**Behaviour Policy**

**Introductory Statement**

The school’s Behaviour Policy was formulated following consultation with parents, staff and Board of Management Members in October 2002; the policy was reviewed and amended in the spring term of 2008, in January 2013 and most recently in the Spring Term of 2017.

This policy, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act (1998) and the Education Welfare Act (2000), details the procedures for dealing with discipline matters that may arise. It should be read and understood in the context of our Mission Statement and read, though not exclusively, in conjunction with the following Marist Primary School policy documents:

1.Child Protection Policy

2.Health and Safety Statement

3.Anti-Bullying Policy

**Aims**

The Behaviour Policy aims to achieve:

* the promotion of positive behaviour and a sense of responsibility in pupils, based on consideration, respect and tolerance for others
* the promotion of good behaviour in the school and classroom so that there exists a safe happy, stimulating and effective teaching and learning environment
* the maintenance of good order throughout the school, respect for the school and our wider environment and building positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support among students, staff and parents
* help young people to mature into responsible participating citizens

**Rationale**

It is a priority area identified by staff and parents.

It is a response to staff’s and parents’ wishes to have a safe, happy environment for the children.

It is a requirement under DES Circular 20/90 on school discipline.

**Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the school**

The Behaviour Policy aims to realise the school’s mission of creating, through partnership with parents, a happy caring school, where tolerance and respect for others is paramount.

**Policy Content**

**1. Guiding Principles of Behaviour Policy**

**2. General Guidelines for Behaviour**

**3. Rewards**

**4. Ladder of Intervention and Supports Available within the School to Support Children and Families.**

**5. General School Rules**

**6. Notification of a Child’s Absence from School**

**7. Strategies for Dealing with Unacceptable Behaviour**

**8. Detention**

**9. Suspension**

**10. Expulsion**

**11. Success Criteria**

**12. Roles and Responsibilities**

**13. Implementation, Monitoring and Review**

**14. Ratification and Communication**

**1. Guiding Principles of Behaviour Policy**

* It is necessary to provide a framework, which promotes good behaviour and discourages unacceptable behaviour, so that our school will be a safe happy secure environment in which children can develop to their full potential
* We respect the individuality of each child while acknowledging the right of every child to an education in a relatively disruption free environment
* The school aims to promote a positive sense of self-discipline and responsibility endeavouring to notice when children show kindness, care, respect and tolerance. However, there are times when it may be necessary to impose sanctions to maintain good order. The teacher’s understanding and knowledge of children in his/her class will inform his/her approach in promoting good behaviour
* When behavioural incidents arise we will endeavour to enable children to understand the consequences of their actions and the impact and effect they have on others. Where possible we will apply and teach Restorative Practices concepts and skills to address behavioural issues endeavouring to develop empathy, responsibility and conflict management and anger management strategies.
* We value the strong sense of community within the school and the high level of co-operation among all staff, pupils and parents.

**2. General Guidelines for Behaviour**

* All pupils are expected to behave in a respectful courteous manner in the classroom, in the school, in the playground and when on school outings and activities
* Pupils must respect and co-operate with teachers and all school staff
* Pupils must respect the right of other children to learn and play in a safe and happy environment
* Pupils must respect their own property and the property of others
* Pupils must care for and respect the school and the environment
* Pupils are required to be compliant with school rules

**3. Rewards**

As part of our Behaviour Policy different reward systems will be used to acknowledge the positive behaviour of children.

Primarily, our reward system places emphasis on intrinsic rewards which foster the development of inner motivation and self-discipline i.e. praise, acknowledgements. Rewards such as dojo points, stamps, stars, homework passes, golden time and lucky dip etc. will also be used by teachers.

The following strategies have been agreed as the reward system which will be adopted by the whole school. Within class, however, teachers will decide how they will operate their own system.

* A quiet word or gesture to show approval
* A comment in a pupil’s journals
* A visit to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation
* A word of praise in front of a group or class or whole school assembly
* A system of merit marks
* Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
* A mention to Parent(s)/Guardian(s);written or verbal communication
* Privileged time/Golden Time
* Homework Passes
* Class celebrations

**4.** Ladder of Intervention and Supports Available within the School to Support Children and Families.

There are various supports within the school which enable teachers to have a planned approach to helping children change their own behaviour. Three different levels of intervention may take place in response to inappropriate behaviour, these interventions are known as the ladder of intervention.

