



St. Joseph's National School

Code of Behaviour

Policy Summary Details

Policy Title:	Code of Behaviour
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Introduction

The code of behaviour for St. Joseph's National School complies with the requirements of the DES Circular 20/90 on School Discipline. It also complies with the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) which refers to the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. This behaviour code applies to all pupils in St. Joseph's N.S. including **children in our mainstream setting, children in our special class settings and children with diagnosed special educational needs**. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

In line with Section 23(2) of the Education Welfare Act, 2000 the following areas will be addressed in this policy:

- The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school
- The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards
- The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned
- The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student
- The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school

1. Relationship of the policy to characteristic spirit of the school

1.2 Vision and mission statement

“In St Joseph's we have a strong sense of community and we all work together to make our school a happy place where learning is fun and everyone is valued. We have a long-established policy of welcome where we work in partnership with parents and the wider community to give every child every chance every day.”

Our school cherishes all pupils equally and to aid them in achieving their true potential we endeavour to:

- Offer a happy and positive experience of school that fosters a sense of uniqueness and self-esteem whilst maintaining a sense of fun and play.
- Promote a good attitude to and respect for peers and teachers and a sense of inclusion in the school community where parents already play an integral role.
- Encourage each child to develop to their full potential in all curricular areas and to be motivated in their learning.
- Instil a nurturing sense of awe, wonder and beauty and so lead our pupils to God.
- Demonstrate a commitment to promoting a healthy attitude towards physical development through exercise and diet.
- Value the diversity of our culture and environment and build a sense of citizenship where pupils have a sense of tolerance, responsibility and an awareness of their own rights and the rights of others.

1.3 Objectives of our Code of Behaviour policy

This Code of Behaviour has been developed to help create a safe, supportive and inclusive learning and working environment for all students and staff of St. Joseph's NS. It is intended to

- support the fostering of a positive school climate and culture.
- assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures
- ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school
- promote self-esteem and positive relationships.
- assist all members of our school community to acknowledge and respect that we are a Catholic school and that there are many religions and cultures in our school, with different traditions and celebrations, which may be different to those experienced by students at home.

2. Guidelines for behaviour in St. Joseph's National School

It is stated in the “The Education Welfare Act, Section 23”, that the code of behaviour shall specify “the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school”. The following are the standards of behaviour this school wishes all pupils to observe:

- **Safe behaviours** - Exercise personal safety and practise safe actions towards others
- **Kind behaviours**- Using kind words and kind actions when interacting with one another
- **Respect for property and our world**- School property as well as their own and other children's and staffs belongings. Phones and other devices are looked after at home except in specific circumstances and authorised by the principal. Promoting care for the world around us and our school environment.
- **Respectful behaviours**- Towards children, as well as adults working in/visiting the school.
- **Positivity** - Persevere and always try your best
- **Attendance**- Be in school every day
- **Punctuality** -Arrive in school on time everyday
- **Uniform** — Wear full school uniform every day and PE clothes on PE days,

3. School rules

The following is a list of school rules that are in place in our school. The purpose of these rules is to help children understand and meet the standards of behaviour that have been set out for St. Joseph's N.S.

Our School Rules

We respect everyone.

We are gentle.

We listen well.

We work hard.

We are honest.

We look after property and our beautiful world.

3.1 We respect everyone

Through this rule we aim to help children treat other children and adults in the school in a kind and respectful manner. While not exhaustive, the following are types of behaviours that would be considered a breach of this rule.

- Name calling
- Exclusion — e.g. leaving people out of games
- Speaking in a disrespectful manner
- Discrimination

3.2 We are gentle

Through this rule we aim to help children behave in a safe manner in our school. While not exhaustive, the following are types of behaviours that would be considered a breach of this rule.

- Personal safety rules- climbing on railings at entrance doors, running in corridor.
- Behaviours that may impact the safety of others — hitting, kicking, slapping etc.

