

St. Dominic's National School

Mountain Park,
Tallaght,
Dublin 24.

Phone: 01-4512443/01-4512219

E-Mail: secretary@stdominicsns.ie

Principal: Séamus Vaughan

Deputy Principal: Máire Meenan

Roll Number: 20468P

Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement

A committee was formed in 2017 to review our Code of Behaviour. The committee included Laura Murphy, Aoife Breathnach, Laura Tighe, David Fagan, Emma O'Reilly, Clodagh Byrne and Margaret Gallagher. The document is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, section 23 (1) and is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in 'Developing a code of Behaviour: Guidelines for schools', NEWB, 2008. A review was carried out again in September 2019 by the ISM team in consultation with staff.

A further review was carried out in September 2020 to reflect the changes to our school environment caused by Covid-19.

Mission and Ethos

St. Dominic's National School Code of Behaviour is designed to create a safe, secure, teaching and learning environment, where mutual respect is expressed in ways which show consideration for others and where children, staff, parents and Board of Management work in partnership. The code will seek to foster and reinforce positive social values. It will seek to promote self-control and will also seek to foster a sense of responsibility in our students and staff. The code will outline the sanctions in place in the school in the event of negative behaviours but it will also highlight the positive strategies that are in use to promote and reward appropriate behaviour.

Aims

The Code will set down the procedures that will allow desired positive values to flourish. It will allow for the effective day to day running of the school. It will create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration of others. It will endeavour to ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions in place, are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school. The Code will assist parents, pupils and teachers in understanding the procedures in place and will aid their co-operation in the application of those procedures.

Discipline for Learning (DFL)

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

We have many ways of recognising good behaviour 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.

School Rules

Our code of behaviour has been formulated to endeavour to create an environment that is calm and rewarding so as to facilitate active learning throughout the school.

The following school rules have been drawn up to promote such an environment:

There are five school rules which are taught to the children in class.

1. Walk in the school.
2. Use kind words and actions.
3. Play safely in your yard area.
4. Wear your uniform.
5. Come to school on time and ready to learn.

The above rules are taught in a very thorough way. The emphasis is on why, where, when, what and to whom the rule applies.

The following are examples of the minor misbehaviours that are covered by the above school rules and which will not be accepted by any teacher.

- Ø Chewing gum in class.
- Ø Swinging on chairs.
- Ø Interruptions – speaking out in class / shouting out in class.
- Ø Leaving place without permission

- Ø Bad language.
- Ø The use of disrespectful responses.
- Ø Running on corridors.
- Ø Mobile phones.
- Ø Littering classroom or yard areas or the use of graffiti.
- Ø Upsetting others by teasing.

Examples of more serious behaviours that will not be accepted include the following:

- Ø The use of physical violence – hitting, kicking, spitting.
- Ø Verbal abuse towards other pupils or adults or the making of racist remarks.
- Ø Throwing of objects at other pupils or supervising adults.
- Ø Refusal to work or to move to a different area when instructed.
- Ø Telling lies.
- Ø Stealing.
- Ø Malicious damage to school/other pupil's property.
- Ø Bullying (See separate policy document).

Code of Behaviour in the Yard

For yard time to be an enjoyable and safe experience for both children and supervising adults the following routines must be followed.

- Ø Pupils line up in the classroom before going to yard and proceed to yard once the bell has sounded.
- Ø Pupils are reminded to take coats during cold weather as they will not be able to return to their classrooms during break time.
- Ø Pupils will not engage in play which endangers themselves or others. No mess fighting, tripping, spitting, kicking, wrestling, bulldog or other dangerous games are acceptable.
- Ø All instructions given by supervising adults must be complied with.
- Ø Pupils must stay within the assigned yard boundaries.

- Ø Pupils will not disrupt the play of other pupils by interfering with their games. Neither should they provoke or annoy other pupils.
- Ø When the bell sounds pupils must go immediately to their assigned lining up areas.
- Ø Pupils must line up with their own class group and wait for their teacher to bring them back to their classroom.

Indoor Supervision

During wet weather pupils must remain sitting down in their classrooms and must comply with their teacher's instructions regarding indoor games.

Yard

- Children not behaving appropriately on yard will be given a black warning. The child must stand out of play on yard for a period of time. This time depends on the age of the child and severity of the behaviour.
- Depending on the severity and frequency of the behaviour in class sanctions may be imposed by the class teacher.

Classroom Rewards

Junior Infants & Senior Infants

Junior & Senior Infants class teachers will implement various in class reward systems which are in line with our Code of Behaviour and DFL system.

