

# Positive Behaviour Policy and Code

## St. Stephen's BNS

(September 2022)

### CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

The code of behaviour is based on a commitment to the welfare of every student, including the right to participate in, and benefit from education.

At St. Stephen's De la Salle, we aim to reflect our Christian and human ethos and the values of the Primary School Curriculum through fostering positive relationships and setting standards of behaviour based on respect, consideration, responsibility, honesty and forgiveness. We seek to accommodate the individuality of each child while also upholding the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption-free environment and the entitlement of staff to perform their responsibilities without impairment. In the revision of our Positive Behaviour Policy and Code in 2022, input has been sought from staff, parents, representative pupils and the Board of Management. Our hope is that this revised Code will give clear guidance to children, staff and parents so we can work together for the best positive behaviour outcomes.

Our Code acknowledges that the understanding of rules and consequences will vary, according to a child's age and ability.

### General Rules:

1. School commences at 8.50. Punctuality is expected. Supervision begins at 8.45.
2. School finishes at 13.30 for junior and senior infants. School finishes at 14.30 for all other classes. All children must be collected promptly.
3. After arrival on the school premises, pupils may only leave at an earlier time with a parent/age appropriate guardian who signs them out at the reception.
4. For health and safety reasons, all parents must remain at the barrier.
5. We encourage neat and tidy hair in school. Dyes, designs and shaven heads are discouraged as these can affect behaviour and attitude.
6. Full school uniform must be worn at all times. School tracksuit must be worn on PE days.
7. All pupils must wear the school uniform as detailed on the school website and in the Information for Parents Booklet. Where a child has sensory or medical issues that make them uncomfortable wearing particular uniform items, modifications can be agreed with the Principal.
8. Mobile phones, smart watches and any personal electronic devices are not allowed during school time. There is a facility for 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> classes to leave their phones into the office at 8.45. Any infringement of this rule will involve the confiscation of the device. If a photo has been taken, it will be deleted before the device is returned. If a pupil is found to have taken a photo in school time, and/or then shared it, it will be treated very seriously by the school.

*\*The school takes absolutely no responsibility for the safekeeping of phones or other personal devices brought into school and will not be liable for any loss or damage to same.*

9. Jewellery and piercings are not permitted.
10. Respect all school property, including furniture, equipment, plants & flowers, notice boards, displays, etc.
11. Electric bikes/scooters cannot be stored on the school grounds.
12. The school must be informed of all absences via Aladdin. The school has a duty to inform the Welfare Board of any absences over 20 days.
13. Students are not allowed to use the lift without permission and adult supervision.

## **Classroom rules:**

In September every year, each class teacher will devise their own class rules/code of behaviour in collaboration with all class students. The students will be reminded of these class rules regularly throughout the school year. For example:

1. I will be kind. I will not hurt other people.
2. I will listen. I will not interrupt.
3. I will respect property. I will not waste or damage things.
4. I will work hard. I will do my best.
5. I will be honest. I will not hide the truth.

## **Movement about the school rules:**

1. I will move along the left side of the corridor and on the stairs in single file. This will keep everyone safe.
2. I will walk calmly in the corridors. I will not run.
3. I will walk quietly. I will not disturb other classes.
4. I will carry things safely. I will ask for help if I need it.
5. I will wait patiently at the yard door for the teacher. I will not open the door.
6. I will open and close the doors properly.
7. I will leave the school through designated doors/gates only.

## **Yard Rules:**

1. I will stay in the yard at break time. I will not leave unless a teacher gives permission.
2. I will play safely. I will not be rough or hurt others.
3. I will ask an adult for help if an item goes over the fence. I will not go and get it myself.
4. I will play fairly. I will take turns and let others play.
5. I will speak politely. I will not use bad language.
6. I will take care of school things.
7. I will line up immediately when the bell rings.
8. I will go in to class quietly.
9. I will not stand on walls or slide on bars in the yard.