3.3 We listen well.

Through this rule we aim to help children develop good communication skills with one another and with adults. While not exhaustive, the following are types of behaviours that would be considered a breach of this rule.

- Deliberately ignoring an adult's instruction
- Walking away from an adult who is speaking to you

3.4 We work hard

Through this rule we aim to help children persevere and try their very best at all times. While not exhaustive, the following are types of behaviours that would be considered a breach of this rule.

- Refusal to complete assigned activities
- Refusal to participate in school led activities

3.5 We are honest

Through this rule we aim to help children value honesty and trust in relationships. While not exhaustive, the following are types of behaviours that would be considered a breach of this rule

- Stealing other people's property
- Blaming others or not telling the truth

3.6 We look after property and our beautiful world

Through this rule we aim to help children respect school property and that of other children and staff. We aim to help children to care for nature, reduce waste and protect our environment.

While not exhaustive, the following are types of behaviours that would be considered a breach of this rule.

- Deliberately damaging classroom materials (pencils, posters, displays, toys, equipment)
- Graffiti — Writing on school property (desks, walls etc)
- Deliberately dropping litter around the school or playground
- Encouraging others to damage or disrespect the school environment

3.6 General procedures for dealing with minor misbehaviour (sanctions) The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 23, states that a school must outline 'the measures that may be taken if a student fails to observe the standards of behaviour that the school has outlined'. Although not exhaustive, the following list contains the types of measures that may be taken if a student in St. Joseph's N.S. continuously engages in minor misbehaviours and thus, fails to observe the standards.

- Rule remind, wait and praise, record
- Inclusive time out/calm down
- Speak to the child
- Loss of privilege
- Change seating
- Loss of golden time
- Time deducted from an activity
- Communication home

4. Serious misbehaviours

We in St. Joseph's N.S. recognise that staff have a right to be protected under the Welfare Act 2005. In the table below we highlight examples of serious misbehaviour. In line with Section 23 of The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, we also detail the measures that may be taken if a child engages in these serious misbehaviours. In deciding these actions, we have considered the duty of care we have to safeguard the well-being of staff, pupils and the child exhibiting the serious behaviour.

Example of serious misbehaviour	Procedure	Justification
Physical assault on a staff member	Parents are contacted and may be asked to take their child home.	These behaviours: Are regarded as unacceptable behaviours

	A suspension may be issued	- Put staff members' and pupils' physical and emotional wellbeing at risk - Unsettling for children to witness
Blatant verbal abuse/ written abuse of a staff member <i>or</i> defiance towards a staff member	Parents are contacted and may be asked to take their child home. A suspension may be issued.	These behaviours: - Are regarded as unacceptable behaviours - Put staff members' emotional wellbeing at risk
Serious physical assault on another pupil	Parents are contacted and may be asked to take their child home. A suspension may be issued	These behaviours: - Are regarded as unacceptable behaviours - Put pupils' physical and emotional wellbeing at risk
Behaviours are such it warrants the evacuation of class	Parents are contacted and may be asked to take their child home. A suspension may be issued	These behaviours: - Put other pupils' wellbeing at risk - Jeopardise other children's entitlement to a safe learning environment - Jeopardise children's teacher/SNA time - May escalate a state of distress for the child engaging in the behaviours - Are regarded as unacceptable behaviours in a school setting. We recognise however that the child may be in a heightened emotional state.

Causing intentional damage to school or other property	Parents are contacted and may be asked to take their child home. A suspension may be issued	These behaviours: • Incur damage and expense to the school • Put staff and other pupils' wellbeing at risk • Jeopardise other children's entitlement to a safe learning environment • Jeopardise children's teacher/SNA time • May escalate a state of distress for the child engaging in the behaviours • Are regarded as unacceptable behaviours in a school setting. We recognise however that the child may be in a heightened emotional state.
Leaving room, yard or the school grounds without permission	Parents are contacted and may be asked to take their child home.	These behaviours: • Put the pupils' safety at risk as we
		cannot account for possible scenarios
	A suspension may be issued	such as a child accessing the yard where there may be dangers such as moving vehicles • Jeopardise other children's entitlement to teacher/SNA time, as staff may be deployed to try and keep the child safe • May escalate a state of distress for the child engaging in the behaviours • Are regarded as unacceptable behaviour in a school setting. We recognise however that the child may be in a heightened emotional state.

