



<b>Policy:</b>	St. Seachnall's National School Code of Behaviour
<b>Date of Preparation:</b>	2022 - 2023
<b>Policy Number:</b>	3
<b>Date Approved by Board of Management:</b>	Reviewed annually by the Principal. All changes are ratified at the BOM meeting in September.

### **Introductory Statement:**

This policy was formulated as part of the School Self Evaluation (SSE) process and involved all the staff, Parent Association and Board of Management.

### **Rationale:**

St. Seachnall's NS has updated the school's behaviour policy because:

It is a priority area identified by staff

- The existing policy is due for review

### **Aim:**

- To promote respect for self, others and school property,
- To develop behaviour that enables all children to learn and teachers to teach
- To facilitate a pleasant, safe, orderly and positive atmosphere in the school community.
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner.

### **Four Simple Rules**

#### **Respect**

Respect yourself and others too,  
Keep books and property as good as new

#### **Listening**

Listen to learn,  
Hands up for your turn

#### **Behaviour**

Be polite, work hard each day  
So you'll enjoy both work and play

#### **Movement**

In the line or in the school  
Quiet walking is the rule

### **Rights and Responsibilities**

#### **The Board of Management:**

- has a duty of care for the children attending the school;
- is aware of its obligations for all members of the school community under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act (2005);
- should ensure that the school is safe for pupils, teachers and all other members of the school community;

- should ensure that the school has a code of behaviour drawn up in consultation with and known to parents.

## **Pupils:**

### **Pupils Rights:**

Pupils have the right to expect to:

- be treated fairly, consistently and with respect;
- learn and to be educated in a relatively disruption-free environment;
- be safe from bullying and abuse;
- have their individual differences recognized and catered for;
- be listened to, and to question, at appropriate times;
- make mistakes and to learn from them;
- have positive behaviour affirmed;
- have misbehaviour dealt with appropriately.

### **Pupils' Responsibilities**

Pupils are expected to:

- attend school regularly and punctually;
- work quietly, safely and to the best of their ability at all times;
- listen to their teachers and act on instructions / advice;
- listen to other pupils and await their turn to speak;
- show respect for all members of the school community;
- respect the right of other pupils to learn;
- care for their own property;
- respect all school property and the property of other pupils;
- avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others;
- remain seated at all times, if their teacher is not in the room;
- avoid all nasty remarks, swearing or name-calling;
- include other pupils in games and activities;
- move quietly around the school;
- keep the school clean and tidy;
- bring the correct materials and books to school;
- stay on school premises and within designated areas during school times;
- follow school and class rules.

## **Teachers' Rights**

Teachers have the right to expect to:

- be treated with respect;
- teach in a safe, well-maintained physical environment, relatively free from disruption;
- receive support and cooperation from colleagues, ancillary staff and parents in order to achieve the school's aims and objectives;
- appropriate support services to cater for the psychological, emotional and physical needs of the pupils;
- be listened to, and participate in decision-making which affects their own work and that of the school in general;
- work in an atmosphere that encourages professional development;
- receive support and professional advice from the Board of Management, Department of Education and Science, National Education Welfare Board, National Council for Special Education and National Educational Psychological Service;
- request an appeal in accordance with agreed procedures.

## **Teachers' Responsibilities**

Teachers are expected to:

- support and implement the school's code of behaviour;
- listen, at appropriate times, to pupils' explanations for behaviour using restorative practice questions.
- be cognizant of their duty of care;
- create a safe, welcoming environment for each pupil;
- develop and nurture a sense of self-esteem in each pupil;
- praise desirable behaviour;
- facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential;
- recognize and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils;
- be courteous, consistent and fair;
- use positive classroom management strategies to keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum;
- keep a record of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour and create an individual behaviour plan for misbehaviour that is ongoing;
- communicate with parents when necessary;
- communicate with the principal when necessary and report matters of concern.

