

ST. SENAN’S N.S.

**CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

**Relationship of Code of Behaviour to School Mission/Ethos Statement**

St. Senan’s National School is a Catholic school situated in Shannon Parish. We are a warm, welcoming school who works in partnership with the community to ensure the best possible experience and outcomes for each of our pupils. The school community strives to provide a warm, caring and safe environment. We take each child from where he/she is so they can develop to their full potential and grow in the knowledge that they are valued. We aim to promote positive learning experiences, knowledge and training for each child.

Our school places strong emphasis on the need to give our children every possible opportunity to develop patterns of good behaviour. We respect that the individuality and needs of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of every child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.  The spirit of teamwork and collegiality is central to developing such an environment and to leading our children and staff towards a healthy sense of self-worth and self-discipline.

The purpose of this policy is to promote positive student behaviour through promoting and acknowledging positive school behaviour which allows the school to function in an orderly and harmonious way.

**AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THE CODE**

The aims and objectives of the code are:

* To promote and acknowledge positive behaviour.
* To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
* To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
* To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
* To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community
* To assist school staff, 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
* To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

**INTRODUCTION**

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of St. Senan’s NS School has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for its Pupils, Staff and Parents.

The Code of Behaviour details:

1. The standards of behaviour that are encouraged from each pupil attending the school;
2. The whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour;
3. Positive strategies used in the school;
4. The measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards;
5. The procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
6. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil
7. The school’s Anti-Bullying Policy
8. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child’s absence from school.

The Code of Behaviour of St. Senan’s NS has been developed in accordance with *‘Developing a Code of* *Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools’, National Educational Welfare Board, 2008*.

**POLICY FORMULATION**

In formulating this policy, the Board of Management completed the following steps;

1. Parents and Staff were informed that an initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was available and they were invited to make submissions on the content of the code within a specified timeframe.
2. Class teachers were requested to discuss the topic of ‘rules’ with their classes.
3. The initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was reviewed and where appropriate amended in-line with the feedback received.
4. The finalised draft of the policy was submitted for the Patron’s Approval.

**WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH**

The elements of our whole school approach to behaviour include

* Harmony between the schools Code of Behaviour and the ethos, policies and practices on the ground
* Teamwork approach to maintaining good discipline
* Agreed procedures for curriculum and classroom management
* Regular review of the school’s behaviour policy

The Board of Management, Principal, Teachers, Special Needs Assistants, other school staff, parents and pupils have responsibilities at different levels for behaviour in the school.

The Board of Management will provide opportunities for staff to formulate their approach to the effective implementation of the school’s Code of Behaviour. Time will be allocated at staff meetings to consider behaviour and issues pertaining to same.

The future drafting of school plans or policies will consider this code in light of how they will impact on student behaviour.

**The principal teacher shall provide the parents of new entrants with a copy of the school’s Code of Behaviour.  Parents are required to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour provided is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child.**

**Staff**

Each class teacher is responsible for the maintenance of behaviour in his/her own classroom. Through a structured agenda of staff meetings throughout the year staff will have the opportunity to voice their concerns and to share strategies and approaches towards maintaining effective discipline. Programmes of work to meet the educational needs of each class are prepared by all teachers. Every effort is made by the school team, through active engagement in the School Development Planning process, to ensure continuity from class to class. Supports are in place to minimise disruption to classes and to assist the class teacher in the smooth running of the class .i.e. SNA support, Support teachers.

Special Needs Assistants (SNA) work under the direction of the class teacher. The SNA will bring misbehaviour to the notice of the class teacher who will deal with it in line with the procedures of this policy.

Staff members are encouraged to participate in programmes and lectures, run by the local Education Centre, that will support them in the day-to-day maintenance of good behaviour.

The school’s SPHE curriculum and Wellbeing committee supports our code of behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting with and behaving towards others. Throughout the course of the year lessons to deal with specific areas such as bullying or conflict resolution are taught. The SPHE programme also aims to foster self-esteem and to help accommodate differences and to develop citizenship.

**Board of Management**

The Board of Management of St. Senan’s National School facilitates the development and implementation of this code of behaviour. It sees good behaviour as the cornerstone of school life. Board meetings are held on a bi-monthly basis. Our code of behaviour is updated annually or more frequently if necessary. The board fully supports the implementation of the code. It encourages staff participation in training programmes that support the promotion of positive behaviour.

