

# St. Patrick's School

Drumgoold, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford, Y21 Y9W0

Email:  
[principal@stpatricksschool.ie](mailto:principal@stpatricksschool.ie)  
[www.stpatricksschool.ie](http://www.stpatricksschool.ie)



Telephone: 053-9239150

*Principal: Lee Rogers*  
*Deputy: Ann Marie Furlong*

## Code of Behaviour

### St Patrick's Special School

---

#### Content of Policy

The policy is addressed under the following headings.

- Introduction
- Vision
- Aims of the policy
- Expectation of positive behaviour
- Positive Strategies for managing behaviour
- School Rules
- Rewards and Sanctions
- Suspension, Expulsion Procedures
- Keeping records
- Reference to other Policies

#### Introduction

The Board of Management of St Patrick's Special School promotes a positive approach to the encouragement of good behaviour in the school. The Board, Principal and staff aim to establish appropriate standards of behaviour for all our pupils in a safe learning environment where all pupils are respected and valued. As part of this, we work to encourage all pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour choices and the consequences of these choices.

It is the policy of the Board of Management to keep this document and its implementation under review.

#### Vision

The school staff and parents endeavour to provide an environment which will enable each child to live, learn and grow to his/her full potential. We believe that our positive Code of Behaviour will facilitate this objective. The school promotes good behaviour by:

- Having a whole school approach to promoting good behaviour and agreed strategies for catering for pupils who present with challenging behaviour.
- Having explicit ways of communicating high expectations for pupil.
- Developing strategies to strengthen pupil and parental involvement.
- Input from the multi-disciplinary team.

#### Aims of the policy

- To ensure the individuality of each pupil is accommodated while acknowledging the rights of all to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

# ***St. Patrick's School***

**Drumgoold, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford**

- To promote equality and fairness for all.
- To promote good behaviour and self-discipline among the pupils.
- To promote the safety and happiness of all members of the school community.

## Expectation of Positive Behaviour

This section outlines what is expected of parents, staff and pupils to ensure the harmonious operation of the school on a day to day basis.

The school expects parents to:

- Attend all meetings relating to your child's progress in school
- Ensure the punctual and regular attendance of your child at school.
- Inform the class teacher if the child is leaving school early.
- Check school bags for notes.
- Call to the secretary's office before visiting the classroom.
- Send written notice to the class teacher to account for your child's absence on his/her return to school as per the NEWB guidelines.
- Keep your child at home when he/she is sick.
- Observe public health regulations in relation to infectious diseases.
- Label your child's clothing and property.
- Ensure your child has a positive attitude to and abides by the class and school rules.
- Be familiar with school policies.
- Support the staff in the implementation of the school code of behaviour.
- Support your child in his/her homework and ensure that he/she has the necessary materials.
- Give a phone number where you can be contacted in the event of an emergency.
- Support the school's healthy eating policy - no sweets, fizzy drinks, crisps, chocolate etc.

The school expects pupils to:

- Show courtesy and respect to others.
- Use polite language at all times.
- Accept the authority of staff.
- Abide by agreed class rules on behaviour.
- Participate in class activities.
- Observe health and safety regulations in relation to moving around the building and grounds and in using equipment.
- Respect school property and the property of others.
- Keep the school tidy and litter free in accordance with the Green School policy.
- Play co-operatively with other pupils.
- Share equipment and resources.
- Wear the school uniform.
- Do homework when given.
- Have all the necessary materials for class.

The school expects staff to:

- Provide a positive safe learning environment for all pupils.
- Implement agreed approaches to discipline in a fair, consistent and professional manner.
- Have a clear understanding of rewards and sanctions.
- Maintain structures to ensure pupils move in a safe and orderly fashion around the school at all times.
- Celebrate the achievements of pupils.
- Have open communication with parents and caregivers.
- Provide mutual support for each other.
- Avail of opportunities for training and professional development in this area.