## **'Out and About' Rules**

1. I will follow directions/instructions immediately from the adult responsible for me when I am out and about.
2. I will show respect for those I am with, and for those I meet, when out and about.
3. I will show respect for property when out and about. I will not cause damage.
4. I will listen carefully to any rules about places I go when out and about.
5. I will remain seated and wear my seat belt.
6. I will be respectful and quiet on all visits to the church.
7. I will keep these rules for my own safety and for the safety of others.

If misbehaviour occurs outside school hours by a student wearing the school uniform/tracksuit, a judgement would have to be made by the principal that there is a clear connection with the school before the code of behaviour applies.

# Role and Responsibilities of Adults

## School Staff:

All staff at St. Stephen's have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other. Their good example has an important influence on the children. Staff are expected to:

- create a positive, caring atmosphere, with realistic expectations for each child and adult
- model and promote courtesy, respect, honesty, kindness, forgiveness and fair treatment to all – children and adults alike.
- know, model and teach/ remind children of the Class Rules and all related school rules, including area-specific rules, use of mobile phones, etc.
- affirm positive behaviour and appreciate the contribution of all
- cooperate in keeping good order in school so effective teaching and learning can take place
- promote respect for property and care for the school and wider environment
- practise and promote the early resolution of relational difficulties, and of situations resulting from unacceptable behaviour, in a constructive restorative manner
- adhere to the agreed approach to discipline

## Parents:

Best behaviour outcomes are seen when school and parents work together. Parents are expected to support the school's Positive Behaviour Policy and Code in the following ways:

- **Positive Message:** speak positively with their child about the importance of keeping school rules
- **Respectful Communication:** respectful communication with school staff, e.g. by responding to teacher's notes in home-school diary; when addressing any concern with the teacher, interactions with staff, etc.
- **Good Attendance:** promote the importance of good attendance (except when sick, in post-surgery recovery or at necessary appointments), informing the school about absences.
- **Care/ Provision of Belongings:** help child learn to care for his/ her belongings.
- **Homework:** take an active interest in child's homework, where appropriate (e.g. hearing reading or spellings, checking work, etc.); sign homework each evening; give reason for work not completed; and contact the teacher if homework is causing worry for child.
- **Cooperative Approach:** if child is working on improving a particular behaviour at school, cooperate with staff by using the agreed approach at home too, where possible.
- **Restorative Approach:** cooperate with school if their child has engaged in unacceptable behaviour, taking a restorative approach to help the child (when able) to reflect on the behaviour, acknowledge harm done and talk about how things can be made right.
- **Pride in Uniform:** instil a sense of pride in the school and in wearing uniform (exceptions for children with sensory issues)

## Modelling the Standards

**No child or adult should be treated in an unacceptable way.**

***Adults in the school have a responsibility to model expected and acceptable behaviour and interactions with others.***

- **Whole School Approach** – Encourage, reinforce and reward good behaviour, All Star Awards and display, highlight class efforts and achievements.
- **Classroom** – Children devise their class code of behaviour in collaboration with their teacher, jobs and responsibilities are rotated, frequent reminders and attention drawn to the class code of behaviour, SPHE lessons and Grow in Love lessons.
- **Parental Involvement** – HSCL newsletter, Parental involvement in homework, Parent's Association, Board of Management, in-school activities such as maths for fun, reading initiatives, science for fun, etc.
- **Pupils with additional needs** – whole school approach to support, visual prompts, visual aids, SNA support.
- *All students are expected to adhere to the Code of Discipline. Our Code acknowledges that the understanding of rules and consequences will vary, according to a child's age and ability.*

### Expected behaviour:

*The code helps young people to experience the value of being responsible, participating members of the school community.*

#### **Respect for self:**

- Cleanliness and tidiness of self is expected (person & clothes).
- Take proper care of books and belongings.
- Take pride in presentation of school work.

#### **Respect for others:**

- Treat others with respect at all times.
- Bad language is unacceptable.
- Be gentle and speak respectfully.
- Ask permission when borrowing.
- Treat other's property with respect.
- Include everyone in your game.