(1) Support for all - Most students behave appropriately with the help of clear rules and routines in class and in school. Occasional minor misbehaviour is attended to routinely and effectively through the skill of the classroom teacher.

(2) Additional Support for some students - Some students need more active intervention to help them to manage their behaviour. Without this additional help, they may be at risk of failing; behaviourally, socially and educationally e.g. care team meetings, referral to another teacher or adult who can work with the student, behaviour contracts.

(3) Specialised support for a small minority of students - A small minority of students may show particularly challenging behaviour and may not respond to low level interventions. In these instances, the students need a sustained and systematic response involving the important adults in their lives, in school and at home. In such instances, the Principal and staff may seek assistance in responding to the needs of the student from local support services including but not limited to the National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS), HSE Community Psychology Services, National Behavioural Support Service, the National Council for Special Education, Child or Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Currently, the supports available in the school that may, where appropriate and where resources permit, be used to help manage behaviour include;

* ‘FRIENDS for Life’ Programme. A school-based positive mental health programme. The programme helps students to develop effective strategies to deal with worry, stress and change and teaches the skills required to reduce anxiety and promote resilience. It is beneficial for all students, irrespective of their anxiety level. Teachers can run the programme as a whole school anxiety prevention programme, as a whole class or small group intervention or with individual students.
* Parents Plus Parenting Programme. A Parenting Support Programme is available to all parents through our school Home/School/Community Liaison Scheme.
* Stay Safe Programme within classes.
* Care Team Meetings. Focused weekly meeting by a small number of staff, including the Principal, to address the urgent needs of a small number of children in the school.
* Support Teacher Service: A teacher who works with individual children or in small groups to develop the child’s/children’s social and emotional intelligence and enhance self-esteem.
* Play Therapy. A form of counselling in which play is used as a means of helping children to express or communicate feelings
* Individualised Programmes. Some pupils may be required to follow an individualised programme devised by the Class teacher and/or Support teacher to help them learn positive behaviour appropriate for the classroom and school environment. Programmes will be drawn up in consultation with Parents/Guardians and will require support from the child’s home. The Principal and Deputy Principal may have a supportive and consultative role in the devising and implementation of such programmes.

**5. General School Rules**

**School Rules**

The Rules of the Marist Primary School have been designed to reflect the Christian values of respect for self and others: kindness, helpfulness, courtesy, good manners, fairness and forgiveness.

Our general rules are:

1. I will respect myself and others.
2. I will participate fully in class so that my teacher can teach and my fellow pupils and I can learn.
3. I will take responsibility for my own behaviour.
4. I will make good choices.

In practice this means:

**Myself**

I will:

* be on time for school and leave promptly when school finishes.
* listen carefully and work hard in school and do my best to complete my homework.
* walk in an orderly manner around the school and when in my line.
* be truthful and honest at all times.
* wear the full school uniform/tracksuit as directed.
* wear safe, flat shoes and always keep my laces tied.
* label and take responsibility for all my belongings.
* bring a large empty lunchbox to school for my school lunch.
* remain seated at all times while eating lunch and during breaks spent in the classroom.
* not bring a mobile phone to school.
* not wear make-up to school.
* not bring money, other than that which is necessary for school requirements, to school.
* be responsible for my own behaviour.

I may wear a watch and 1 pair of stud earrings which must be worn in the lobe of my ear. Earrings must be removed on P.E. Days.

**Others**

I will:

* be polite and respectful towards all pupils, staff and visitors.
* show respect and sportsmanship to my team-mates and opponents in all games.
* follow the playground rules.
* keep the Stay Safe Code.
* behave well in class so that my teacher can teach and my fellow pupils can learn.
* treat the property of others with respect.

**Myself & the Wider World**

I will:

* show reverence and respect at prayer time and when visiting the Church.
* treat the school building, furniture, equipment and books with respect.
* treat the property of others with respect.
* put litter in the nearest bin.
* represent my school in a positive manner on all school outings.

**Important Notes**

Parents are expected to have their children in their class-line each morning and to allow them to walk unaccompanied from the school door to their classroom. It is expected that children will be collected promptly at dismissal time.