# ***St. Patrick's School***

**Drumgoold, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford**

- Demonstrate a willingness to learn and change practice in line with school policy.

## Positive Strategies for managing behaviour

Strategies used in the Classroom:

Positive strategies which staff use to manage behaviour in the classroom are as follows:

- Clear boundaries for behaviour are established and clearly displayed.
- Staff ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave.
- Pupils have input in devising class rules where feasible.
- In keeping with the underlying ethos of the school, respect for the rights of others is displayed at all times.
- Classrooms are organised to cater for different learning styles.
- Approaches to classroom management ensure a variety of activities and methodologies are provided to sustain pupil interest and motivation.
- Timetables are clearly displayed using formats accessible to the pupils.
- Pupils are offered sensory breaks and taught relaxation techniques.
- There is a clear system of acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and sanctions for misbehaviour.
- Staff adopt a consistent approach in dealing with pupils.

Strategies used in the Playground/ Lunch-room

- There is a concise set of playground rules which emphasise positive behaviour and make it clear what activities are permitted.
- Playground rules are clearly displayed on rear exit doors.
- Augmentative methods of communication are used to facilitate understanding of instructions.
- The playground supervision roster is displayed in the staffroom.
- Transition year students participate in playground activities as part of their Social Outreach Programme under the guidance of the staff members on playground duty.
- In general children do not leave the playground to use the toilet. In the event of a pupil having urgent need to use the toilet he/she will be accompanied by a staff member.
- Play activities are organised in ways that will minimise misbehaviour.
- Playground games are taught at assembly and practiced in the playground.
- The Stay Safe Programme is taught in all classes.
- Awareness of bullying and strategies for dealing with it are included in the lessons.
- On wet days pupils are supervised in the General Purpose Room at lunchtime.
- To minimise misbehaviour play and music activities are organised. DVD's are shown on occasion.
- On wet days senior pupils are supervised during morning break in the General Purpose Room and junior pupils are supervised in the dining room.
- Staff ensure that pupils leave the dining room in an orderly fashion.
- Clear arrangements are in place for re-entering the school from the playground. On hearing the bell pupils line according to their classroom and wait for a staff member to escort them back to class.
- To assist pupils there are markings on the playground to identify the location of class lines.
- A staff member is allocated to supervise pupils who cannot go out to play through illness or other reasons.
- Accidents/incidents are recorded in an incident book located in the nurse's station.
- In as far as possible incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with by staff on duty.

Strategies used in other areas of the school:

Positive strategies used to prevent behavioural problems in corridors, halls, cloakrooms, toilets etc. include the following:

- Expectations for behaviour within the school are outlined to pupils at assembly and in class. These expectations stress observation of common courtesy procedures and health and safety regulations.
- Visual reminders of correct behaviour are displayed on the corridors, in the dining room and other common areas.
- All staff consistently acknowledge courteous behaviour and remind pupils of safe practice.
- The arrival and departure of pupils from the school is strictly supervised by staff

# ***St. Patrick's School***

**Drumgoold, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford**

## **School Rules**

Rules are kept to a minimum. They are phrased in a positive manner using language accessible to the pupils. They are reinforced through use of the following methods:

- Direct teaching and circle time
- Visual representation throughout the school in text and pictures
- Verbal reminders at assembly

## **Rewards and Sanctions**

### **Rewards**

Positive behaviour is reinforced through the following strategies:

- The verbal acknowledgement of appropriate behaviour
- Written acknowledgement of good behaviour (communication book)
- An award system agreed on an individual or class basis.
- Individual rewards which can include extra computer time, favourite toy, music, favourite books, favourite chores, outdoor activity,
- Award presented by principal for example an extra star on Friday in recognition of good behaviour.
- The acknowledgement of success in a variety of areas- art, sport, handwriting, photography etc at school assemblies.
- A school certification system can be operated.
- The presentation of certificates awarded by external bodies at assembly.
- The annual presentation of prizes in recognition of full attendance for the year.
- The provision of opportunities for pupils to demonstrate skills in music, sport, art ,drama etc to parents and friends.
- The promotion of school achievements in the local press.