## **Parents'/Guardians' Rights**

Parents and Guardians have the right to expect to:

- be treated with respect;
- have a safe and welcoming environment for their child;
- obtain recognition of individual differences among pupils, having due regard for available resources
- have fair and consistent procedures applied to the school's dealings with pupils;
- communicate with teachers on matters of mutual interest or concern;
- have contact at an early stage to discuss difficulties / problems;
- be consulted if an individual behaviour plan is necessary;
- receive progress reports in accordance with agreed school policy;
- receive information on school policies and procedures;
- be consulted in relation to the school's code of behaviour;
- appeal in accordance with agreed procedures.

## **Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians**

Parents/Guardians are expected to:

- encourage children to have respect for themselves, for others, for their own property and that of others;
- ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually;
- be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work;
- ensure that their children have the correct books and other materials;
- be familiar with the code of behaviour and other school policies;
- support the implementation of these policies;
- cooperate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others;
- communicate to the school difficulties or circumstances which may affect a child's behaviour.
- follow school procedures for contacting a staff member.

## ***Notification to School of Pupil Absences:***

Parents should provide the school with the reason for their child's absence on Aladdin whenever an absence occurs.

## *Implementation of Code of Behaviour:*

The overall aim of the Code of Behaviour is to facilitate a pleasant and positive atmosphere in the school and the emphasis is on creating and maintaining a positive school ethos. Good behaviour, effort and achievement in academic and non-academic areas will be commended regularly.

Our rules are few in number, four basic rules focusing on Respect, Listening, Behaviour and Movement. The rules are regularly explained, discussed with and taught to pupils by class teachers and Principal, especially at the beginning of the school year. The Principal will visit classes regularly to comment on and commend good behaviour and to be of assistance to staff as they implement the Code of Behaviour.

Each teacher and his/her class are expected to develop a "Classroom Contract" in conformity with the overall code of behaviour with a balance of rewards and sanctions, e.g. star system. Parents are expected to support the school in implementing its Code of Behaviour and to advise their children to follow the rules.

The Code applies to all students while on the school premises, either during or after the school day. It also applies to pupils on school -sanctioned outings such as tours, educational visits, sports events etc.

Our Code of behaviour is based on an integrated approach to the following programmes, Restorative Practice, Zones of Regulation, Incredible Years and Fun FRIENDS/FRIENDS for Life.

### **1. Restorative Practice:**

St. Seachnall's NS is a Restorative Practice School. Restorative Practice enables pupils to reflect on their behaviour, with the aim of finding solutions to restore relationships. Our overall aim is to ensure that all pupils feel happy, successful and connected to our school. Restorative Practice (RP) is both a philosophy and a set of skills rooted in respect for human beings and aims to build positive relationships between people. It is a proactive, skills-based approach that is centred on the understanding that relationships can be restored when they have been harmed by conflict or wrong doing. It focuses on separating the behaviour from the person and appropriate responses to repair harm where necessary. Restorative approaches are underpinned by values of respect, equity, interconnectedness, understanding, empathy, belonging and fair process.

We believe that *'fairness is not giving each child the same; fair is giving each child what he/she needs'*.

As a school we clearly define fair process as an approach which includes:

**Engagement:** Involve individuals affected by decisions where appropriate.

**Explanation:** Clarify how decisions are reached and why. Explain any contributing factors.

**Expectation Clarity:** Once a decision has been made fairly, those involved are expected to follow through with this agreement.

Restorative practices include a set of proactive approaches to build community/connection and a set of responses to challenging behaviour where harm has been caused. These approaches range from the informal and proactive to more formal responses:

**Restorative Circles:** To build empathy, understanding, speaking/listening skills and positive social relationships. Used for check ins/outs, relationship building, problem-solving, academic content, feedback, assessment, planning and discussion.

**Restorative Conversations:** When minor conflict or challenging behaviour has occurred; conversations take place with one or more children to examine who has been affected and how to address the harm that has been caused.

