhibit the educational

benefit for self and others, the school reserves the right to reduce a child's school day which would be reviewed on a case by case basis.

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.
- 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.

Grounds for Suspension

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.

- Following a period of suspension, the parent(s) must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

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, a meeting **must** take place with two staff members and parent(s)/guardian(s). 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 re-admitted 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.

Final Step - Gross Misdemeanours

- 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. Expulsion is a very serious step and is only taken in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour and only after the school has taken significant steps to address the behaviour. These steps include the following:
 - Meeting with parents and pupil to explore ways of helping pupil change his/her behaviour.
 - Making sure that the pupil understands the possible consequences of the behaviour, (if it should persist).
 - Ensuring that all other possible options have been tried.
 - Seeking the assistance of support agencies e.g. National

Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Health Service Executive Community Services (HSE), National Behavioural Support Service (NBSS), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) & National Council for Special Education (NCSE).

The grounds for expulsion and the factors which need to be considered are similar to those for suspension, however where expulsion is concerned the school will already have tried a series of other interventions including suspension which unfortunately haven't changed the pupil's behaviour.

Expulsion for a First Offence:

The Board notes that the NEWB (TUSLA) lists the following for possible inclusion in a list of single breaches of discipline that may lead to expulsion:

- Serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff
- Actual Violence or physical assault
- Supplying of alcohol/drug
- Sexual Assault

Factors to be Considered before proposing to expel a pupil:

(Listed NEWB (TUSLA) Guidelines for Schools p 82 under the following headings)

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions to date
- Whether expulsion is a proportional response
- The possible impact of expulsion

Procedures in respect of expulsion:

- A detailed investigation is carried out under the direction of the principal.
- A recommendation to the B.O.M. by the principal (see page 84 National Educational Welfare Board guidelines)
- Consideration by the B.O.M. of the principal's recommendations and the holding of a hearing. (see page 84 NEWB Guidelines)
- B.O.M. deliberations and actions following the hearing. (page 85 NEWB Guidelines)
- Consultations arranged by the EWO.
- Confirmation Board of Management of the decision to expel

Appeals

Parents may appeal the decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. The appeals process under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 begins with the appointment of a mediator.

Behaviours of Concern

What are Behaviours of Concern?

Behaviours of concern can be defined as *"behaviours that indicate a risk to the safety or wellbeing of the people who exhibit them or to others"*.

A crisis situation can occur when behaviours of concern present serious risk of imminent physical harm to the student concerned and/or others within the school environment.

St. Paul's Rationale

Sometimes students may have such highly complex and challenging behaviour, social or education needs that they need extra help and support. This policy aims to support the student exhibiting Behaviours of Concern, other students, staff, and the relevant parents. This policy is complimentary to the school Child Safeguarding Statement, Code of Behaviour, and Health & Safety Statement.

- **Code of Behaviour**

Our school Code of Behaviour aims to positively support students in the first instance but reserves the right to impose sanctions particularly when the health and safety of students and staff are a concern.

- **Child Safeguarding Statement**

Our school Child Safeguarding Statement places a statutory responsibility on registered teachers to report child protection concerns that are at or above a threshold of harm. An accompanying Risk Assessment identifies possible situations where students may be at risk and the control measures that our school puts in place to address such concerns.

- **Health & Safety Statement**

Our school Health & Safety Statement underpins the entitlement of all students and staff to co-exist in a safe environment.

Training

St. Paul's has a certified CPI (Crisis Prevention Institute) Safety Intervention instructor (Niall Boyle). He provides safety intervention training to a number of staff annually. This training is a safe, non-harmful behaviour management system that

provides *Care, Welfare, Safety and Security* to individuals presenting with a range of crisis behaviours.

How we react to a Behaviours of Concern incident:

In our school, the main priority is to ensure that everyone is safe and to prevent the situation from deteriorating further. Reflective meetings take place afterwards between all the relevant parties. An immediate plan may need to be put in place that will link to an effective and sustained behaviour plan

Support Services

Here is a list of State Agencies and support services (not exhaustive) that we consult for advice, assistance and additional supports.

- Túsla
- CAMHS: Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Department of Education
- Education Welfare Officer: (Attached to EWS)
- Education Welfare Service (Now part of Túsla)
- Gardaí
- NCSE National Council for Special Education
- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
- Special Education Needs Organiser (member of NCSE staff)
- School Completion Programme
- School Counsellor

We may also contact our relevant Management Body and or Principal's Association for advice and guidance.

Recording of Behaviours of Concern

Where behaviours of concern are an issue, we ensure that the parents are aware of the school's policy and procedures on recording such behaviours. Parents should understand that the school seeks to record and analyse these behaviours to understand what the triggers are and to put in place a plan to support the student to develop more socially acceptable behaviours. (See Appendix A)

Examples of Behaviours of Concern (not exhaustive):

- Student with a weapon and intent on using violence
- Physically attacking another or about to

- Throwing furniture or breaking glass close to others
- Putting themselves in danger, Flight Risk or trying to self-harm

When will our school use restraint?

We will only use restraint when there is a crisis.

We will use the CPI Decision-Making Matrix when assessing Risk Behaviour.

- Use of strategies to strengthen non-verbal communication.
- Limit-setting strategies when verbally intervening to de-escalate defensive behaviours.
- Safety intervention strategies to maximise safety and minimise harm.
- Practise of non-restrictive and restrictive interventions will be carried out that are consistent with CPI training.

Restraint:

- (1) Should not be used except in the case of a **crisis** where there is a **serious risk of imminent physical harm** to the pupils concerned/others
- (2) Should be **reasonable, proportionate and least restrictive** to maximise safety and minimise harm
- (3) It should be carried out by appropriately trained persons if possible
- (4) If used should be documented and reported to the board of management

**(Appendix A) Behaviour of Concern Incident Report Form****Student:** _____**Location of incident:****Date:** _____**Time:** _____**What happened?****What triggered the incident?****Whom/What was at risk?****Student Welfare:**

List any de-escalation/
positive intervention
strategies that you used
to diffuse the incident

Did you need to use a restrictive practice or physical intervention?

How effective was it?

Was the student distressed?

How was the student assisted to recover/ repair relationships with staff /other students?

How can we reduce the risk of this happening again?

Staff Welfare:

How many staff were needed to manage this incident safely?

Were you or another staff member hurt?

Did you or another member of staff find this incident distressing? If yes, rate this on a scale of 1 to 5: (1 = little or no distress, 5 = very distressing)

Which other staff were present?

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Review by Principal:

Parents notified: Yes/No

Medical intervention needed/sought: Yes/No

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Adoption by the Board

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: 7th Oct '25

Signed: A. Cully
(Principal)

Date: 14/10/25

Signed: Rev. John Corcoran
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 14/10/25