### **Sanctions**

The following strategies may be included as ways of showing disapproval of unacceptable behaviour:

- Individual discussion with the pupil who has exhibited unacceptable behaviour. The discussion may include:
  - Reasoning with the pupil
  - Advice on how to behave
  - Reprimand
- Communication with parents. Parents will be informed of serious misdemeanours at an early stage.
- Temporary separation from peers.
- Loss of individual rewards.
- Referral to another teacher.
- Referral to the principal.
- The principal may in some circumstances deem it necessary to request parents to collect the pupil from school.
- Detention at home: An agreement may be drawn up with parents as part of an overall behaviour management plan whereby the parents agree to keep a pupil out of school for a short period following serious challenging behaviour.

## **Suspension and Expulsion**

In cases of a single incident of very serious misbehaviour or a series of less serious but still significant incidents, the Principal and/or Board of Management may commence the suspension or expulsion procedures.

### **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 his/her action and its consequences and give staff time to plan ways of

# ***St. Patrick's School***

**Drumgoold, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford**

helping the pupil to change unacceptable behaviour. The purpose of suspension is one of corrective support rather than punishing pupils for misbehaviour. 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 pupils.
- The pupil's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety of the pupil himself or herself, staff or other members of the school community.
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.

## Procedures for Suspension

The Board of Management and Staff of St Patrick's Special School will follow the procedures for suspension and expulsion outlined in the NEWB Guidelines for Schools on Developing a Code of Behaviour.

Fair procedures (i.e. the right to be heard and the right to impartiality) will be applied at all times. Accordingly, pupils and their parents will be fully informed about the alleged misbehaviour and the processes that will be used to investigate and decide the matter and they will be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation before a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed. In exceptional circumstances, the Principal/Board may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff of the school, or any other person on the school premises.

The power to suspend a pupil for up to three days has been formally delegated to the School Principal by the Board of Management of St Patrick's Special School and that delegation is hereby confirmed.

The Principal, or in cases where a longer period of suspension is contemplated, the Board of Management, will among other things, take account of the following factors in determining the duration of a suspension. These factors are not exhaustive and the Principal or Board may also have regard to other matters that the Principal or Board, in their absolute discretion think may be appropriate.

- The age, state of health and needs of the pupil.
- The pupil's previous record of behaviour at the school.
- Any mitigating circumstances unique to the pupil that might reasonably be taken into account in connection with the behaviour leading to the suspension.
- The degree to which parental, peer, or other pressure might have contributed to the behaviour.
- The severity of the behaviour, its frequency, and the likelihood of recurrence.
- The extent to which the behaviour impaired or will impair the normal functioning of the pupil and others in the school community.
- The degree to which the behaviour was a breach of the Code of Behaviour.
- Whether the incident leading to the suspension was the result of the pupil acting alone or as part of a group.
- Whether or not the behaviour occurred on school premises or when the pupil was otherwise in the charge of the school staff on the way to or from school. An important consideration in cases of doubt is the extent to which behaviour away from the school had a serious impact on the life of the school.
- The degree to which the pupil recognises and accepts that his/her behaviour was unacceptable and is prepared to exhibit genuine contrition.

Suspension Procedure (this procedure does not apply where the Principal is of the view that immediate suspension is warranted)

- 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.
- The parents/guardians and the pupil will be invited to meet with the Principal and/or Board of Management to discuss the proposed suspension.



# ***St. Patrick's School***

**Drumgould, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford**

- The Board of Management has delegated responsibility for suspension to the principal in the event that immediate suspension of a pupil is warranted.
- 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;

- 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 during the suspension
  - the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parents (for example, the pupil and parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behavior)
  - the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
  - where applicable 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 school 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. In certain cases, re-admission will be conditional on the pupil and the pupil's parents agreeing to a contract of behaviour or a behaviour plan.
  - 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 on return to the school 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 pupil has been suspended for six days or more cumulatively.