Serious breaches of behaviour are brought before the board where all interventions outlined below are exhausted. Due process is adhered to in order to ensure that

day-to-day good behaviour is not compromised.

**Parents**

In the development of our code of behaviour parents are consulted on an ongoing basis. An audit was conducted with parents and a representative group was invited to contribute to the process.

A copy of the code is given to all parents of new entrants. Parents are required to sign the code.

Parents are requested to sign each child’s homework journal on a daily basis. This follows successful completion of all homework set by the class teacher. Parents are responsible for ensuring that all homework is completed correctly and in compliance with the school’s Homework policy statement.  Inappropriate behaviour is recorded in the child’s journal and through class dojo.  Where problems persist the class teacher telephones parents. When necessary parents are requested to attend meetings to discuss their own child’s behaviour. The school recognises the support and cooperation of our parents in the successful implementation of our policy.

St. Senan’s N.S. operates ‘Class Dojo’ and ‘Aladdin text-a-parent’, through which parents are immediately informed of poor behaviour and lack of adherence to school rules.

**Pupils**

Pupils have a role in the implementation of our code of behaviour. They have an active role in developing the class rules. Assemblies are held throughout the year wherein good behaviour is recognised and rewarded. Children are encouraged and thought to understand their feelings and take responsibility for their behaviour. Children are encouraged and viewed as role models to other pupils and the wider school community.

**PUPILS WITH SPECIAL/BEHAVIOURAL/EMOTIONAL NEEDS**

Pupils with special needs will be required to follow the school’s ‘Code of Behaviour’ but teachers will use their professional judgment in the application of the Code.

Teaching children with SEN the rules and helping them understand behaviour and its consequences will be the focus of the teacher’s work. Parents of these children will be kept informed of their child’s behaviour on a regular basis and may be requested to work with the school in devising effective strategies to help the child to improve his behaviour.

This may involve working and co-operating with a Special Needs Assistant (SNA), if an SNA is deployed to assist a pupil/class and/or agreeing a behaviour plan. Support services such as NEPS, the SENO and the SESS may be involved in this context.

**STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR**

We expect the pupils to behave in accordance with the code of Behaviour of St. Senan’s N.S. in all school activities as specified clearly below in this policy.

**Any form of bullying will not be tolerated and will be dealt with immediately and effectively by the school.**

**General Behaviour.** Each pupil is expected to:

**All children are expected**:

* To be well behaved and to show respect and consideration for other children and adults. (*Students must never behave in a way that endangers the health or the safety of any person in the school*)
* To show respect for the property of the school and for the property and belongings of others
* To attend school regularly and to be punctual at all times
* To stay on school premises at all times during school hours unless a parent/guardian has given written consent to do otherwise
* To participate fully in class
* To try their best at all times

**Whole-school Rules  (Expected Behaviours)**

* Working hard and doing one’s best
* Wear school uniform at all times (unless otherwise directed)

- Respect for teachers, staff and other students

* Take responsibility for oneself
* School journal to be signed on a daily basis
* Listen carefully
* Display good manners at all times
* Respect for Property
* Time keeping
* Regular Attendance
* Walk in Corridor and when inside the school
* Stay in seat
* Involvement in extra-curricular activities
* Respect visitors to school (greeting visitors etc)
* Each class teacher will formulate class rules with the class at the beginning of the school year.

**Classroom**

* We will listen to each other
* We will tidy up after ourselves
* We will stay in our seats
* We will put up our hands to get teacher’s attention or to speak
* We will respect school property
* We will always try our best
* We will actively participate in all class activities and take turn

# TRANSITIONS WITHIN SCHOOL

* Students line up in their classrooms
* Students walk in the líne at all times
* Students walk to the exit door on the left side quietly
* Students return to class walking quietly on the left side
* Students do not pass out other students in the line

#### **Yard Rules**

The open space that we have in our school facilitates the allocation of specific play areas. This means that children can play freely and in an uninterrupted manner. A rota for supervision is posted in the staffroom. Our three SNAs are present in the yard at all times.

Throughout the winter / early spring children play in concrete area. When suitable children play in green areas. Supervision responsibilities are adjusted accordingly.