It is preferable that children would not be taken out of school before dismissal time. However, in exceptional circumstances or for vital medical/dental appointments Parent(s)/Guardian(s) must seek permission from the Principal/Deputy Principal and sign the book in the Secretary’s Office before collecting the child.

No child may go home, outside normal dismissal time, unless collected by a Parent/Guardian or by an adult who has the consent of a Parent/Guardian.

When pupils are late or absent from school, a dated note of explanation from a Parent/Guardian is required when they return to school, or earlier if the absence is longer than a day or two.

The support of Parents/Guardians is fundamental to the effective implementation of the school’s Code of Behaviour. Parents/Guardians indicate their agreement and support of the code when they enrol their child in the school. Parents are also asked to talk to their child about the school rules at the start of every school year and to show their support by witnessing their child’s signature indicating agreement with the rules in the school journal (applicable to children from 1st Class to 6th Class).

**6. Notification of a Child's Absence from School**

Parents are required to inform the school of the reason for their child’s absence on his/her return to school. A note in the child’s school journal or dated note for Junior and Senior Infant children should be provided to the child’s teacher. In cases of prolonged illness a doctor’s certificate will be required. All notes and medical certificates pertaining to absences will be kept by the child’s teacher. The Principal may contact parents where there are concerns regarding absences or where adequate reasons for absence/absences have not been provided by parents.

**7. Strategies for Dealing with Unacceptable Behaviour**

As part of our Behaviour Policy we have characterised unacceptable behaviour in the following ways: Minor Misbehaviours, Repeated Minor Misbehaviours, Serious Misbehaviours and Gross Misbehaviours. Examples of each and the sanction they may warrant are listed in the Appendix. Teachers have a copy of the Appendix in their School Plan. A teacher and/or Principal’s understanding of the child, his/her needs and how best to enable him/her to take personal responsibility for his/her behaviour will inform their judgement when imposing sanctions.

**8. Detention**

Detention when sanctioned is normally for one or two days during small and big break periods. The Principal will be consulted. Parents will be notified prior to the detention. The child/children complete assigned work during the detention period. Incidents of detention are recorded in the Detention Book. The detention system as a whole is overseen by the Principal.

**9. Suspension**

While the Board of Management has the authority to suspend, the Board of Management of the Marist Primary School has delegated this authority to the Principal, for periods of up to three days. The Board of Management has also authorised the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion. The Board of Management has placed a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. Factors to be considered when issues of suspension arise, as detailed in the NEWB Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (2008), will be consulted prior to any decision.

**Immediate Suspension:** 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. Fair procedures will be applied.

In the case of suspension being necessary the following procedure will be followed:

* An investigation of the facts
* Parents will be informed in writing
* Parents will be given an opportunity to respond

The Principal will notify the parent in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm

* the period 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 student and the parents
* the provision for appeal to the Board of Management
* the provision for appeal to the Secretary General of the DES. (Only where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days)

A decision regarding suspension by the Principal may be appealed to the Board of Management within a reasonable period of time of being informed of the decision, having regard for the educational and safety needs of all parties concerned.

In accordance with Section 29 of the Education Act (1998), Parents/Guardians have the right of appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills, within a reasonable period of time from the date that the Parent/Guardian was informed of the decision and following the conclusion of any appeal procedures provided by the school.

**Records and Reports**

Formal written records will be kept of:

* the investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
* the decision-making process
* the decision and rationale for the decision
* the duration of the Suspension and any conditions attached to the Suspension
* the Principal is required to report suspension in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines.

10. **Expulsion**

Where an incident or series of incidents merit consideration of ‘permanent exclusion’ of a student by the Board of Management, the procedures set out in Section 12 ‘Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools’ (2008) will be followed.