5. Positive strategies for supporting and managing behaviour

‘The most effective methodology that teachers develop in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place’. (Managing Challenging Behaviour, Guidelines for teachers INTO 2004: 5).

5.1 Supporting children with behaviours of Concern - Continuum of Support

Supporting children using the Continuum of Support	
Level 1 Classroom Support	
	If the child does not respond to the “general procedures” a support plan will be drawn up between the child's parents/ guardians and class teacher targeting the rule and behaviour that needs addressing. The following are examples of some of the strategies that may be employed at the level of classroom support: 1. Reward chart 2. Self-regulation space 3. Choice boards 4. Sensory box 5. Visual timetable 6. Incredible Years strategies 7. In class movement breaks (in classroom eg. Go Noodle) The impact of these supports will be monitored, reviewed and if necessary, adapted. Assessments and observations may be undertaken, and new targets set. Pending on the outcomes of the reviews, a decision may be taken to move to the next level of support which is called “Support for Some”
Level 2 Support for some	
	Children who access support at this level, will generally receive support from a member of our special educational needs team. It is also possible that the services of outside agencies will be enlisted. The following are examples of the support that may be offered to the child at the level of “support for some” • Nurture group • Social skills group • Individualised Behaviour Plan • SNA support • Movement breaks • Additional / alternative staff may be utilised • In-school therapies • Referral to outside agencies Assessments and observations may be undertaken, and new targets set. There will be ongoing collaboration and consultation between home and school to support children who are accessing supports at this level.

Level 3 Support for few

Children who access support at this level, will generally receive support from a member of our special educational needs team. It is also possible that the services of outside agencies will be enlisted. Children who are accessing support at this level may be offered some of the following supports:

- Change of setting within the school
- Variations to arrival and departure times
- Learning online may be offered

There will be ongoing collaboration and consultation between home and school to support children who are accessing supports at this level. All supports at this level will be individualised.

5.2 Whole school approach — Displaying and teaching children the school rules

- School rules are displayed in prominent places all around the school and yard
- School rules are explicitly taught to all children at the beginning of each year across multiple settings e.g. the classroom, the yard etc
- School events e.g. friendship week, anti-bullying week, wellbeing week
- Principal reinforces the teaching of rules

5.3 Rewards

- Individual and/or group rewards for students will be decided at class level (e.g. communication with the principal/home, extra golden time, prize box, stickers, class dojo, class trips)
- Recognition of children with improved behaviours (communication with principal/home, sticker etc)
- If pupil displays positive behaviour a certificate may be sent home with the pupil. Pupils are rewarded for sustained good behaviour and application to class work.
- Individual and class reward systems can be used at the discretion of class teachers.

5.4 Supervision

- Supervision will be provided for students by staff at all times. The arrangements for supervision in the playground are distributed to all staff members.

5.5 Wet Days

- The arrangements for wet days are that all pupils stay in their classrooms and have suitable activities to do.
- The teachers on duty go from class to class whilst supervising ensuring all children are safe.
- The teacher on duty will follow the general procedures described in section 3. He/she will notify the class teacher if a student has not met the standards of behaviour.

6. Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour.