On exceptionally rainy or cold days children stay in their classroom and are supervised by the teacher on duty and the SNAs

Yard Rules

* We will play in our class play area/zone
* We will ask permission to re-enter the school
* We will play fairly
* We will share equipment
* When we hear the bell, we will walk to the line
* We will wait in our line for our turn to go back to class
* We will walk back to class ready for work

**School Outings**

When children from St. Senan’s N.S. are on school outings there is a clear expectation on the part of all staff members and parents that they represent themselves and their school with pride. General school rules apply specifically:

* Respect for teachers, staff and other students
* Respect for personnel working in visited sites (eg. Tour destinations, swimming pool)
* Taking responsibility for oneself
* Listening
* Manners
* Respect for Property
* Time keeping
* Walking in an orderly manner when required
* Staying in seat (bus / train)

**Uniform**

* The school uniform is to be worn in school and on designated school based activities.
* Jewellery is limited for health and safety reasons to the wearing of a pair of stud earrings and a watch.

**STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**

* Discrete time in SPHE to discuss Code of Behaviour
* Verbal praise, positive comments to parents
* Rewards for example treats, stickers, etc
* Good school and class routines
* Clear boundaries and rules for students
* Dina in the Classroom for Junior to Second classes
* Positive feedback about their behaviour, note home in journal
* Parents support the school by encouraging good learning behaviour
* Develop good relationships between teachers, parents and students to promote a happy atmosphere in school
* Adults model the behaviour that is expected from students
* Use of “Incredible Years” positive strategies

**School Staff ~ Promotion of Positive Behaviour**

Promoting good behaviour is the primary goal of this code. Children for the most part are well behaved and meet the expectations of this code.

Staff recognise the importance of rewarding good behaviour and of recognising the serious efforts children make to improve. Each class teacher operates a rewards system in their individual classes. SNA’s, under the direction of class teacher, support the promotion of positive behaviour.

Clear and structured timetables are in place to facilitate the movement from class to class. All such timetables are coordinated at the start of the school year and are closely monitored throughout.

All staff members promote and encourage positive behaviour through:

**Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour**

* A quiet word or gesture to show approval
* A visit to another member of staff or to the principal for commendation
* Rewards for positive behaviour
* A mention to parent, written or verbal communication
* SMART targets for students with SEN (computer time, cookery etc)
* Behavioural targets documented in individual Student Support Plans
* Good behaviour of individual children or groups is recognised at assembly
* Golden Time for full class group
* Cartaí Glasa

**Supportive interventions.** Listed here are some level 1 supportive actions:

* Classroom based interventions eg class meetings with the option of informal consultation with e.g. parents/guardians, staff members, principal
* Discussion of behaviour with the child
* Informal notes regarding incident/intervention/date. This information would be useful should a problem persist.
* Behaviour plan/ Behaviour contract
* Peer support/mentoring for staff
* Members of staff , working as a team, can support the classroom teacher:
* Analysing possible reasons for a student’s poor behaviour.
* Helping to devise possible ways to change the behaviour.
* Use of “Incredible Years” positive intervention strategies for target groups
* Developing a Continuum of Behavioural support.

## **COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS**

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child’s life (in the past or present), which may affect the child’s behaviour.

The following methods of communication are to be used within the school:

* Informal/formal parent/teacher meetings
* homework journal
* Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
* School notice board
* Newsletters/school web-site/e-mails
* TextaParent service. / phone call

**PARENTS /GUARDIANS**

Parents are expected to:

* Ensure their children attend school and are punctual
* Equip pupils with appropriate school materials, books and full uniform
* Be courteous towards pupils and staff
* Make an appointment to meet with a teacher/the Principal through the office
* Respect school property and encourage their children to do the same
* Label pupils' coats and other personal property.

As the Board of Management is responsible for the Health & Safety of all staff and students, parents are requested not to approach or reprimand another person’s child on the school premises.

NOTIFICATION OF A CHILD’S ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should adhere to the following procedures when notifying the school of a pupil’s absence;

* The school should be notified of the absence on the first day the pupil returns to school
* The reason for the absence should be notified to the class teacher
* The absence should be notified in writing by **doctors’** ***letter or using the school journal***
* Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided
* Significant absences cause by ill health (i.e. absences longer than 10 school days) should be certified.