#### **Respect for Adults:**

- Respect teachers and adults at all times.
- Address adults by title, e.g. Mrs, Mr, Miss, Ms.
- Basic manners are encouraged and expected – please, thank you, excuse me.
- Stand aside to let an adult pass.
- Offer help to adults.
- Treat visitors with respect, be courteous and listen attentively.

## **Bullying:**

*We try to prevent incidents of bullying by:*

- Adhering to a strict Anti-bullying policy, which is reviewed regularly.
- Creating a school ethos which encourages children to discourage, disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- Encouraging respect, trust and support for others.
- Ensuring that all staff are approachable and will listen.
- Use of Stay Safe programme using a whole school approach.
- Rewarding kind, caring and sensitive children.
- Encouraging the child to report bullying.
- Integrating the issue of bullying into the school curriculum.
- Encouraging parents to report bullying.
- Providing comprehensive supervision in school.
- Being consistent and fair in the implementation of school rules.

*All incidents of bullying will be recorded and All incidents of bullying will be reported to parents. The Board of Management will have the right to discipline a pupil who is bullying another.*

*The school does not accept responsibility for online/cyber bullying but should it impact on the school day, parents will be notified.*

***\*\*Bullying is repeated aggression – physical, verbal or emotional – conducted by an individual or group against another or others. For more detail, please refer to our Anti-bullying Policy.***

### **How to promote the positive aspects of the code:**

**Ensure a safe and happy school environment for all pupils and staff.**

- Respect for self and others.
- Kindness and willingness to help.
- Promote courtesy and good manners.
- Fairness.
- Readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict.
- Encourage forgiveness.
- Use of positive reinforcement and affirmation.
- Use of restorative practice technique and questions for example:

#### **Restorative Questions to respond to unacceptable 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?

## **Restorative Questions to help those harmed by others' 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?

## **Students involved in developing their own classroom code of behaviour.**

- Ensure all students understand why the code is important.
- Using A fair code.
- Clear and consistent standards.
- All students are involved and take ownership of their class code.

## **Other Strategies including but not limited to:**

- In class homework vouchers
- Golden time.
- Class dojo.
- Student of the week/month certs.
- Lucky dip.
- Praise and encouragement.
- Stars/stickers for good behaviour and good work.
- Treats e.g. popcorn party.
- Cinema at Christmas.
- Team points.

## **Levels of Misbehaviour and Behaviour Modification Response:**

There are three levels of unacceptable behaviour: **Minor, Serious and Gross.**

### **Minor Misbehaviour**

Examples including but not limited to:

- not paying attention or following instructions
- chatting and distracting others in class
- rudeness
- smirking or being cheeky when reprimanded
- running in prohibited areas
- rough play of any kind
- mild use of unacceptable language

**(NOTE:** Where the teacher feels that a pupil has a genuine difficulty in complying with a particular school rule, a positive behaviour plan should be devised/ reward system set up, e.g. star chart/ tokens, to help the pupil improve in this area. Cooperation between home and school on such positive interventions are key).

## First Offence:

The class teacher will talk with the child, using the restorative questions (e.g. listed above). Where a child is unwilling to cooperate or is unable to immediately engage with the restorative questions, the progression will generally be as follows:

- Reflection Time, e.g. thinking space or personal reflection time.
- Restorative questioning.
- May use a reflection sheet in school/at home.

## Second Offence within a short period:

- Minor Sanction at the class teacher's discretion, e.g. loss of privilege (lose a token; shorten/miss Golden Time; miss a favourite activity/yard; sent to another class for a set period of time).

This should be followed by another attempt to engage in the restorative questions and/or reflection sheet in school/at home and/ or by continuing with use of an appropriate positive reward system.

Depending on the misbehaviour involved, the class teacher may also write a note in the child's home-school notebook or phone a parent/ guardian.