6.1 Staff

6.1.1. Promotion of positive behaviour

In our school staff treat all children with respect and dignity. There is a strong sense of community and co-operation among staff, pupils, and parents and all are agreed that their focus is primarily on the promotion and recognition of positive behaviour. The following are examples of how we strive to promote positive behaviour in the school:

- We have a positive behaviour code which emphasises good behaviour around the school and in the yard.
- We discuss examples of positive behaviours at class level.
- Staff in our school believe strongly in the benefits of praise and encouragement and in the nurturing of trusting, respectful relationships with each child.

6.1.2 Role of teachers in striving for a workable, accessible, functioning, and effective policy

As a staff we strive to ensure that the Code of Behaviour is a workable, accessible, functioning, and effective policy that permeates all aspects of school life. We are therefore always trying to ensure that the Code of Behaviour is part of the general school narrative. In so doing, we aim to constantly review, renew, and improve our practices on the ground. The following are examples as to how we strive to achieve this:

- Discussions at staff meetings about how policy is working and how best it can be implemented.
- Croke Park hours dedicated to policy reviews including Code of Behaviour
- Class meetings that are focused on the Code of Behaviour
- Children are taught 'Our Golden Rules' in Junior Infants and revised up through the school
- Teachers will model the rules of respect, gentleness, listening, hard work, care of property and honesty in their communication with students and colleagues.
- Posters, signs around the school displaying the rules and expected behaviours will be created by teachers with children
- Each teacher is responsible for operating any in-class reward schemes which may be supportive to the students with fairness and in a way which will best teach the students how to respect everyone, be gentle, work hard, take care of property and be honest.
- Teachers will remain abreast of DES guidelines in relation to supporting students with behaviours of concern and will participate in opportunities to share best practice among staff.
- Teachers will engage with Revised Parental Complaints Procedure agreed with the

management bodies of schools and the INTO. (See section 6.3.1)

We believe that all staff should be aware of this Code of Behaviour, including Principal, teachers, secretarial staff, caretaker, and special needs assistants. Details of our Code of Behaviour are made available to all staff.

6.1.3 The SPHE curriculum as a mechanism to support the Code of Behaviour The school's SPHE curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour. Through this programme we aim to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. Through the teaching of SPHE we also aim to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship. Several different teaching methodologies are addressed including Circle Time and Co-operative Games.

6.2 Board of Management

'The Board of Management has a role to play in the maintenance of desirable standards of behaviour in a school. It should be supportive of the Principal Teacher in the application of a fair code of behaviour and discipline within the school' (Circular 20/90). In line with these, the Board of Management in St. Joseph's Junior National School shall:

- Assume overall responsibility for ensuring that the Code of Behaviour is prepared and revised in line with current legislation.
- Be briefed of any changes and revisions which may need to be addressed by the principal and/or the teacher representative.
- Assume responsibility for the ethos of the school and overall responsibility for policies. The Board will play an active role in exploring the kinds of relationships and behaviours that will reflect the school's responsibilities and ethos.
Ensure that all members of the school community have the opportunity to be involved in creating and making revisions to the school's Code of Behaviour. It will formally record the adoption of the code of behaviour, the commencement date and decisions about when the code will be reviewed.
- Assume responsibility for dealing with serious breaches of the code by meeting with all parties concerned. Several strategies may be developed arising from such meetings and these may include suspension and/or expulsion.
- Grants permission to the Principal to suspend a pupil for up to 3 days. Suspensions that are more than three days will require the intervention and backing of the Board.

6.3 Parents

'Evidence seems to indicate that schools which succeed in achieving and maintaining high standards of behaviour and discipline tend to be those with the best relationships with parents'. We in St. Joseph's N.S. pride ourselves on creating and maintaining positive relationships with our parents. We place an emphasis on supporting parents and helping them access the resources and supports that their children may need. We will always strive to ensure that when dealing with misbehaviours that parents are supported and understand the actions being taken. We will do this by:

- Making the code of behaviour available to all parents

- Discussing the code of behaviour at parent meetings each year
- Ensuring to the best of our ability that parents are aware of the school rules
- Parents and teachers will collaborate to monitor children's behavioural progress.

