

## **Code of Behaviour and Discipline Policy**

The Board acknowledges that the primary responsibility for the behaviour of pupils rests with parents and appreciates the important role which parents play in supporting good standards of behaviour in school. Parents can co-operate with the school by encouraging pupils to abide by school rules and by visiting the school to discuss incidents of pupil misbehaviour when requested to do so by the Principal or class teachers.

The school endeavours to ensure that the individuality of each child attending the school is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption-free, safe environment.

The over-riding emphasis of the code is the encouragement of positive behaviour in children and the cultivation of mutual respect and tolerance. In the interests of good order and safety it is most important that clearly defined guidelines for behaviour be known and understood by all of our pupils and that pupils see parents and teachers engaged in a co-operative enterprise on their behalf.

In school pupils have to learn to live with crowds, to share adult attention and to accept the authority of teachers who act “in loco parentis”. Pupils who find it difficult to accept classroom conditions or who do not develop self-control are said to present the school with discipline problems.

The aims of Primary Education may briefly be stated as follows:

- 1.To enable the child to live a full life as a child.
- 2.To equip the child to avail himself/herself of further education so that he/she may go on to live a full and useful life as an adult in society.

The school is committed to the realization of these goals and endeavours to create a stimulating and happy environment for all our pupils in which there is good order and a reasonable approach to discipline.

The aims of this code are:

- To help create a positive learning environment in which all pupils benefit from the educational services provided by the school.
- To help pupils to become self-disciplined and to encourage good standards of behaviour.
- To help organise large groups so that the school can operate smoothly and safely for the benefit of all.
- To develop respect for fellow pupils, adults, the school, its equipment and environment.
- To help to appreciate the differences that exist between pupils and to learn to tolerate these differences.

Pupils are expected to behave in a responsible manner towards themselves and others, showing consideration, courtesy and respect for other pupils and adults.

The property of the individual and of the school must be respected.

Pupils are expected to uphold school standards with regard to dress and language.

#### The School Code of Discipline and Behaviour Covers:

- 1.The classroom.
- 2.The playground.
- 3.The school environment.
- 4.Activities away from the school premise.

#### Behaviour in Class:

Courtesy and respect are fundamental requirements in the classroom. Disrespectful behaviour towards other pupils or towards a teacher e.g. defiance, cheek, insolence or disobedience cannot be tolerated.

Behaviour problems are to some extent situation specific and because of this teachers and parents do not always “see” the same child.

Pupils must respect the right of other pupils to learn. Discipline is a matter for every pupil. A minority of disruptive pupils can adversely affect the educational progress of an entire class. Any behaviour that interferes with

this right e.g. constant disruption of the class or persistent distracting of others is considered unacceptable behaviour. In order that pupils may derive benefit from the work in class, full co-operation is required from pupils at all times. Pupils must co-operate with instructions given by the teacher.

Pupils must remain seated in the classroom when the teachers are absent and during recreation periods on days when outdoor play is not possible.

#### Behaviour in the Playground:

Any behaviour which endangers oneself or others is not permitted. Rough behaviour e.g. fighting, kicking, spitting, pushing, shoving and running is forbidden.

Pupils may not leave the playground for any reason during breaks without the expressed permission of the supervising teacher. This includes re-entering the school building.

#### Behaviour in the School Environment:

- Respect for others is a basic rule.
- Verbal or physical abuse of other pupils is strictly forbidden.
- Bullying or intimidation of other pupils will not be tolerated and is always regarded as a serious matter.
- Pupils must show respect for school property.
- Pupils must walk quietly and in an orderly manner in corridors.
- Chewing gum is forbidden as it can be unhygienic and adheres to floors and school furniture.
- Pupils are expected to follow the instructions of the Traffic Warden and to queue on the footpath in an orderly and safe manner while awaiting the signal to cross.

#### Attendance at School:

Pupils are required to attend school regularly and to be in time for school each day. St. Marnock's School opens to receive pupils at 8.45a.m.. Arrival in class after 9a.m. can be disruptive. When a child is absent from school during part of a school day, or for a school day or more than a school day,

the parents must notify the principal in writing of the reasons for the child's absence. In the case of a pupil being absent for part of a school day the parents must write an explanatory note which must be presented on the day the partial absence occurs. In the case of a pupil being absent for a school day or more than a school day the written explanation must be presented on the day the child returns to school following the absence. Homework journals are not to be used for this purpose as written explanations have to be retained in the school in accordance with Section 21 of the Education Welfare Act.

#### School-related Activities off the School Premises:

Children taking part in school-related activities off the school premises, such as educational outings and sports events, are required to act responsibly, to listen to and obey the instructions of teachers, supervisors and guides, to be courteous to others and to respect property.

#### Homework:

It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis.

All homework must be done promptly and completely. Parents should sign the Homework Journal to confirm that all homework has been completed. Homework may include memorization, written assignments or other tasks.

If for some reason homework, or any part of it, cannot be completed parents are asked to note this in the Homework Journal.

Written homework must be done neatly and carefully. Graffiti on textbooks and copybooks is discouraged.

#### Praise and Rewards:

Encouraging high standards of behaviour among pupils and creating and maintaining an orderly atmosphere for learning in the school will include the use of praise and rewards for good behaviour. It will entail matching the curriculum to the aptitudes of the pupils, the use of effective techniques for motivating pupils and the promotion of sound relationships between pupils and teachers.

It will also involve, in some instances, the application of sanctions to register disapproval of unacceptable behaviour. When sanctions are involved pupils should understand that what they have done is not acceptable and that it is the misbehaviour that is rejected and not the person.

Misbehaviour in Junior Classes is normally overcome by a verbal reprimand or by referring the matter to parents.

The following strategies may be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour. The strategy/strategies to be used in any given situation will be determined by the seriousness of the misbehaviour.

- ***Reasoning with the pupil.***
- ***Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)***
- ***Temporary separation from peers, friends or others.***
- ***Prescribing additional work (especially at week-ends).***
- ***Referral to Principal.***
- ***Communication with parents.***
- ***Detention during a break or after school hours.***
- ***Loss of privileges e.g. school outings.***
- ***Suspension.***

Before resorting to serious sanctions e.g. detention, or, suspension, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Where it is proposed to detain a pupil after school hours, the parents, or, guardians will be notified of this. Communication with parents will be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension will be considered. Communication with parents will be verbal or by letter, depending on circumstances. The parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a pupil, or, teacher will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents

will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may have to be suspended for a period. Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130 – 5 (Amended as per Circular 7/88) of the Rules for National Schools.

In the case of gross misbehaviour the Board shall authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with Rule 130 –6 (Amended as per Circular 7/88). Before expelling a pupil the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

Arrangements will be made for an emotionally disturbed child to be referred for assessment by a NEPS psychologist. Help may also be sought from support services within the wider community e.g. Community Care Services provided by Health Boards.

Parents are requested to:

- Become familiar with the school's policy document in relation to discipline.
- Co-operate with the school with regard to the implementation of its policy on discipline.
- Communicate regularly with the school about factors likely to affect the behaviour of their children in school.

This Code is subject to revision at intervals.

The Board of Management wishes to thank you for your co-operation and to enlist your continued support in ensuring that pupils attending St. Marnock's School will benefit from the excellent educational service provided by the school in a stimulating, happy and safe environment.