The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer in **writing where a child is suspended or** **expelled for 6 days or more, where the child has missed 20 or more days** in a school year, where attendance is irregular and when the pupil is removed from the school register

RECORDS

A standardised record system will be used to track an individual pupil’s Behaviour in order to provide additional support and care for children should patterns of behaviours appear and need additional support from school staff and supportive agencies. Such records will contain;

* Incidents of misbehaviour,
* interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
* Evidence of improved behaviour
* Any sanctions imposed, and the reasons they were imposed

Pupils will be told when a record is being made about their behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained.All records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003.

**INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR**

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. The Code also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed.

| Level | Supportive Interventions | Disciplinary Actions |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Level 1: Behaviours***  Level 1 behaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and common areas. Students learn through their mistakes.  To this extent, responses to the daily behaviours, which occur in school, will be developmentally appropriate, instructive and positive. Children will be taught what is expected and how they should behave.  Listed below are some examples of the types of Behaviour that are included in Level 1.  Please note the list is not exhaustive.   * Failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers including non completion of homework * Running in the hallways * Disturbing the work or play of others. Interfering with others (work, property or person) * Disrespectful language, tone, or manner * Ignoring staff requests * Disruption of class. Interruption of the smooth flow of the work of the classroom. * Name calling * Undermining another’s self-esteem (through comments or behaviour) * Misbehaving in line. Not standing quietly in line in the yard after the bell rings. * Chewing gum and littering | * Classroom-based interventions, class meetings, with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members) * Discussion of behaviour with the child * Informal notes regarding incident/intervention/date.  This information would be useful should a problem persist. * Behaviour plan / contract -providing the child with the opportunity to devise their own plan with support which will contain short, attainable targets. | Consequences for Level 1 behaviour are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Teachers will discipline students at level 1.  **Specific in class sanctions**   * Verbal reprimand * Apology * Time out in class. * Time out in another class- SET teacher, SNA break * Loss of privileges * Repeated behaviours, level 2 rules may apply.   **Specific on yard sanctions**   * Verbal reprimand. * Apology * Time Out– sin bin (refusal- go to level 2). * Repeated breaches-level 2 rules apply. * Should behaviour persist the parents will be informed and the pupil may be sent home. |
| ***Level 2: Behaviours***  Level 2 behaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and well being of the students and staff.  Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 2.  Please note the list is not exhaustive.   * Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention * Behaviour which is dangerous to self or others (e.g. shoving, pushing, hitting, fighting) * Intentionally damaging school or personal property * Bullying * Stealing * Cheating * Use of profanity * Derogatory reference to another person (under the nine grounds of discrimination) see appendix 1 * Disrespectful language or behaviour toward another person * Possession or use of dangerous toys or sporting equipment (e.g. Halloween Bangers, any kind of knives, etc.) * Leaving the classroom without permission * Using mobile phone in school (except for medical interventions) | * Care Team to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Assistant Principal or Principal. * Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education. * Referral of a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent). * Behaviour Plan / Contract | The disciplining of students for Level 2 behaviour is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour and developmentally appropriate levels.  Some examples of Level 2 responses are:   * In school supervised detention. Loss of privileges. * Meeting with a phone call and note to parent(s)/guardian(s) * Suspension from school of one to three days, depending on the severity of the Behaviour * Implementation of a Behaviour management plan * Parents informed by phone call or note of recorded incidents related to behaviour.   (a)Phone call to parent-recorded on Aladdin  (b)Parent called in by Class teacher/Principal -recorded on Aladdin  (c)Parent called in by Principal-one to three day suspension   * Report submitted to the Board of Management * Confiscation of mobile phone and parent contacted to collect phone * If a child curses at a member of staff the parent will be contacted by note or phone call. * If this behaviour persists then suspension for one to five days depending on the severity of the behaviour will apply. |
| ***Level 3: Behaviours***  Level 3 behaviours are considered the most serious violations.  These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal well being of the pupils and staff of the school.  They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment.  Situations of a serious nature may result in contact with the Garda Síochána.  Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 3.  Please note that the list is not exhaustive.   * Intentional and directed physical or verbal abuse of staff/pupil * Leaving the school * Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention * Bringing to school any article or item which could be a source of physical or moral danger * Intentional possession or use of weapons. * Violent fighting or intentionally causing physical harm to others * Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving the nine grounds of discrimination. * Serious damage to property * Immodest/inappropriate behaviour. | * Care Team to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Assistant Principal or Principal. * Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education. * Referral of a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent). * Behaviour Plan / Contract | ***Level 3: Disciplinary Actions***  Behaviour at Level 3 will result in suspension from school. The length of the suspension will depend  upon the severity and frequency of the specific Behaviour.  Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension is contained in this document.   * **Suspension from school for one to three days:**   This response will occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour. The Principal following due process and procedure, will issue a suspension (as per NEWB Guidelines). Parents will be notified of the decision to suspend initially by phone and then in writing. An appointment involving relevant parties will be made at a time convenient to all parties.   * **Suspension from school for three to ten days:**   This response will occur with the repeated incidence of Level 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this Behaviour.  A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management (following NEWB Guidelines).   * Reported to NEWB as absenteeism * **Expulsion:**   + Incidents of Level 3 behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled (as per NEWB Guidelines). |