6.3.1 Procedures for parents for articulating concerns

Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have concerns. We strive to resolve issues based on the principle of the least amount of intervention. In line with this principle we ask that parents follow the following steps:

The school has adopted the Revised Parental Complaints Procedure agreed with the management bodies of schools and the INTO. It is designed to provide an open and clearly defined process to facilitate parents/legal guardians in raising concerns about their own child/children in an agreed, fair and transparent manner. A full copy of this document is published on the school website.

A brief synopsis of the stages in this procedure are outlined below

Stage 1 Discussion	Stage 2 Written	Stage 3 Board of Management	Stage 4 Decision
1.1 Parent/Guardian meets teacher (more than once if appropriate)	2.2 Written complaint sent to Chairperson	3.1 Chairperson makes a formal report to the board.	4.1 Written decision from Chairperson
1.2 Parent/Guardian meets Principal (more than once if appropriate}	2.2 Chairperson provides a copy to the teacher.	3.2 Complaint Concluded	4.2 Complaint concluded
1.3 Parent/guardian meets Chairperson of the Board of Management (more than once if appropriate}	2.3 Chairperson convenes meeting(s)	OR	
		3.3 Proceed to hearing	
Complaint may be resolved at this stage	Complaint may be resolved at this stage		

6.3.2 Parents and the Code of Behaviour

The Code of Behaviour is a legal requirement for each school. The Code of Behaviour is important as it provides a framework for creating a learning environment that is conducive to supporting the children and staffs' psychological, emotional, and physical well-being. It is of the utmost importance that staff members, parents and pupils alike are familiar with the Code of Behaviour (in an age appropriate way). It is equally important that all parties adhere to the

school's code of behaviour. It is against this backdrop the following should be noted:

- Every parent is made aware of our code of behaviour and agrees to accept it. Hard copies are available on request.

Please note that if a parent refuses to accept the school's code of behaviour, the school can refuse to enrol the child into the school.

6.3.3 Parents as supporting the code of behaviour

Parents support the school in the promotion of positive behaviour and the maintenance of high standards of behaviour in the following ways:

- They are aware of and cooperate with the school's expected behaviours
- Ensure children are at school on time
- Attend meetings at the school if requested
- Comply with the requests that are made of them (e.g. signing letters that are sent home, speaking to their child about his/her behaviour etc)
- Contribute to and support behaviour Support Plans if necessary

6.4 Pupils

Pupils in the school play an ongoing part in the implementation of this code in the following ways:

- Being a member of student committees
- Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on the Code of Behaviour through classroom discussions and by observing the rules in action in the class and on the yard.

7. Suspension procedures

It is stipulated in the Education Welfare Act, 2000, that a code of behaviour shall specify... 'the procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned' and 'the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student.'(Sections 23(2) c, d)

7.1 Suspension

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

- 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.

An Immediate Suspension will be deemed to be necessary where, after a preliminary investigation, the Principal reaches the determination that the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety and well-being of pupils or staff of the school.

An Automatic Suspension is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management, having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by Health & Safety Legislation, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur Automatic Suspension as a sanction:

- Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff/coaches/visitors to school.
- Acts of violence resulting in serious damage to school property.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension by telephone, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected. In no circumstance will a student be sent home from school prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will issue in due course, but no later than 2 school days after the imposition of the suspension.

Such a notification will detail:

- The duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
- The reasons for the suspension
- Any study programme to be followed.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- The provision of an appeal to the Board of Management
- The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (*Education Act 1998, section 29*)

Please note:

- A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

- The Board of Management has authorised the Principal to exclude a pupil from the school for a maximum initial period of three school days (Rule 130, Section 5, Rules for National Schools)
- Suspensions of longer than 3 consecutive days must be sanctioned by the Board

Before a suspension is considered all other means of dealing with the behaviour should have been tried. Parents should also have been aware that their child has been engaging in concerning behaviours from previous meetings. However certain misbehaviours such as seriously assaulting a teacher, SNA, or more violent misbehaviour may warrant an automatic suspension.