1st – 6th Class

1. Children will earn 2 DFL stamps on a DFL chart displayed in the class room each day by observing school rules.
2. Stamps are given for days a child is absent.
3. Children who have lost no more than 2 stamps will receive a good behaviour sticker and a well done message sent home monthly on the Aladdin noticeboard.

Classroom Sanctions

The following is the sequence of events that will occur when undesired behaviour takes place in the classroom. At the discretion of the teacher, depending on the behaviour, it may be necessary to go straight to a particular sanction.

Junior Infants & Senior Infants

1. verbal warning, name stays on sun
2. 1st written warning, name moved to sad cloud
3. 2nd written warning, name moved to angry cloud
4. If the school rules are still not adhered to the class teacher will have a predetermined system in place. (for example, loss of golden time)

** Teachers may use other displays equivalent to the sun/sad/angry cloud display.

DFL Steps – 1st – 6th Class

Pupils will begin each day ready to learn, regardless of the behaviour of the previous day, unless suspended.

1. verbal warning
2. Written warning, movement of name
3. Yellow warning, further movement of name, loss of 1 stamp
4. Red warning – loss of two stamps, isolation out of class and a text sent home*.
5. In school suspension – pupil will be supervised in the hall for the day. No yard
6. Suspension

*Text to be sent home - 'Your child reached step 4 on our Code of Behaviour today. They lost 2 of their good behaviour stamps. Please discuss this with them'.

In all classes, the teacher will inform parents as they feel appropriate.

Programme of intervention for children with ongoing difficulty

An agreed ladder of support. Care Team: Teacher will inform care team members (Principal, Deputy Principal,

Home School Liaison Coordinator) of their concerns regarding pupil.

Ø Behaviour plan drawn up by teacher

- Ø Seek advice from Support teacher
- Ø Care Team discuss these concerns with teacher
- Ø HSCL meets with parent to get more information regarding pupil and to outline concerns and discuss possible solutions.
- Ø Referral to in school support – period with Support Teacher
- Ø Referral to play therapist if applicable.
- Ø Referral to psychologist for educational or other assessment.
- Ø Involvement of NEPS.

Suspension

The Board of Management and staff of St. Dominic's School will follow the procedures for suspension and expulsion outlined in the guidelines for Schools on Developing a code of Behaviour. Fair procedures (i.e. the right to be heard and the right to impartiality) will be applied at all times. In this regard, no person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.

In determining the appropriateness of suspending a pupil the staff and Board of Management will refer to the factors to consider before proposing suspending a pupil. These factors include, the nature and seriousness of the behaviour, the context of the behaviour, the impact of the behaviour, the interventions tried to date, whether suspension is a proportionate response and the possible impact of suspension. The Board of Management has delegated responsibility for suspension to the principal in the event that immediate suspension of a pupil is warranted.

Immediate Suspension

In exceptional circumstances, the principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary when following a preliminary investigation, the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a threat to the safety of pupils or staff of the school or any other person. The suspension may be for a period of up to three school days depending on the severity of the misbehaviour. The principal must seek the approval of the Chairperson. If a suspension longer than three days is proposed by the principal, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval.

Procedures in relation to suspension

Parents will be informed of an immediate suspension by telephone and arrangements made for the pupil to be collected. In no circumstances will a pupil be sent home from school prior to his/her parents being notified. A formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension and parents will also be sent written notification.

The principal and/or the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parents to a meeting to discuss the circumstances surrounding the suspension and any interventions necessary to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.

If parents fail to attend the meeting, the Principal/Chairperson will write to the parents inviting them to a rescheduled meeting and, failing that, the Board of Management will consider the proposed suspension and make a decision. Where parents do not agree to meet the Principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.

A Suspension letter will confirm:

- ü The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- ü The reason for the suspension
- ü Any programmes of study to be followed
- ü The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents (for example, the pupil and parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the Code of Behaviour).
- ü The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- ü The suspension will be recorded on Aladdin Administration System as a suspension
- ü When a period of suspension ends, the pupil will be readmitted formally to the class by the teacher or principal. The school will help the pupil catch up on work missed and the pupil will be given the opportunity and support of a fresh start.
- ü If a pupil continues to misbehave he/she may be suspended for a major fixed period (up to ten days) to allow for consultation with both the pupil and the pupil's parents to address the issues.

The Education Welfare Officer will be informed when a student has been suspended for six days or more cumulatively. Section 29 appeal – when the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days the parents may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act and will be given information about how to appeal.