* Detention: Detention will consist of 1 lunch time being spent supervised by a member of staff inside the school.

**STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR**

* Problem Solving Approach
* Process-Teacher, Principal, Parents, BOM, Other Agencies
* Use of SPHE; RSE, Stay Safe and Walk Tall programmes to promote children’s self –esteem and provide coping skills.
* Sanctions are applied in a respectful manner with the emphasis on helping children to understand the consequences of their behaviour and take responsibility for the behaviour.
* Sanctions are used as consistently as possible by all teachers. When teachers are in doubt as to the appropriateness of a sanction, they will consult with colleagues and the principal.
* Sanctions are proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the behaviour.
* Teachers will investigate incidents of misbehaviour to clarify factors such as intent, provocation, the child’s understanding of the misbehaviour and its consequences, particular context factors such as emotional state of the child in order to apply the sanction proportionately.

**Involvement of Parents/Guardians**

We expect that Parents/Guardians on their child’s enrolment take, read and agree to support the school’s Code of Behaviour, by signing. This is specifically indicated on the Enrolment Form.

Parents/Guardians are provided with a copy of the school’s code of behaviour on their child’s enrolment and periodically updated when deemed necessary.

The School’s Code of Behaviour is also available to parents/guardians by prior arrangement.

**Staff**

It is the role of all staff members to ensure that this code of behaviour is implemented and followed at all times. All members of staff have a key role in ensuring adherence to the code.

**PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

**Suspension**

***Definition of Suspension:***

*‘Requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days’*

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

***Authority to Suspend:***

The Board of Management of *St. Senan’s NS* has formally and in writing delegated the authority to impose an ‘Immediate Suspension’ to the Principal Teacher. An ‘Immediate Suspension’ may be for a period of **one to three** school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will **not exceed 5** school days.

Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally and in writing delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an ‘Automatic Suspension’ for named behaviours detailed in this policy. An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of **one to three** school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will **not exceed 5** school days.

The Board retains its authority to suspend a student in all other cases/circumstances.

***Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension***

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 wellbeing of pupils or staff of the school. An ‘Immediate Suspension’ may be for a period of **one to three** school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will **not exceed 5** school days.

An ‘Automatic Suspension’ is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of *St. Senan’s s NS* 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

or

* Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of **one to three** school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will **not exceed 5** school days.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) where possible 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
* the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be completed **no later than 2 school days** after the incident the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss;

* the circumstances surrounding the suspension,
* interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.

The Board of Management of St. Senan’s NS acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given;

1. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.
2. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
3. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

**Other Forms of Suspension**

Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension and the school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. Suspension can provide a respite for staff and the pupil, give the pupil time to reflect on the link between their action and its consequences and give staff time to plan ways of helping the pupil to change unacceptable behaviour. The decision to suspend a pupil will follow from serious/gross misbehaviour:

* The pupil’s behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
* The pupil’s continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
* The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property

Any behaviour judged to be a gross misdemeanour deserving of suspension

*On an occasion where a child poses a physical risk to himself/herself and or others including, staff*

*and students. Parents/Guardians will be requested to attend the school and if the child remains in a*

*distressed state and continues to pose a risk to themselves or others, parents/guardians will remove*

*the said child/children from the school premises until such time as the child/children no longer*