Procedures in respect of suspension:

The school will use a fair procedure when suspending any pupil. Once the assessment of the facts is deemed to confirm that the misbehaviour warrants suspension the school will observe the following procedures:

- The school informs the parents of the complaint, how it will be investigated and that it could result in suspension. Parents may be informed by phone or in writing.
- Incident records will be written up.
- Parents and students will be given an opportunity to respond
- In the case of an immediate suspension, an investigation occurs to establish the case.
- The formal investigation should then immediately follow the imposition of the suspension.
- All the conditions for the suspension apply to the immediate suspension. No suspension including an immediate suspension should be open ended.
- Parents will be notified, and arrangements made for the pupil to be collected in the case of an immediate suspension.

After the suspension ends:

- A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents about suspension.
- The school will have a plan to help the child re-integrate back to school.
- The student will have the opportunity and support for a fresh start.
- If the period of suspension is in excess of three days a special decision of the Board of Management is required (Rule 130, Section 5, Rules for National Schools) Parents may be given the opportunity to be heard by the Board before a decision is reached.
- The EWO is notified for any periods of suspensions that are in excess of three days.

8 Expulsion (permanent exclusion)

Under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, it is the right of a Board of Management to take ‘...such other reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school concerned and that the safety of students is secured.’ (Section 24(5))

Essentially this means that the Board of Management has the authority to expel a student from any setting within the school — this includes those who are in the special class setting as well as those in the mainstream of the school.

All actions taken regarding expulsion will adhere to the National Educational Welfare Board's guidelines for developing a Code of Behaviour.

As a matter of best practice, the authority to exclude a student permanently from the school will be reserved to the Board of Management and will not be delegated.

8.1 The ground for expulsion

Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour. Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that should only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student.

The proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as

- The student's behaviour has had a serious 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.

While these are similar to the grounds for suspension, factors such as persistence and seriousness of the behaviour as well as a belief the school has exhausted all possibilities for supporting the student to manage their behaviour will influence the decision of the Board to expel a student.

8.2 “Automatic” expulsion

While extremely unlikely to happen in a Junior School, The Board of Management may automatically expel a student for certain offences.

However, this decision does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures.

8.3 Expulsion for a first offence

The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the school code could include:

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

8.4 Procedures for expulsion

The following procedure will be followed in the case of an expulsion.

Step 1: A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the

Principal In investigating an allegation, in line with fair procedure, the principal will:

- Where appropriate, inform the student and their parents about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- Give parents and where appropriate, the student every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.

Parents will be informed in writing of the alleged misbehaviour and the proposed investigation in order to have a permanent record of having let them know. Parents and where appropriate, the pupil must have every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made about the veracity of the allegation, and before a sanction is imposed. Where expulsion may result from an investigation, a meeting with the student's parents and where appropriate the student is essential.

If parents and where appropriate, the pupil fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the situation, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour. The school will record the invitations made to parents and their response.

Step 2: A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal

Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal will make a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The Principal will:

- Inform the parents and where appropriate, the student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- Ensure that parents have records of the allegations against the student, the investigation, and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- Provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parents.
- Notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing.
- Advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management.
- Ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

Step 3: Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of the hearing

It is the responsibility of the Board to review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. The Board should undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It should ensure that no party who has any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberation (for example, a member of the Board who may have made an allegation about the student).

Where the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it must hold a hearing. The Board meeting for the purpose of the hearing should be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures. At the hearing, the Principal and the parents, or a student aged eighteen or over, put their case to the Board in each other's presence. Each party should be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. The meeting may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction. In the conduct of the hearing, the Board must take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be, impartial as between the Principal and the student. Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board should facilitate this, in line with good practice and Board procedures.