Suspension may also be invoked in order to direct a pupil to absent themselves from school premises for a particular period for reasons including but not limited to health and safety concerns for the pupil themselves or for other members of the school community or for administrative reasons pending the investigation of particular issue.

A meeting of the Board of Management may authorise further suspension up to a maximum of 10 days.

Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

## **Removal of suspension (reinstatement)**

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent(s) may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff.

# ***St. Patrick's School***

## **Drumgoold, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford**

In the event that the Principal is not satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupil's or staff, the parents(s) application to have the pupil reinstated to the school may be referred by the School Principal to the Board of Management.

In the event that the pupil is reinstated a revised Behaviour Intervention Plan for the pupil will be required prior to re-admitting the pupil formally to the class.

### **Appeal**

Parents of a pupil who has been suspended for 20 school days or more are entitled under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 to appeal such a suspension.

### **Report to NEWB**

The Principal is required to report to the NEWB suspensions of a certain length (i.e. 6 days or over) or suspensions which mean that the aggregate number of days of suspension in a school year is 20 or more

### **EXPULSION**

Subsequent to the above suspension procedures and meetings with parents/guardians, if serious/gross incidents of misbehaviour continue, the pupil will be recommended for permanent expulsion by the Board of Management. In exceptional circumstances, pupils may be expelled for a first offence. Expulsion will apply in the event that:

- The pupil's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- The pupil's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety of the pupil himself or herself or to any other member of the school community including staff or other pupils.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property, involvement with drugs or sexual assault.
- The pupil being uncontrollable and not amenable to any form of school discipline or authority.
- Parents/Guardians being unable or refusing to exercise their responsibility for the pupil.
- Sexual assault or inappropriate damaging sexual conduct.
- Possession of and/or supplying illegal drugs.
- Actual violence or physical assault against another pupil or member of staff.
- Attempted violence or physical assault against another pupil or member of staff.
- Attempted self-harm resulting in the risk of potentially serious physical injury where the school judges that it can no longer meet the pupil's needs by adequately providing for the pupil's health, safety and well-being when at school.
- Actual self-harm resulting in serious physical injury where the school judges that it can no longer meet the pupil's needs by adequately providing for the pupil's health, safety and well-being when at school

Procedure in respect of expulsion:

1. Detailed investigation of incident(s) by school principal including interviews with all relevant parties, witnesses and the alleged wrongdoer.
2. Provision of written report by Principal to Board of Management outlining the facts of the matter as ascertained by the Principal and the Principal's recommendations in relation to sanctions.
3. The Principal's report should be furnished to the parents of the pupil at least 5 working days before the hearing referred to below. Sufficient time must be allowed to them to review the report and be aware of what allegations are being investigated as part of this process. If statements have been taken as part of the investigation or evidence gathered, the parents are entitled to copies of such statements (unless the

***St. Patrick's School***  
**Drumgould, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford**

statement has been given in confidence and on the understanding that it will not be shared with the pupil and/or their parents) and details about the evidence which will be considered by the Board of Management.

