

St Kevin's National School, Greystones

Code of Behaviour

School Ethos

St. Kevin's National School encourages and guides each and every child in developing fully their own gifts while caring for one another in the way Jesus taught us. As a school community it values the contribution of all its members, respects their uniqueness and responds to their individual needs in a caring and supportive way. It sees itself as an extension of the family. As a parish school we encourage pupils' participation in parish activities appropriate for their age.

Aims

To develop an environment that:

- Is guided by our **STKEV** values and attributes – **S**elf-awareness, **T**eamwork, **K**indness, **E**ngagement in my learning and **V**ersatility.
- Encourages an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- Fosters pride in our school and its community
- Is safe, supportive and conducive to learning
- Allows the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- Assists parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and seeks their co-operation in the application of these procedures
- Ensures that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school

Guidelines for behaviour in the school

The Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. The overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.

Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, and by communicating any relevant concerns appropriately to the school.

Prior to registering a pupil, parents/guardians of the child are asked to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child.

Specific School Rules

Our school rules are based on the core competencies and qualities that our school community identified for our St Kevin's learners.

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Be Self-Aware

- Respect yourself
- Be prepared for a positive day of learning
- Take pride in your appearance e.g. wearing correct uniform
- Value your own safety
- Take care not to cause harm – either accidentally or intentionally
- Walk quietly and carefully around the school.

Be a Team Player

- Respect others
- Value and celebrate our differences
- Value and respect the right of all children to an education
- Value the work and opinions of others
- Value all staff who teach you, who support you in the school environment, who maintain the school environment, who operate the office etc
- Remember to behave appropriately when wearing the school uniform especially when representing the school on various excursions.

Be Kind

- Respect the environment
- Care for all members of our school community
- Share with others
- Be polite and pleasant to everyone
- Keep the school grounds clean and help tidy up
- Look after displays
- Take pride in our school by being polite and pleasant to each other and to visitors.

Be Engaged In Your Learning

- Work to the best of your ability
- Take pride in your learning
- Take responsibility for your own learning
- Demonstrate a positive attitude towards your school work
- Listen to others without interrupting

Be Versatile

- Accept decisions made on professional grounds
- Use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- Work in a manner that is considerate of others

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- Use equipment properly and carefully and always return it when you are finished in the best condition possible
- Follow instructions from staff promptly

Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, children and school. At St Kevin's School, we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our families. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour continues to flourish in our school.

Staff

At St. Kevin's, we treat all children with respect and dignity. There is a strong sense of community and cooperation among staff, pupils and parents. The promotion and recognition of positive behaviour is considered a priority.

- Each class has its own reward system.
- Teachers work with pupils to develop a set of class rules each year, based on the **STKEV** values and attributes which are revisited, modelled and reinforced each year.
- Every opportunity is used to praise and encourage pupils.
- An introductory pack is made available to new teachers which includes the Code of Behaviour.
- All staff members are made aware of children that have specific behavioural difficulties so that they can best support them with Individual Education Plans (IEP) supporting behaviour goals.
- The school's Social and Personal Health (SPHE) curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour.
- Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference.

Board of Management

- The Board of Management is consulted in reviewing, drafting and ratifying the code of behaviour.
- The Board of Management supports the staff in the implementation of the code of behaviour.
- In the case of serious breaches of behaviour which may involve suspension or expulsion, the matters are referred to the Board.

Parents

- Parents contribute to the development of the code. Their involvement will draw on their expectations, insights and experience.

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- Parents are aware of and cooperate with the school's system of rewards and sanctions.
- Parents attend meetings at the school to support their child's behaviour, if requested.
- As primary educators, parents are expected to model and reinforce good behaviour.
- When on the school premises, parents are expected to support our expectation of appropriate behaviour.

Pupils

- Pupils' opinions were sought and the results were taken into consideration when drawing up the code.
- Pupils contribute to devising classroom rules.
- Pupils learn about taking personal responsibility for their behaviour thus contributing to each other's wellbeing and the wellbeing of all members of the school community.
- Pupils are taught to appreciate the value of good behaviour to promote a positive learning atmosphere.
- Older children learn the importance of modelling good behaviour e.g. whole school assemblies, assisting in the infant yards.

Rewards and Sanctions

Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour

Part of the vision of St. Kevin's is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and similarly that children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Our reward system seeks to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Class teachers reward good behaviour in a class setting (for example verbal praise, merit award, being sent to the Principal's office for recognition, positive note in the homework diary etc). Good news about behaviour is communicated to parents at parent teacher meetings, both formal and incidental, email, phone call, end of year reports, written comments at the end of work and/or homework journal. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher, or the supervising teacher at break-times.

In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of **MINOR MISBEHAVIOUR** include:

- Not wearing appropriate uniform

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- Breaking a class rule
- Not following instructions.
- Pushing in the line

Minor misdemeanours should be attended to routinely and effectively by a member of teaching staff. They will use their professional judgment in cases of minor misbehaviour as to whether contact with parents is necessary. The following sanctions could be used:

- Reasoning with the pupil
- Verbal reprimand and/or temporary separation from peers, friends or others within the classroom
- Restorative Justice practices: Writing about their behaviour and choices – what behaviour did I display? What school value should I have displayed instead? What would I do differently in future? How can I resolve the problem created by my behaviour? (See Appendix A)

Examples of **SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOUR** include:

- Continuous breach of minor misdemeanours
- Defiance/cheek
- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Damage to property

Serious misdemeanours should be attended to by a member of teaching staff and a referral should be made to the principal. Parents will also be informed at this stage. The sanctions for this would be the same as above but would include a referral to the Principal Teacher.