**Right to Appeal an Expulsion.**

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act 1998 Section 29)

**11. Success Criteria**

Indicators of the success of the Behaviour Policy will include:

* Atmosphere of discipline/good behaviour within the school
* Children’s awareness of school rules and their rationale
* Children’s awareness of the procedures which will be applied in order to resolve issues for all
* Staff implementation of school rules
* Growth in self discipline and personal responsibility
* Modelling of good behaviour, in all its facets, by Staff
* Modelling of effective methodologies and practices in resolving behavioural issues by Staff
* Co-operation between Parents, Staff and Pupils in implementing the Behaviour Policy
* Comments, positive feedback or compliments on behaviour from teachers, other staff, parents, visitors and Department of Education & Skills Inspectorate
* Children working to the best of their ability
* Classes are orderly and working to the best of their ability
* Improvements in behaviour are in evidence

**12. Roles and Responsibilities**

**Board of Management**

* to provide a safe, caring environment for all
* to support the Principal and staff in implementing the Code of Behaviour
* to review and amend the Code of Behaviour as necessary

**Principal**

* to promote a positive affirming climate within the school
* to ensure that the Behaviour Policy is implemented in a fair and consistent manner
* to co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of the Behaviour Policy within the school

**Deputy Principal**

* monitoring discipline in the school
* monitor and collate recorded incidences of misbehaviour in the ‘Class Incidence’ Books and ‘Yard Incidence’ Books
* with the Principal to work with pupils, parents and staff to resolve discipline issue

**Teachers, S.N.A.s and Childcare Workers**

* to implement the Behaviour Policy within their classrooms and to support the Principal in the implementation of the Behaviour Policy within the school

**13. Implementation, Monitoring and Review**

The revised Behaviour Policy will apply from September 2017. Each staff member is responsible for the implementation of the Behaviour Policy and the Anti Bullying Policy. Within the classroom the teacher monitors his/her class. Teachers are responsible for the management of behaviour and respond to any instance of unacceptable behaviour they witness. The Principal is responsible for monitoring and reviewing policy at staff level on a regular basis and reports any review the staff deem necessary to the Board of Management. The Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for discipline in the school and a duty to ensure that a fair Behaviour Policy is applied therein. The Board of Management will ensure the Behaviour Policy and the Anti Bullying Policy are reviewed as the need arises.

**14. Ratification and Communication**

The Behaviour Policy was ratified by the Board of Management in February 2009 and again on the 21st January 2013 when processes relating to Suspension and Expulsion were detailed. Parents were informed that there were revisions in the Behaviour Policy in the school newsletter in March 2013.The Policy was further ratified in 2017 and communicated to all parents through the school the website This Policy will be given to parent(s)/guardians at the time of application.

**Appendix 1**

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| **Categories** | **Examples** | **Possible Sanctions** |
| **Minor**  **Misbehaviours** | * Lack of Courtesy * Low key disruptive behaviour   which affects children’s  learning   * Use of bad language * Moving out of assigned yard area * Inappropriate or rough play * Not taking turns * In other pupils personal space | * Verbal reprimand * Reasoning with pupil * Time out * Inform parents in junior classes * Note in the journal * Denial of participation in some class activity |
| **Repeated Minor**  **Misbehaviours** | * Lack of courtesy * Low key disruptive behaviour which affects children’s learning * Use of bad language * Moving out of assigned yard area * Inappropriate or rough play * Not taking turns * In pupils personal space | * Formal Recording of Behaviour * Time out in another class * Contact with parents * Walk with teacher in the Playground * Time out * Time out within a class * Removal of a Privilege |
| **Serious**  **Misbehaviour** | * Disrespectful verbal / non verbal behaviour * Name calling and use of inappropriate language * Continuous defiance of teacher * Verbal assault on other children * A physical assault on another child i.e. kicking, biting * Constant disregard for school rules * Non compliance when corrected by teachers and S.N.A.s * Constantly disturbing others and preventing them from learning * Constant incompletion of homework * Constantly excluding other children * Having objects in their possession, which could be a danger to themselves and others * Bringing mobile phones and/or other electronic devices to school | * Formal recording of behaviour   Class Record/Yard Book   * Informing parents (note in journal to be signed by parent/guardian * Class teacher meets parent(s)/guardian(s) * Principal talks to child * Detention on Monday, Wednesday & Friday with a Teacher * Removal of a Privilege * Exclusion from After School Activities or External Activities |
| **Gross**  **Misbehaviour** | * Serious physical assault on another * Blatant defiance of authority * Mitching from school * Uploading of any photo and/or video relating to school/school activity on social media * Bullying | * Referral to the Principal * Meeting with the Principal/Parent   (Dept. Guidelines/Welfare Act 2000)   * Referral to BOM in accordance with Rule 130(6) as amended by CIR.7/88and ‘Developing a Code of Behaviour Guidelines for Schools’(2008) * Suspension * Expulsion |