*poses any physical risk to themselves or others .*

*Parents/guardians will be given the opportunity to calm the child and re-integrate the child into the*

*class in a safe manner for all. However, this must be in agreement with the teacher.*

*This removal will not constitute a suspension and is taking inconsideration the school’s duty of care*

*towards all children.*

*Parents may also be requested to attend the school should a child leave the classroom without*

*permission and refuse to return.*

**In relation to suspension,**

* Communication to parents regarding the suspension of a pupil or the possibility of suspension will be in writing and copies of all correspondence will be retained. In some circumstances it may be necessary to contact parents by phone.
* After hearing the issue from the class teacher, the principal will meet with the child to discuss the behaviour and inform him/her of procedures to follow.
* The parents/guardians will be invited to meet with the Principal and/or Board of Management to discuss the proposed suspension **no later than 5 days from date of letter.**
* The Board of Management has delegated responsibility for suspension to the principal in the event that immediate suspension of a pupil is warranted (Guidelines p73). The parents/guardians and child will be invited to discuss the matter with the Principal and the procedures governing suspension will be applied.
* Where parents do not agree to meet with the Principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.
* A written statement of the terms and date of the termination of a suspension will be given to parents/guardians
* A suspension will **not be for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is necessary in order to achieve a particular** **objective**. The letter will confirm;

1. the period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
2. the reasons for the suspension
3. any programme of study to be followed
4. 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)
5. the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management,
6. the right to appeal to the Secretary general of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 Section 29).

* The suspension will be recorded on the NEWB ‘*Student Absence Report Form’* (when applicable).
* When a period of suspension ends, the pupil will be re-admitted formally to the class by the principal. The school will help the pupil catch up on work missed and the pupil will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start.
* Where a satisfactory resolution of a problem is achieved, a pupil may be re-admitted to school within a suspension period at the discretion of the Principal and/or the chairperson of the Board of Management.
* If a pupil continues to misbehave s/he 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/guardians to address the issues.
* As outlined above, parents/guardians and pupil will be given the opportunity to discuss the issues with the Principal/Board of Management.
* The Education Welfare Officer will be informed when a student has been suspended for six days or more cumulatively.
* Section 29 Appeal – when the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days the parents may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act and will be given information about how to appeal.

Where a decision to suspend has been made the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision. The letter will confirm:

* the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
* the reasons for the suspension
* the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
* The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

**Expulsion**

***Definition of Expulsion:***

*‘A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.’*

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

***Authority to Expel:***

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

***Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:***

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will apply:

1. **A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required)**

As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s);

1. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
2. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than **5 school days** from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond
3. **The Principal (or BOM Nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management**

Where the Principal (or nominee) forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal (or nominee) makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

In this event the Principal (or nominee) will:

1. inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
2. ensure that parent(s)/guardians 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
3. provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)
4. **Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal’s (or BOM’s Nominee) Recommendations & the Holding of a Hearing**

If, having considered the Principal’s report, the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student a hearing will be scheduled.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing

1. as to the date, location and time of the hearing
2. of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
3. that they may if they so choose be accompanied at the hearing

The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that;

1. the meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
2. the principal (or BoM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other’s presence
3. each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party
4. the parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose
5. **Board of Management Deliberations & Actions following the Hearing**

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled the Board

1. Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.
2. **Will not expel the student before the passage of 20 school days** from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification
3. Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
4. Will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer
5. Will suspend the student, if it is deemed likely 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 pupils or staff.
6. A record will be kept in the school of all instances of serious misbehaviour by pupils.
7. Breaches of behaviour will be recorded in writing by the class teacher and if necessary by the Principal
8. Other relevant school policies (e.g. Health & Safety) will be referred to as appropriate.
9. The school’s Anti Bullying Policy is attached to this policy.
10. **Confirmation of the Decision to Expel**

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 will **formally confirm the decision to expel.**

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing that the expulsion will now proceed. They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of St. Senan’s NS acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

1. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
2. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

POLICY RATIFICATION

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management, Staff and Parents of St. Senan’s NS at its meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson, Board of Management

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

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Parents Association

PATRON’S APPROVAL

**Appendix 1**

Nine grounds of Discrimination : Age, Civil Status, Disability, Family Status, Gender, Housing Assistance Payment, Membership of the Traveller Community, Race, Religion, ...