Examples of **GROSS MISBEHAVIOUR** include:

- Abuse (verbal, physical or emotional) either towards a pupil or a member of staff
- Committing acts of violence to others
- Being overly abusive to others in a verbal, physical or emotional sense.
- Theft
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes
- Leaving school/school activities without permission.

Please note - Bullying is repeated aggression – physical, verbal or emotional - conducted by an individual or group against another or others. Please see our Anti-bullying policy for further information. Issues in relation to Bullying are also explored continually during SPHE lessons.

Dealing with gross misbehaviour involves all the above, along with the involvement of the Board of Management. The sanctions used would be the same as above but would also include the option of suspension.

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It's important to note that 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.
- reinforcing the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour
- signalling to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.
- preventing serious disruption of teaching and learning
- keeping the student, or other students or adults, safe.

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

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

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. an appointment made through the office, or a note/email to the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties. The first person to be informed should be the class teacher.

This arrangement ensures that all concerns are dealt with in a dignified, meaningful manner, without infringing on valuable teaching time.

Involving parents in management of problem behaviour

Parents are contacted when a child's behaviour is causing disruption/harm to the child and/or to other children. For isolated incidents, pupils will be given the opportunity to improve, before parents are contacted. However, if the problem behaviour persists, parents will be notified and will be invited to the school to discuss the issue. Initially, the meeting will be with the class teacher, but the nature of the behaviour may warrant a meeting with the class teacher and Principal. Strategies for modifying behaviour will be discussed and behaviour will be reviewed within an agreed timeframe.

Managing aggressive or violent misbehaviour

In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil himself/herself or the safety of other pupils or staff, the Board of Management will consider temporary exclusion while consultation with SENO and/or EWO takes place about appropriate resourcing and/or alternative placement.

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- Children who present with indicators of an Emotional Behavioural Disorder are referred for psychological assessment/multi-disciplinary assessment. Parental support is required before any assessment can be pursued.
- Following assessment, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Service Executive, NEPS, Lucena Clinic and resource teaching hours are applied for through the Special Educational Needs Organiser. Where care needs are involved, Special Needs Assistant (SNA) support is also applied for through the National Council for Special Education (NCSE)
- Special Education Needs (SEN) personnel may be in a position to facilitate teachers in sharing practice and support in the management of challenging behaviour. This could include the development of an Individual Behavioural Plan.

Suspension / Expulsion procedures

SUSPENSION

These procedures will be applied to both the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour and the process of decision making as to (a) whether the student did engage in the misbehaviour and (b) what sanction to impose.

Suspension of a student will only be considered when:

- a) The student's behaviour has a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- b) The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to safety
- c) The student is responsible for serious damage to property

In imposing suspension as a sanction, due regard will be given to the following factors:

- The nature, seriousness, context and impact of the behaviour
- The interventions already implemented
- Whether suspension is an appropriate response and the possible impact of suspension

Procedures

Investigation: Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant a suspension, initial consultation will be made by the Principal with the Chairperson of the Board of Management. In the event that the Chairperson is unavailable, another member of the Board of Management will be consulted. The student and their parents will then be informed by phone (if the matter is extremely urgent) or in writing about the complaint, how it will be investigated and the possibility that this investigation might lead to a suspension. Parents and student will have an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed. In the event of an immediate suspension (where the safety of the student, other students, staff or others is compromised) parents will be notified and arrangements will be made for the student to be collected. A student will not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal, in consultation with a Board of Management member, considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed to achieve a

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particular objective. In the event of an extended suspension, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management. The maximum number of days in any suspension period is ten.

Implementation: Parents will be notified in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm:

- The reason(s) for the suspension
- The period of the suspension, including the relevant dates
- Any study programme to be followed
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents
- The right to appeal to the Board of Management if the decision is made by the Principal
- The right to appeal to the Department of Education & Science in the event that the number of suspension days in one school year reaches twenty (Section 29 Appeal).

A suspension may be removed following either a review by the Board of Management, or as directed by the Department of Education and Science (following a Section 29 Appeal).

Return to school: Following a period of suspension, a plan for integration will be put into place to ensure that every opportunity will be afforded to the student to start afresh.

EXPULSION

Expulsion of a student will only be considered when:

- The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property

In imposing expulsion as a sanction, due regard will be given to the following factors:

- The nature, seriousness, context and impact of the behaviour
- The interventions already implemented
- Whether expulsion is an appropriate response and the possible impact of expulsion

Procedures

Investigation: Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion. A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal in line with fair procedures. The procedural steps will include:

- Informing the student and their parents about the details of the alleged misbehaviour - how it will be investigated and the possibility that this investigation might lead to an expulsion.

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- An opportunity for parents and the student to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed.
- 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.

Appeals Process: A decision to expel may be overturned if directed by the Department of Education and Science (following a Section 29 Appeal).

Review of Suspension and Expulsion procedures: The Board of Management will review the above procedures to ensure that the use of these sanctions is consistent with school policies and that the sanctions are used appropriately.

Reference to other Policies

Other school policies that have a bearing on the code of behaviour:

- SPHE plan
- Anti-bullying
- Enrolment
- Attendance
- Supervision Policy
- Health & Safety
- School Tours
- Special Educational Needs

Implementation Date

Ratified by St Kevin's Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____

Board Chairperson

To be reviewed September 2022.

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Describe what happened:

What choice(s) did you make in your behaviour that caused a problem?

Which of our school values did you forget to use? (Self-Aware, Teamwork, Kindness, Engaged in my own learning, Versatile)

How would using that value/those values have helped you?

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How are you going to resolve the problem that has been caused by your choice of behaviour?

In future, what would you do differently to ensure you are displaying our school values?

Signed:

Pupil

Teacher

Parent(s)