## Third Offence within a short period:

- **Yellow Card issued:** A Yellow Card should be issued and sent home to be signed by a parent/ guardian. The principal is notified that a card has been issued.
- This may be followed up by a phone call from the class teacher.
- The restorative and/ or positive reward approach should be continued by all adults involved. Parents should talk with their child about the rule-breaking, bearing in mind that, if the misbehaviour continues, the child will receive an orange card, then a red card.
- Signed yellow cards should be returned by a parent/ guardian to the school. The Teacher/Principal will keep these on file.
- **\*If a parent/guardian refuses to sign the card (be it yellow, orange or red), the card still stands and will be kept on file by the Teacher/Principal.**
- A sanction chosen by the teacher/principal will be imposed (see below for sanctions).

\*\*Minor misbehaviour applies in cases where it is accepted that the child has an understanding that his/her actions are malicious and likely to cause damage. At the school's discretion, for certain pupils with additional needs this may not be the case. However, the school reserves the right to engage this policy for children with additional needs when behaviour is a threat to the health and safety of other students/staff.

**\*\*Yellow, Orange and Red Cards may be issued for minor, serious and/or gross misbehaviour and may be immediate (skipping earlier steps at the school's discretion)**

## Serious Misbehaviour

- An orange/red card will be issued by the Principal/Teacher at the school's discretion.
- Parents/Guardians will be contacted and a meeting between parents/guardians and the Teacher and/or Principal will be held.
- A behaviour plan may be devised in consultation with the parents/guardians and put in place.
- Signed orange/red cards should be returned by a parent/ guardian to the school. The Teacher/Principal will keep these on file.
- \*If a parent/guardian refuses to sign the card (be it yellow, orange or red), the card still stands and will be kept on file by the Teacher/Principal.
- A sanction chosen by the teacher/principal will be imposed (see below for sanctions).

### Examples including but not limited to:

- all minor misbehaviours on a continuous basis
- rough play causing injury
- acts of aggression, including threats or physical harm to another person
- Name calling and personal comments will be taken very seriously.
- behaviour that is hurtful, including bullying\*, harassment, discrimination & victimisation
- bad or inappropriate language directed at a child or adult
- refusal to do school work or homework
- damage to property
- theft
- bringing dangerous items to school
- leaving classroom, school activities or the school grounds without permission

**(NOTES:\* Bullying is repeated aggression – physical, verbal or emotional- conducted by an individual or group against another or others. For more detail, please refer to our Anti-Bullying Policy.)**

Where restorative interventions fail, and a child capable of understanding the impact of his behaviour seems to be blatantly repeating a minor misbehaviour or where a serious behaviour occurs, an appropriate sanction will be warranted.

\*\*Serious misbehaviour applies in cases where it is accepted that the child has an understanding that his/her actions are malicious and likely to cause damage. At the school's discretion, for certain pupils with additional needs this may not be the case. However, the school reserves the right to engage this policy for children with additional needs when behaviour is a threat to the health and safety of other students/staff.



## Gross Misbehaviour

- A red card will be issued by the Principal/Teacher at the school's discretion.
- Parents/Guardians will be contacted and a meeting between parents/guardians and the Teacher and/or Principal will be held.
- A behaviour plan may be devised/revised in consultation with the parents/guardians.
- Signed red cards should be returned by a parent/ guardian to the school. The Teacher/Principal will keep these on file.
- \*If a parent/guardian refuses to sign the card (be it yellow, orange or red), the card still stands and will be kept on file by the Teacher/Principal.
- A sanction chosen by the Teacher/Principal will be imposed (see below for sanctions).
- **\*\*A pupil may be suspended immediately if a breach of the code is very serious.**

Examples including but not limited to:

- repeated serious misbehaviour
- intentional assault on a pupil, staff member or other adult at school
- serious bullying
- wilful serious damage to property
- serious theft
- bringing dangerous item to school, e.g. sharp knife, alcohol, drugs, cigarettes

\*\*Gross misbehaviour applies in cases where it is accepted that the child has an understanding that his/her actions are malicious and likely to cause damage. At the school's discretion, for certain pupils with additional needs this may not be the case. However, the school reserves the right to engage this policy for children with additional needs when behaviour is a threat to the health and safety of other students/staff.