After both sides have been heard, the Board should ensure that the Principal and parents are not present for the Board's deliberations.

Step 4: Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing

Having heard from all the parties, it is the responsibility of the Board to decide whether or not the allegation is sustained and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion, and the reason for this opinion. (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 24 (1) the Board of Management should refer to the National Welfare Board reporting procedures for proposed expulsions. The student cannot be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO receives this notification (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 24 (1)).

An appeal against an expulsion under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will automatically succeed if it is shown that the Educational Welfare Officer was not notified in accordance with Section 24 (1) or that twenty days did not elapse from the time of notification to the Educational Welfare Officer to the implementation of expulsion (Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007, S4A).

The Board should inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. Where expulsion is proposed, the parents should be told that the Board of Management will now inform the Educational Welfare Officer.

Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

Within twenty days of receipt of a notification from a Board of Management of its opinion that a student should be expelled, the Educational Welfare Officer must:

- Make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents and the student and anyone else who may be of assistance.
- Convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend (Educational (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 24).

The purpose of the consultations and the meeting is to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education. These consultations may result in an agreement about an alternative intervention that would avoid expulsion. However, where the possibility of continuing in the school is not an option, at least in the short term, the consultation should focus on alternative educational possibilities.

In the interests of the educational welfare of the student, those concerned should come together with the Educational Welfare Officer to plan for the student's future education.

Pending these consultations about the student's continued education, the Board of Management may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that safety of students is secured (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 25(5)). The Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time. Expulsion should only be considered where there is a likelihood that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other students or staff.

Step 6: Confirmation of the decision to appeal

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management would formally confirm the decision to expel (this task may be delegated to the Chairperson and the Principal). Parents should be notified immediately and the expulsion will now proceed. Parents and the student should be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record should be made of the decision to expel the student.

9 Appeals

Parents / Guardians may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education Science, under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998. An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a student.

The appeals process under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998* begins with the provision of mediation by a mediator nominated by the Appeals Committee (*Department of Education and Science*). For further details about the Appeals process, including requirements for documentation, and the steps in the process, refer to current DES guidance.

10. Keeping records

10.1 Classroom behaviours

- If there is a student who has a record denoting that he/she engages in repeated serious misbehaviour and has a support plan, the reports and plan will be shared with the child's new teacher. These actions are to enable the child's new teacher to put supports in place for the child in question.
- A record of all serious misbehaviours and sanctions will be kept and where necessary will be recorded in the Board of Management minutes in an appropriate manner.

10.2 Yard behaviours

- Behaviour not meeting the expected standards on yard will be reported to the class teacher.
- If deemed a serious misbehaviour the sanctions outlined in section 4 will apply.

11. Reference to other policies/ documents

This Code of Behaviour should be read in conjunction with the school's

- SPHE plan
- Anti-bullying policy
- Enrolment policy
- Admissions policy
- HSCL policy
- Health & Safety and Risk Assessment Policy
- Dignity at work policy
- Special Educational Needs policy.
- Child protection policy

Documents which have informed and guided the development of this code of behaviour are: Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (NEWB 2008); Understanding Behaviours of Concern and Responding to Crisis Situations Guidelines for Schools in Supporting Students (DES 2025); NCSE Relate A Regulation-First Approach to Reframing Behaviour and Supporting Student Engagement and Participation (NCSE 2025); Many further publications and programmes were consulted notably Incredible Years Programme, PAX programme, Nurturing Schools, Bì Cineálta, Wellbeing Framework, How does your engine run? BUSS programme.

Ratification & Communication

The Board of Management officially ratified this policy on 12/5/26.

Signed : Bernie mh

Date : 12/5/26

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed : Bridget Clew

Date : 12/5/2026

Principal

Modification Clause:

The management and authorities of St. Joseph's N.S. reserve the right to modify details of this code of conduct at short notice. Such modification may be needed in an ever - changing environment and social context.