Procedures for Expulsion

Subsequent to the above suspension procedures and meetings with parents/guardians, if serious/gross incidents of misbehaviour continue, the Board of Management reserve the right to permanently exclude the pupil from school. The grounds for expulsion include the following:

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

In exceptional circumstances, pupils may be expelled for a first offence. This may apply in the event of:

- Ø A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff.
- Ø Actual violence or physical assault.
- Ø Supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school.
- Ø Sexual assault.

Procedures in respect of Expulsion – Six Steps.

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
2. A recommendation will be made to the Board of Management.
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

Section 29 Appeals

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the secretary general of the Department of Education and Science (DES). A form for such an appeal is available from the DES.

MOTIVATING AND AFFIRMING GOOD BEHAVIOUR STRATEGIES FOR AFFIRMING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

- Ø Teachers will make themselves aware of the guidelines for teachers in the NEPS Booklet, 'Behavioural, Emotional and Social difficulties.'
- Ø Teachers will consult these guidelines in establishing good school and class routines.
- Ø They will establish the core routines necessary for the smooth running of classroom learning.
- Ø Pupils will know what routines they have to follow when they enter the school in the morning, how they enter after a break and how they will move about the school either individually or as a class.
- Ø Teachers will use the guidelines and consult their pupils in drawing up a list of five to seven rules that they will follow and which are stated in terms of observable behaviour.
- Ø Teachers will agree a reward system that is appropriate to their class or they will use a combination of systems.

Examples of positive behaviour modelling and motivation are as follows:

In the classroom

- ü Star charts
- ü Golden time
- ü Sticker Chart
- ü Rewards – pencils/rubbers/sweets
- ü Marble Jar
- ü Traffic Light system / Weather Chart – Sun and Rain System
- ü Tokens for individual behaviour
- ü Classroom jobs and responsibilities given
- ü Cookery time
- ü Video time
- ü 'Good Note' home to parents
- ü Verbal / Non-verbal praise.

Good behaviour on the part of one pupil alone, a group of pupils or a whole class should be affirmed at school level. Such examples of affirmations and positive behaviour modelling are as follows:

Whole-school level

- ü Student of the Week
- ü Student of the month
- ü Trips out of school
- ü In school activities

Each teacher in St. Dominic's National School is expected to be aware of and use some or all of the following positive strategies when dealing with children:

- ü Non-Verbal signals
- ü Simple directions
- ü Proximity control
- ü Rule reminders
- ü Diversions
- ü Warning of consequences
- ü Giving a choice / alternative
- ü Thinking chair
- ü Refocusing

Teachers will also try to ensure that the following routines are put in place:

- Ø Transition from subject to subject should be smooth and well planned. A time table to show pupils what comes next will help to facilitate this.
- Ø Insist upon silence when instructions are being given out. Instructions should be given in a clear and considered fashion.
- Ø Insist upon children being in a quiet straight line before going out to yard or around the school.
- Ø Seating in the classroom should allow easy and safe movement of adults and children and seating arrangements should allow for good classroom management.
- Ø Classrooms should be tidy and free of any obstructions or clutter. Children should be encouraged to tidy their place and classroom each day so that they take pride in their surroundings.

Class Records

Each teacher will keep a record of significant incidents of behaviour. In infants, records will be kept by class teachers of all names moved to the angry cloud (or display equivalent). In 1st – 6th classes, all red warnings will be recorded on Aladdin by class teachers.

The records may include the following information:

- Ø The frequency of incidents.
- Ø The nature and seriousness of the behaviour.
- Ø The context of the behaviour.
- Ø The impact of the behaviour.
- Ø The interventions tried to date.

These records will enable the teacher to track a child's behaviour and will be used to inform parents of their child's behaviour and progress at parent teacher meetings and at other times when they are invited up to the school to meet with the teacher and/or principal.

A record will also be kept of letters and telephone calls to parents in relation to pupil's behaviour. Furthermore a record will be kept of communication with outside agencies and with the Board of Management. Documentation pertaining to Section 29 appeals will be kept and stored in a secure place in the principal's office.

Assembly

The school has regular assembly time. This is done to mark special events during the year and reward children for positive behaviour and attendance. Members of the In-school Management Team lead assemblies.

- There will be a monthly assembly for 1st to 6th class
- At assembly, children will be reminded of our school rules.
- During assembly, children who lost no more than 2 stamps will be photographed in their class groups. This photograph will be displayed on the school website.