4. The Board of Management considers the school principal's report and recommendations and holds a hearing at which the child's parents/guardian can make submissions.
5. The Board of Management considers if expulsion is appropriate in light of the following factors:
  - 5.1. The nature, scale and persistence of the behaviour in question
  - 5.2. The effect of the behaviour on the school community (staff and pupils)
  - 5.3. The previous behaviour and conduct of the pupil
  - 5.4. Any contrition or attempts by the pupil to reform their behaviour
  - 5.5. Attempts (short of expulsion) made by the Principal and staff to divert, correct or check the behaviour and the effectiveness of those attempts
  - 5.6. The duty of the school to provide an education for its pupils and whether the continued enrolment of the pupil affects or limits the Board's ability to discharge this duty.
  - 5.7. The duty of care owed by the school to its employees, pupils and to visitors to the school and whether the continued enrolment of the pupil affects or limits the Board's ability to meet this duty of care.
6. Based on the foregoing considerations, any submissions from the parents, and the Principal's Report, the Board then makes a decision as to whether or not to exclude the pupil.
7. If the Board of Management recommends expulsion, it will propose a date on which the expulsion will become effective which will allow a 20-school day period from the date on which the Education Welfare Officer is notified of the proposed expulsion.
8. The Board will come to a decision on whether the student should be suspended until the expiry of the 20 school day period.
9. The Education Welfare Officer is informed of the proposal to expel the pupil and the effective date of that proposal.
10. Parents of the pupil are informed of their rights to invoke a Section 29 appeal under the Education Act 1998.
11. The Education Welfare Officer arranges consultations with the appropriate parties.
12. Confirmation of the decision of the Board of Management (and if relevant, the effective date of the expulsion) is sent in writing by registered post or a recorded delivery method to the parents of the pupil.

The formal letter of notification should be sent by registered post and should include:

- Notice of the expulsion.
- Effective date of the expulsion.
- Reasons for the expulsion.
- A statement that the Education Welfare Board has been informed of the expulsion.
- A statement that the pupil is under the care and responsibility of the parents/guardians for the period of 20 school days required by the Education Welfare Officer to examine alternative provisions for the education of the pupil.
- Information and documentation on S.29 Appeal rights.



# ***St. Patrick's School***

**Drumgoold, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford**

## **Expulsion Appeals**

Parents/guardians have the right to appeal an expulsion decision of the Board of Management to the Minister for Education or to an authority delegated for such appeals by the Minister under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Permanent expulsion may be appealed by a parent/guardian, by a student (over 18 years), or by the National Education Welfare Board. Any such appeal must be lodged within 42 calendar days of the decision of the Board of Management.

## **Keeping records**

In line with the school's policy on record keeping, and data protection legislation, records of behaviour are compiled by the teacher, psychologist and behaviour specialist where appropriate.

- Records are written in a factual and impartial manner.
- The teacher report includes a section on behaviour where positive and negative behaviour is noted.
- Serious incidents of misbehaviour are reported immediately to the principal.
- Parents are kept informed regarding behaviour issues during the year.
- In general misbehaviour on the playground/lunchroom is dealt with on the spot by staff on duty. Verbal reports of behaviour are only given to the class teacher if necessary.
- All DES documentation relating to behaviour is kept in the principal's office

## **Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school**

- In accordance with The Education Welfare Act (2000), written notification of absence or proposed absence should be supplied to the class teacher outlining the reason for the absence. A letter to this effect is issued to new parents. The written notifications are kept by the class teacher for one year.
- Parents are asked to note mid-term breaks and end of term closures when planning family holidays. It is advisable not to take pupils out of school during term.
- If a pupil is absent for 20 days the school is obliged to inform the NEWB. In the event parents will be informed.
- The school uses the standard forms to report on pupil absences to the National Education Welfare Board (See forms on [www.newb.ie](http://www.newb.ie))

## **Success Criteria**

Indicators of the success of the policy will include:

- Observation of positive behaviour in classrooms, playground and school environment
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers
- Positive feedback from staff, parents and pupils

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

All stakeholders have a responsibility to be familiar with the policy and implement their specified roles and expectations.

## **Implementation Date**

The plan has been implemented since June 2016

## **Timetable for Review**

This policy will be reviewed as necessary, or in the event of new legislation, will be amended accordingly.

A copy was issued to all parents and posted on the school website


A copy was issued to each classroom.

A copy was included in the school plan as a reference for ancillary staff

**St. Patrick's School**  
Drumgoold, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford

Timetable for Review  
As necessary

Signed:  Date: 27/3/2024  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

 Date: 27/3/2024  
(Principal)

---