**Restorative Meetings:** Informal circles that take place with 2 or more people to respond to situations of more significant conflict/harm. Through using the RP questions (see below), children are encouraged to: 1. Examine who has been affected, 2. Address the harm that has been caused, 3. Agree on solutions to make amends (1. Past 2. Present 3. Future)

**Restorative Conferences:** More formal restorative circles designed to support those affected by situations of conflict/harm to acknowledge responsibility, ensure accountability and agree on specific solutions to repair the harm that has been caused. As in Restorative Meetings, The RP questions are used in the Restorative Conference process to guide the solution focussed intervention.

### Restorative Questions to Address Harm

- What happened?
- What were you thinking of at the time?
- What have you thought about it since?
- Who has been affected and in what way?
- How could things have been done differently?
- What do you think needs to happen next?

## 2. Zones of Regulation

Zones of Regulation is a social and emotional learning framework and helps provide a pathway to regulation. Once we understand our feelings and zones, we can learn to use tools/strategies to manage our different zones in order to meet goals like doing schoolwork or other tasks, managing big feelings, and healthy relationships with others. The simple, common language and visual structure of The Zones of Regulation helps make the complex skill of regulation more concrete for learners and those who support them.

Blue Zone: (sad, bored, tired or sick)

Green Zone: (happy, focused, calm, proud)

Yellow Zone: (worried, frustrated, silly, excited)

Red Zone: (overjoyed/elated, panicked, angry, terrified)

## 3. Fun FRIENDS/FRIENDS for Life:

Fun FRIENDS is taught in First Class. The Fun FRIENDS curriculum helps build the social and emotional skills of young children by using fun, play-based group activities. By learning resilience skills early in their development, children build confidence to facilitate a smooth transition into school life. Fun FRIENDS nurtures positive relationships with family and peers, encouraging children to thrive.

FRIENDS for Life is taught in Third/Fourth Class. FRIENDS for Life empowers participants to cope with the emotions of themselves and others by engaging with positive thoughts, emotions, and self-regulation strategies. The program also teaches creative alternatives to solving problems they would have previously shied away from, fostering the development of confidence and self-esteem. Most importantly, FRIENDS for Life encourages smiling, happiness and bravery, and facilitates smooth transitions into adolescence.

To help participants remember the FRIENDS concepts, and to bring structure to the sessions we use the FRIENDS acronym:

- Feelings (talk about your feelings and care about other people's feelings)
- Relax (do "milkshake" breathing, have some quiet time)
- I can try! (we can all try our best)
- Encourage (step plans to happy home)
- Nurture (quality time together doing fun activities)
- Don't forget – be brave! (practice skills everyday with friends /family)
- Stay happy

### **A Positive Focus:**

Students' achievements - academic, sporting and behavioural, will be recognised by:

- Positive note home re. excellent work/effort/improvement
- Specific positive praise or coaching throughout the day by all staff.
- Award of merit certificates presented by Principal at assembly
- Extra curricular achievements, sport, chess, quizzes, charity work etc. noted in the school newsletter.
- Examples of work and achievements will be displayed in classrooms and around the school
- Student will be referred to Principal for excellent work/effort/improvement
- Principal will endeavour to visit all classes weekly and commend good behaviour/work by individuals/groups/class.
- Teachers reward good behaviour/work by e.g. star system, less homework or Obair Bhaile Pass, computer time, Golden Time etc.
- A visual timetable on display in every classroom.

### **Student Council:**

Pupil voice is very important in St. Seachnall's NS. We endeavour to create a climate of openness, consultation and participation, where pupil's views are sought, listened to and respected. Two representatives are elected by each class from 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>. Elected children are members of the Students Council. The council, chaired by one of our In-school Management Team meet once a month to discuss relevant issues and contribute their feedback on policies and practices in the school. The role of the school Principal is of central importance in the establishment and operation of a Student Council. All Student Council activities are overseen and carried out with the approval of the Principal and In-school Management Team.

