



St. Macartan's NS

Code of Discipline

Aims:

- In devising the code, consideration has to be given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. The aim is to create an ordered and orderly environment in which pupils can, through developing self-discipline, feel secure and make progress in all aspects of their development
- Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school

Principles:

- The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to tolerate these differences
- The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.
- Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school.
- Every effort will be made to ensure that the code of discipline is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner

Related School policies:

- Health and Safety
- Child Protection
- Anti-Bullying
- Enrolment

School Rules

Our School Rules are based on three simple principles:

- Everybody is safe!
- Everybody learns!
- Everybody is happy!

Our General rules for school time are:

- Obey and Respect All Staff
- Be Safe
- Stay in the yard
- Be nice and mannerly
- Let everyone enjoy break
- Line up stand and quietly
- Don't litter.

Furthermore our general classroom rules are:

- Be prepared for class
- Be neat
- Do all homework



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Each class teacher will draft and display a list of class rules within the scope of the rules above. Class rules will be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Where possible they emphasise positive behaviour. Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference.

Bullying:

"Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, which should not be condoned, can scarcely be described as bullying. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing it is bullying" (Department of Education, 1993 and adopted by the High Court of Ireland, 2004)

This school does not and will not tolerate bullying, and our Anti-Bullying Policy forms part of this document.

Homework:

It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis. Parents are strongly advised to take an active interest in their child's homework and to sign their homework journal each night (ensuring that it is done).

Good behaviour will be rewarded by one or a combination of the following:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book
- A visit to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation.
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- A system of merit marks
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication

Unacceptable Behaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher, or the supervising teacher at break-times. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour parents may be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of minor misbehaviour include (but are not limited to):

- Not wearing appropriate uniform; bringing in chewing-gum
- Not following instructions
- Not completing homework

Examples of serious misbehaviour include (but are not limited to):

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including verbally abusing staff bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or deliberate physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft



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- Bringing dangerous equipment to school
- Leaving school/school activities without permission.

Examples of gross misbehaviour include (but are not limited to):

- Assault on a teacher or pupil
- Serious Theft
- Serious Damage to property
- Serious bullying
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes

Sanctions

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour
- signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
- keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. Teachers may modify these sanctions to ensure that they are age-appropriate for their class. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupil devise strategies for this.

1. Reasoning with pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
3. Temporary separation from peers within class or on yard and/or temporary removal to another class
4. Prescribing extra work
5. Loss of privileges or rewards
6. Supervised Detention during break
7. Referral to Principal
8. Communication with parents
9. Principal communicating with parents
10. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).

Exclusion

In the event exclusion (suspension or expulsion) is required, the school will follow fair procedures based on the principles of natural justice

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend or expel a student. The requirement for fair procedures derives from the Constitution of Ireland, international Conventions and case law.

Fair procedures have two essential parts:

- the right to be heard
- the right to impartiality.



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Suspension

The Board of Management of a recognised school has the authority to suspend a student. It should be noted that in ratifying this policy, the Board of Management of St. Macartan's NS formally delegates authority to the school principal to suspend a child for a maximum of three consecutive school days, or for a maximum of five days if a Board of Management meeting is required to consider the issue and/or apply further sanctions.

In the event that Suspension is required the Board of Management adopts fully the procedures outlined in Chapter 11 (Pages 70-78) of "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools" published in 2008 by National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) and that chapter (Appendix A) forms part of this policy. For those reading this online it is available here:

http://www.newb.ie/downloads/pdf/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf

Below is an outline of the procedures which will be followed:

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds, for example when:

- 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.

A single incident of gross misbehaviour may be grounds for suspension.

In normal circumstances, if it appears suspension will be required, the following steps will be taken:

- The child and parents/guardians will be informed that an investigation is taking place into an incident(s), the preliminary details of which will be outlined, which could lead to suspension. The parents/guardians will be invited to come to the school to discuss the issue. Refusal by Parents/Guardians to attend a meeting in the school does not impinge upon the Board of Management's right to suspend.
- If the investigation is not complete before first meeting with Parents/Guardians, they may be given an opportunity to respond at its conclusion.
- If the investigation concludes that suspension is justified, the Parents/Guardians will be notified in writing of the dates of suspension, appeal procedures and arrangements for returning to school and any commitments to be entered into by the student and Parents/Guardians upon that return.
- Parents/Guardians have the right to appeal a decision to suspend made by the principal to the Board of Management, and the suspension will be postponed pending the outcome of the appeal, except in the case of immediate suspension as outlined below.
- Parents/Guardians have the right to appeal a Board of Management decision to suspend to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches **twenty days**.

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person.

In this instance the Parents/Guardians will be required to collect the child before the full investigation is complete, but otherwise the procedures above apply.

Expulsion

The Board of Management of a recognised school has the authority to expel a student

In the event that Expulsion is required the Board of Management adopts fully the procedures outlined in Chapter 12 (Pages 79-87) of "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools" published in



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2008 by National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) and that chapter (Appendix B) forms part of this policy. For those reading this online it is available here:
http://www.newb.ie/downloads/pdf/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf

Ratification and communication

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Macartan's NS on 17th June 2013 and comes into immediate effect.

It will be reviewed on or before June 2016.

It will be distributed to all staff, published on the school website, www.stmacartans.ie, in the *Parents*→*Policies* section, will be given to prospective Parents/Guardians with the enrolment form, and is available in hard copy to existing Parents/Guardians on request.

Signed: Very Rev. Canon Ramon Munster
(Chairperson)

Date: 17/06/2013