



# St. David's B.N.S. / Scoil Daibheid Naofa

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## Code of Behaviour

### Our School's Aims

In St David's B.N.S. we aim to:

- Establish standards of behaviour in a caring, productive and safe learning environment where all students are valued and respected
- Promote a supportive environment so that all members of the school community may work together in developing acceptable standards of behaviour from our pupils
- Encourage all students to take increasing responsibility for their own behaviour, and the consequences of their behaviour choices, through the implementation of whole school proactive programs and additional targeted support for those who may need it
- Instil within our pupils the values of caring for themselves, others, their school and their learning

### Developing Our Code

Our Code of Behaviour was developed in consultation with the principal, teachers, special needs assistants, care workers, parents, students and other members of the school community. An audit of the existing code was the starting point, with input sought from all the listed parties. An action plan was developed to address the areas that needed to be reviewed and addressed.

### Our vision for Relationships and Behaviour in the School

In St David's B.N.S. we are committed to providing a supportive school environment that maximises the educational opportunities and outcomes for all students.

### **We believe that all members of our school community have the right to:**

- Feel safe and valued
- Be treated with respect and dignity
- Learn and teach in a supportive environment
- Understand expectations and consequences of behaviours

### **We are committed to ensuring that:**

- Students are guided toward caring for themselves by our promotion of self-discipline, self-control and self-responsibility
- We nourish self-esteem and self-respect and we distinguish between a person and that person's behaviour
- We value dignity, worth, fairness and justice in every child
- Students are guided toward caring for others by the promotion of respect, courtesy, tolerance, teamwork, trust and honesty among all members of the school community.
- School staff are the first and foremost models for these values and will behave in a manner from which children can learn at all times, both from their interactions with other adults and with the children themselves

### **Our beliefs are based on the four values of:**

- Caring for yourself
- Caring for others
- Caring for your school
- Caring for your learning

## Promoting our Standard of Behaviour

### ***Universal Behaviour Support***

At our school, we believe that the first step in facilitating standards of behaviour is communicating these standards to **all** students. We believe that teaching students the behaviours we want them to demonstrate at school is very important. An SPHE lesson on our Code of Behaviour will be taught in each class on a designated date in early September each year. Communicating behavioural expectations is a form of universal behaviour support and helps us to prevent problem behaviour and provides a framework for responding to problem behaviour.

The following underpin all behaviour in our school:

- We are gentle
- We are kind and helpful
- We are honest
- We listen
- We work hard
- We look after property

Our four **values** are:

- Caring for yourself
- Caring for others
- Caring for your school
- Caring for your learning

We have worked together to develop a set of behavioural expectations in specific setting for each of our Caring Values. Our school's Code of Behaviour outlines our agreed rules, routines and behavioural expectations in all school settings. Our rules, routines and expectations are promoted throughout the whole school.

### ***Encouraging Positive Behaviour***

In our school, we believe that students are more likely to behave when:

- There is good school management and classroom teaching
- They understand the code of behaviour and their part in making it work
- They see that the code works in a fair way
- The standards for behaviour are clear and consistent
- There are good relationships between teachers, parents, staff and students and a happy school atmosphere
- Adults model the behaviour that is expected from students

### **Rewards**

We believe that the use of rewards can help to affirm children's efforts to abide by the code of behaviour and can also motivate more reluctant children to engage with the code. Rewards systems are in place at a whole school level and at individual classroom levels. Examples of both are provided below. We believe in the following in terms of good practice in using rewards:

- They are meaningful to the individual student or group
- They acknowledge behaviour that is valued and wanted
- They are given for effort as well as achievement
- They are used consistently and by all staff

Whole School Rewards	Class Rewards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive, descriptive praise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Music while doing school work</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student of the Week Assembly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chat break at the end of class</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stickers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extra computer time</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certificates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free time at the end of class</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Golden Time (Options/Sanctions)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Games/Board games</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visits to the deputy principal or principal's office for reward</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homework coupon</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free play in class</li> </ul>

### **Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour**

The staff of St David's B.N.S. strives to prevent problem student behaviour by teaching and noticing expected behaviours on an ongoing basis. When unacceptable behaviour occurs, students experience predictable consequences. Our school seeks to ensure that responses to unacceptable behaviour are consistent and proportionate to the nature of the behaviour.