### **School Contract:**

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will help the children to complete their Annual Pupil School Contract. Each child will sign their own contract This contract will reflect and support the school's expectations and will be presented in a way that is accessible to the children. Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual differences. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage. Teachers will revise the expectations in the class contract through circles and class discussions to encourage and maintain positive behaviour.

## **IN THE CLASSROOM**

*The classroom should be a place of learning for all*

1. I will raise my hand to ask a question, to speak during a discussion or to look for help.
2. I will be polite and use phrases such as "please", "thank you" and "excuse me".
3. I will pay attention and respect others' right to learn.
4. I will respect others' opinions.

5. I will take good care of my books, pens, pencils and all school equipment. I will make sure I have all I need for class and I will respect others' belongings.
6. I will knock before entering another classroom.
7. I will leave my classroom at break time and stay outside until I come in with my class.
8. I will stay at my own seat and continue my work if the teacher has to leave the room.
9. I will leave my classroom clean, tidy and litter free each evening.

## IN THE YARD

### *Break time should be a time of enjoyment for all*

1. I will play fairly and not get involved in fighting, kicking, punching, pulling down other pupils or other forms of rough or dangerous 'play'.
2. I will not go into any out-of-bounds areas.
3. I will respect all members of staff - teachers, classroom helpers, caretaker and secretary - and follow their instructions.
4. I will treat other pupils with respect and kindness and not take part in teasing, name-calling or bullying.  
I understand that if I do not follow the above rules, I will need to take time out from playing or have to walk with a teacher during break depending on the seriousness of the incident. The incident will be recorded.
5. I will do my best to make sure that there is no bullying in St. Seachnalls. I understand that if I am bullied or picked on by words or actions I must tell the teacher on duty, my own teacher or the Principal. I will tell my parents also. If I see anyone being bullied I will report it. I will follow the Stay Safe rule on bullying:

**Say No  
Get Away  
Tell an adult**

For full details see the school's policy on Bullying.

6. I understand that the end of playtime is signalled by two buzzers in quick succession. When the first buzzer sounds, I must stop playing. When the second buzzer sounds, I will walk directly to my line. I will line up quietly in alphabetical order and remain in the line until brought into the class by a teacher.
7. I understand that football or other ball sports may not be played on the yard before school opens.

### **Unacceptable Behaviour**

The vast majority of pupils are well behaved and mannerly. If a child is having difficulties managing their behaviour, the school will endeavour to understand the reasons behind the child's misbehaviour. The school will support the child (e.g. movement breaks, social and emotional support) and involve the child in their behaviour plan and contract. In the event of more serious breaches of discipline, or continuous poor behaviour, it is necessary to have sanctions to deal with such incidents. Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour, parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the Principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

	<b>Examples of Minor, Serious and Gross misbehaviours</b>	<b>Examples of Consequences/Sanctions (Junior Infants/Senior Infants)</b> Teachers will use logical consequences where possible.	<b>Examples of Consequences/Sanctions (First – Sixth Class)</b> Teachers will use logical consequences where possible.
<b>Minor</b>	<p>Interrupting class work Running in school building Messing in class line Leaving chair without permission Being discourteous/unmannerly Not completing homework without good reason (3rd - 6th)</p>	<p>Move to a calm space/time out table.</p> <p>Involving a child in a behaviour plan.</p> <p>Walk with the teacher in the yard.</p> <p>Restorative Practice Conversation (Bill Rogers' 4W Plan: 1. What I did, was it against our class contract or school rules? 2. What rules (or rights) did I break or ignore? 3. What is my explanation? 4. What I think I should do to fix things up or work things out.</p> <p>If it happens continuously, speak to the parents.</p>	<p>Warning first</p> <p>Restorative Practice Conversation (Bill Rogers' 4W Plan: 1. What I did, was it against our class contract or school rules? 2. What rules (or rights) did I break or ignore? 3. What is my explanation? 4. What I think I should do to fix things up or work things out.</p> <p>Behaviour contract Loss of class dojo points Reflective area on yard Walk with teacher Loss of privileges Involve the child in a behaviour plan. Communication with parents Note in journal Move child to different place Time out/reflection time</p> <p>If it happens continuously, speak to the parents and principal.</p>
<b>Serious</b>	<p>Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, cyberbullying in school, harassment, discrimination and victimisation.</p> <p>Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning.</p> <p>Telling lies Being disrespectful to a staff member Leaving the school premises during the school day without appropriate permission. Stealing Damage to property Repeated homework not completed Minor assault Mobile phone use</p>	<p>Phone call home Restorative Meeting with Principal, Teacher and Parent</p> <p>Involving a child in a behaviour plan.</p> <p>Suspension</p> <p>*Recorded on Aladdin</p>	<p>Phone call home Restorative Meeting with Principal, Teacher and Parent</p> <p>Involving a child in a behaviour plan.</p> <p>Behaviour contract</p> <p>Informal in school suspension (move to a different class)</p> <p>Suspension</p> <p>*Recorded on Aladdin</p>