Support Teacher

St. Dominic's National School is part of the Support Teacher Programme under the DEIS initiative. As part of this the Support Teacher has a role to play in promoting and managing behaviour in the school. The Support Teacher operates the following to promote positive behaviour:

- Ø Student of the Week each Friday for Junior pupils.
- Ø Good Behaviour trips for Senior Pupils
- Ø Good Behaviour rewards (cookery time, etc.)
- Ø Preventative programmes to address behaviour issues
- Ø Meeting with pupil/group of pupils from a class to discuss serious behaviour

Homework

Homework is given for the following reasons:

1. To reinforce work that is done in school.
2. To promote good study habits.
3. To make a link between home and school.

Homework Policy

- Ø Homework is assigned on a nightly basis Monday – Thursday at the discretion of the teacher.
- Ø Time on homework should generally not exceed 20 minutes in infants, 30 minutes in 1st and 2nd, 40 minutes in 3rd & 4th and 1 hour in 5th and 6th Class.
- Ø Most nights homework consists of English, Gaeilge & Maths, other subjects may be included. This may be written, reading, research or learning work.
- Ø Teachers will differentiate where necessary.
- Ø Parents are encouraged to adopt a positive attitude towards homework. To be consistent with their input of time and to provide a suitable working environment for their children.
- Ø Teachers may request parents to sign journals on a nightly or weekly basis. Teachers may also request individual items of homework to be signed.
- Ø A brief note of explanation is expected from parents when homework has been neglected or improperly completed.
- Ø Homework is usually dispensed with at weekends and sometimes also as a reward for particularly hard work or in celebration of a special event in the school calendar.

- Ø Children should be encouraged to take responsibility from a young age for organisation of homework materials and completion of homework. If a child does not complete homework they will be expected to complete it the following evening or during the school day outside of teaching time. This will be at the discretion of the teacher.
- Ø Teachers may correct homework on a nightly or weekly basis.

When and if homework is not done the teacher has the following options:

1. Issue a warning and repeat request for the work.
2. Notify parents or guardians.
3. Seek the assistance of the Principal, Deputy Principal or HSLC.
4. If all of the above fail then an arrangement can be made with parents.

Good homework practices should be encouraged and rewarded using the same incentives

as used in the classroom. Most children do their homework adequately with a little coaxing from their parents and teacher. However, for some pupil's homework is a task that they manage to avoid doing despite everyone else's best efforts. Looking for homework from such pupils can be a frustrating task for the class teacher each morning and it can cause an undesirable confrontation that may set the tone for the day. Therefore, it is important to identify those pupils who refuse to do homework and devise an agreed strategy that bypasses those morning confrontations.

Statement of Strategy on School Attendance

The school has a Statement of Strategy on School Attendance includes use of the following strategies to encourage school attendance.

- Ø Creating an attractive school environment.
- Ø Creating a system for acknowledging and rewarding good attendance. This will be done by awarding certificates and homework passes and other appropriate rewards which will be given out at the end of each term.
- Ø Adapting the curriculum content and methodologies to maximise relevance to pupils.
- Ø Adapting the school and class timetables to make it more attractive for pupils to attend

and to be on time.

Ø The school's policy requires parents/guardians to send in a note informing teachers in writing of their child's absence from school and the reason for this absence. These notes are signed and dated and kept until the end of the school year.

Ø A tracking secretary monitors pupils who are absent and seeks a written note of explanation.

Ø An attendance committee meets termly in the school to review attendance.

Ø The school will use the standard forms to report on pupil absences to the Education Welfare Officer

Role of Home School Community Liaison Co-ordinator

The Home School Community Liaison Coordinator will work with parents on non-attending pupils to help improve their child's attendance and make parents aware of the terms and implications of the Education Welfare Act. It is important to note however, that the HSCL provides support to parents (acquire places in breakfast/homework club) and does not have a role in applying sanctions.

Reference to other policies

SPHE Plan

Anti-Bullying Policy

Enrolment Policy

Record Keeping

Health and Safety Policy

Special Education Needs Policy

Success Criteria

Practical indicators of the success of the policy include the following:

Ø Observation of positive behaviour in classrooms, playground and in the school environment.

Ø Practices and procedures listed in this policy are consistently implemented, taking in to account feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.

Roles and Responsibility

Responsibility for implementation of the policy include:

- Ø The Principal and Staff
- Ø Board of Management
- Ø Pupils
- Ø Parents

Implementation date

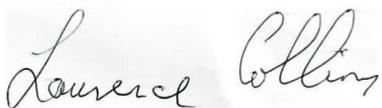
This policy will apply from 30th September 2020

Timetable for Review

This policy will be reviewed in June 2021 or as necessary during the year as Covid-19 restrictions change.

Ratification and communication

The Board of Management officially ratified this policy on 30th September 2020. The ratified policy will be circulated through established channels to all staff and will be available on the school website for inspection.



Chairperson, Board of Management



Principal

Date: 30th September 2020