## Sanctions – including but not limited to:

Although the emphasis at St. Stephen's will be on the promotion of positive behaviour, there will be times when misbehaviour occurs and needs to be addressed. Teachers will use agreed behavioural strategies to encourage positive behaviour. All behaviour breaches are recorded in the class behaviour book/yard incident book.

- Class teacher assign a time out for the student in another classroom.
- Loss of yard time – pupil will do some assigned work in an assigned classroom.
- If an incident in the yard, time in the thinking space for junior classes – teacher on duty will use reflective questioning.
- If an incident in the yard, time sitting on the Ardan for senior classes – teacher on duty will use reflective questioning such as 'what would have been a better choice?'
- Loss of golden time in class.
- Extra homework – 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>
- Class teacher will contact parents/guardians if a serious/ongoing disruption to the teaching and learning in the classroom/yard occurs.
- Class teacher send a message or note home to be signed by parent/principal.
- Loss of privileges, e.g. class trip, cinema, tour
- Traffic Light System = Yellow, Orange and Red cards.
- Internal Suspension.
- External suspension – in the home.
- Board of Discipline hearing.
- Board of Management hearing.

**\*\*The school has a duty to provide a safe environment for staff and pupils. Where there is a health and safety risk for a child/children/staff, the school reserves the right to contact parents and ask that they take their child home.**

**Behaviours of Concern, Continuous disruptive behaviour and/or inattentiveness will warrant the 'Traffic Light' system being put in place:**

1. Yellow Card: Minor Misbehaviours
2. Orange Card : Minor/Serious Misbehaviour
3. Red Card: Serious and/Gross Misbehaviour
4. Any further breaches will result **in internal suspension.**

**\*\*A pupil may be suspended without following steps 1-4 above if a breach of the code is very serious.**

5. External suspension for one or more days.
6. Board of discipline hearing.
7. Referred to Board of management for expulsion consideration/process.

**Suspension as per NEWB guideline (chapter 11)**

***The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:***

- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the learning of other students.
- The student's continued presence in the school, at this time is a threat to the safety of others and themselves.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

**Implementing the suspension:**

The principal will notify the parents of the student being suspended via phone/letter/meeting and will inform the parents/guardians of the following:

- The period of suspension, including dates.
- The reason for the suspension.
- The provision of an appeal to the BOM, Secretary General of the Department of Education.

**Expulsion as per the NEWB Guidelines (chapter 12)**

***A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:***

- The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or 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.

## **Procedures in respect of expulsion:**

1. Detailed investigation by principal – inform parents.
2. A recommendation to BOM by Principal.
3. Consideration by BOM, holding a hearing.
4. BOM deliberations and actions following a hearing.
5. Consultation arranged by Education Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

## **Strategies for Implementing the Code:**

### **Communication**

- Provide all parents with access to a copy of the Code of Behaviour before registration and get them to sign a consent form agreeing to comply with this code.
- Principal/Deputy Principal to clarify Code to parents who have queries.
- Code to be explained to parents of international and traveller students and parents with low literacy levels in the home by the HSCL teacher.
- Induction meeting – explain code of discipline to new parents.
- Information through Parents' Association – talks, newsletter.

### **Monitoring**

Discipline reviewed at all staff meetings.

- What is working well?
- What needs to be improved?

Board of Discipline to meet.

### **Complaints**

St Stephen's always seeks to find an early solution to a problem.

### **Parents**

- Contact class teacher about concern/s.
- Meet with Class Teacher and/or Principal.
- Meet with Board of Discipline.
- Meet with Board of Management.
- Parents can appeal to BOM.
- Parents have the right to appeal to the Department of Education.

### **Pupils**

- In class – inform teacher.
- In the yard – inform the teacher on duty.

This policy will be reviewed on \_\_\_\_\_

This policy was ratified by the BOM of St Stephen's De la Salle BNS on

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Principal

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson

Date \_\_\_\_\_