	Electronic devices used/brought to school without permission		
<b>Gross</b>	Serious verbal or physical assault on a staff member or student.  Serious theft  Serious damage to property  Possession of a dangerous or offensive weapon.	Restorative Conference Involve the child in a behaviour plan. On report Suspension Call the guards Expulsion  *Recorded on Aladdin	Restorative Conference Behaviour contract Involve the child in a behaviour plan. On report Suspension Phone call home Call the guards if needed Expulsion  *Recorded on Aladdin

The use of sanctions/consequences should be characterised by certain features

- It must be clear why the sanction is being applied.
- The consequence must relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.
- It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions.
- Group punishment should be avoided as it breeds resentment.
- There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences
- It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus.
- Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health & safety.

### **Behaviour Support:**

For pupils with challenging behaviour, a structured and sustained programme of support is necessary, involving school and home working together. A Behaviour Support Plan may be prepared to help and encourage the pupil to behave in a way which will enable him/her to participate fully in class.

### **Children with Special Needs**

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning support/resource teacher, and or Principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessment will be invaluable.

### ***Parental Contact with School re Behaviour:***

A parent with concerns about behaviour should contact the class teacher in the first instance. For minor issues, this can be an informal meeting. Parents may not meet teachers when the teacher should be in class. Instead a formal meeting should be arranged so that cover can be organised for the teacher's class. If the issue is not resolved at this meeting the matter should be referred to the Principal. The full complaints procedure is agreed between the Irish National Teachers' Organization and the Catholic Primary School Managers' Association. Copies available on request.

## **Suspension**

The Board of Management authorises the Principal to suspend from the school for a period of up to three days, any pupil who is continuously disruptive or who seriously breaches the code of behaviour. Prior to suspension the following will be done

- Investigation of the facts to confirm serious misbehaviour or ongoing unacceptable misbehaviour.
- Parents will be informed by phone or in writing about the incident.
- Parents will be given an opportunity to respond.
- 

If suspension is decided upon:

- Principal notifies 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.
  - The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents.
  - If misbehaviour continues, a second and longer suspension will be imposed in line with the provisions of The Education Act 1998 and Education Welfare Act 2000.
  - The provision for appeal to the Board of Management or Secretary General of the DES, where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days.)
  - Where a pupil is suspended for a cumulative total of six days the National Education Welfare Board will be notified.

## **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.

## **Expulsion.**

Expulsion will be considered in an extreme case in accordance with The Education Act 1998 and Education Welfare Act 2000.

## **Procedures in respect of expulsion.**

- A detailed investigation is carried out under the direction of the Principal.
  - Inform parents in writing of alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
  - Give parents and students the opportunity to respond before a decision is made.
- A recommendation to the BOM by the Principal
- Consideration by the BOM of the principal's recommendations and the holding of a hearing
- BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing.
- If the BOM is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board will notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing using a **Notice of Intention to Expel** form, of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. The intention to expel a student does not take effect until 20 school days have elapsed after the NEWB has received written notification.
- Consultations arranged by the EWO.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

## **Appeals.**

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