Our whole school approach to responding to inappropriate behaviour includes:

- A ladder of Intervention
- Agreed ways of describing the nature, intensity and persistence of behaviour
- Arrangements for recording behaviour

### ***Mild, Moderate and Serious Behaviours***

When responding to problem behaviour the staff member first determines if the problem behaviour is mild, moderate or serious, with the following agreed understanding:

- **Mild** problem behaviour is handled by staff members at the time that it happens and may be recorded on a yellow card and stored in their classroom support file.
- **Moderate** behaviour is referred to the deputy principal and is recorded on an orange card and a system put in place to prevent reoccurrence. A child who has received three previous yellow cards will receive an orange card deeming it a moderate behaviour issue.
- **Serious** behaviour is referred to the principal and the child receives a red card. Disciplinary absences and detention are considered, which balance the interests of the individual student with the educative and safety needs of others in the school. A child who has received three previous orange cards will receive a red card deeming it a serious behaviour issue.

Staff, students and parents developed a summary of mild, moderate and serious behaviour and possible consequences. (Appendix 1, School Behaviour Policy)

### **Relating Challenging Behaviour to Expected School Behaviour**

When responding to challenging behaviours, staff members ensure that students understand the relationship of the behaviour to expected school behaviour. A five- step approach to setting effective limits will be followed by the staff, and will always be delivered in a calm manner:

- Allow a cooling off period if necessary.
- Explain to the individual exactly which behaviour is inappropriate.  
Explain why the behaviour is inappropriate and how their behaviour differs from expected school behaviours.
- Give reasonable choices with consequences.
- Enforce consequences.

### **Managing aggressive or violent behaviour**

The school recognises that occasionally students may not respond positively to the usual interventions and that they may require extra support in an effort to manage aggressive or violent behaviour. A small minority of students may show particular challenging behaviour. These students will need a sustained and systematic response involving the important adults in their lives, in school and at home. They may be on individual behaviour plans.

### **Ensuring Consistent Responses to Problem Behaviour**

In St David's B.N.S. staff members follow the Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying Policy and Health and Safety Policy which ensures a consistent response to dealing with problem behaviour in the school.

### **Ladder of Intervention**

The following process outlines the ladder of intervention when dealing with inappropriate behaviour:

#### **Step 1: Class Support provided by the class teacher.**

- Teach school wide positive behaviour and procedures
- Positive reinforcement for all students
- Consistent consequences for all problem behaviours
- Effective procedures and supervision in non---classroom areas
- Effective classroom management and instruction
- Consistently challenging behaviour is brought to the attention of the parent. Discussion around behaviour, reasons, consequences and strategies discussed and a plan put in place.

#### **Step 2: School Support provided by the deputy principal/principal**

- Teacher brings the student's case to the deputy principal/principal. Discussion around school---based support that may be implemented. Plan put in place.
- An Individual Behaviour Support Plan may be required. Advice sought from team involved with child including parent/guardian.
- Implementation and monitoring of the Behaviour Support Plan.

#### **Step 3: Intensive Support**

- Behaviour Support Plan will be reviewed.
- Support from CAMHS team and/or NEPS school psychologist may be sought.

### **Parent Contact**

In St David's B.N.S., we feel that it is important that parents are kept informed of their children's behavioural performance. As such teachers use the school journal as a means of communicating with parents. The school also uses the behaviour card system to inform parents of incidents of misbehaviour in the school.

### **Behaviour Card System**

In St David's B.N.S. a behaviour card system is used as a response to instances of misbehaviour. The system operates as follows:

1. Information letter
2. Yellow card
3. Orange card
4. Red card

### **Suspensions**

In cases of serious misbehaviour, a suspension may be issued. Notification will be made to student and parent in writing as soon as possible, giving full reasons for the decision relating to the selected school disciplinary absence. Pupils will be given work to complete while absent from school, and this work must be presented on return to school.

Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. Other interventions may include:

- Behaviour Monitoring
- Behavioural Contract
- In - school suspension
- Detention

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety for themselves, other students and staff members
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property or has engaged in assaultive behaviour

**A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.**

There may be instances where behaviour warrants immediate action and disciplinary absences are given in the interest of the safety of the student and other school community members. The Board of Management has given permission for the principal to authorise such absences without prior approval or written notification when this occurs.

**Re - entry**

A planned re-entry to school is convened after enforcing a suspension to minimize recurrence of unacceptable behaviour and disruption to the student's education. Parties who may be involved in this process: Principal, Parent/Carer, Teacher, staff members involved in the incident.

A meeting will be scheduled to take place on the day of re-entry. Pupils will be expected to return to school with a positive attitude, and to bring with them a written apology that relates to the incident. Parents must bring the signed letter that was sent home explaining the reasons for the suspension to the meeting. At this meeting, a review of the school rules will take place, and where necessary, a behavioural contract may be drawn up.

**Exclusion**

Grounds for exclusion include:

- Conduct that is prejudicial to the good order and management of the school
- The potential a behaviour has to impact on other students and staff
- The potential a behaviour has to disrupt learning activity

**Parental Response**

Parents are entitled to respond to any sanction imposed by the school. Parents can meet with the teacher and principal to discuss their child's behaviour, to give their side of the story, and to seek clarity on the incident. This meeting could also afford the school the opportunity to engage with the parents to explore how best to address the pupil's behaviour issues.

**Appeals**

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science against some decisions of the Board of Management, including (1) permanent exclusion from a school and (2) suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student. (See Circular 22/02)

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### ***Board of Management Responsibilities***

The Board of Management is expected to:

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code
- Ratify the code
- Ensure the code is communicated to the whole school community

### ***Principal's Responsibilities***

The Principal is expected to:

- Promote a positive climate in the school
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner
- Arrange for review of the Code, as outlined in the timetable for review.

### ***Teachers' Responsibilities***

Teachers are expected to:

- Teach the code
- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour having regard to decisions made on a whole school basis
- Be cognisant of their duty of care
- Create a safe and welcoming working 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
- Listen, at appropriate times, to pupils' explanations for behaviour
- Be courteous, consistent and fair
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour
- **Keep a record** of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour
- Provide support for colleagues
- Communicate with parents when necessary
- Provide reports on matters of mutual concern

### ***Other Staff Members Responsibilities***

Other staff members are expected to:

- Support the school's code of behaviour having regard to decisions made on a whole school basis
- Be cognisant of their duty of care
- Contribute to a safe and welcoming working environment for each pupil
- Develop and nurture a sense of self - esteem in each pupil
- Praise desirable behaviour
- Be courteous, consistent and fair
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour – refer incidents of misbehaviour to the relevant teacher
- Provide support for colleagues
- Help teachers to think about and analyse possible reasons for a student's poor behaviour
- Help devise possible ways of changing the behaviour, support and implement behaviour plans for students

### ***Pupils' Responsibilities***

Pupils are expected to

- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Listen to their teachers and staff members and act on instructions/advice
- Show respect for all members of the school community
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name - calling
- Include other pupils in games and activities
- Follow school and class rules

### ***Parent's Responsibilities***

Parents/guardians are expected to

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for their own and other people's property
- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others and support
- Communicate to the school the reasons for children's absences
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour on a day to day basis

### **Relevant Documents**

- Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties, A Continuum of Support, NEPS
- Special Educational Needs, A Continuum of Support, NEPS

### **Ratification and Communication**

The Code of Behaviour will be monitored and reviewed on regular basis. It is posted on the school website and a hard copy is available for viewing on request from the office.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_

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

Chairperson, Board of Management