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# Code of Behaviour

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## Introduction

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child, and school. In St. Laurence’s BNS we foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians, students, and all in the school community. We adopt a positive atmosphere in the school with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school. The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school the overall day to day responsibilities for behaviour rest with the principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school.

## Principles

As a school community St. Laurence’s BNS wish to –

- Create a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- Create a climate that encourages quality teaching and quality learning
- Create a climate that encourages personal responsibility on the part of all
- Create a climate that encourages positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support among all in the school community
- Create a climate that encourages high expectations and affirms good behaviour
- Promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- Encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- Facilitate the education and development of every child
- Foster caring attitudes to one another and the environment
- Foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on kindness, consideration, and respect for oneself and for the rights of others

## Factors which influence behaviour

St. Laurence’s BNS acknowledges that both internal and external factors can play a part in influencing behaviour. These factors can include the following –

- Age and maturity
- Temperament
- Physical/sensory/medical/characteristics
- Educational needs
- Emotional needs
- Self-esteem
- Self-reliance
- Parental influence
- Peer groups

- Community networks
- Time/opportunity/support for personal and social development both at home and in school

## Whole School Approach

The school recognises the value and merit of teamwork across the board. Working with and respecting each other is key in the operation of a successful school. When students are engaged and motivated to learn it is more likely that their behaviour will be positive. When teachers are encouraged and appreciated it is more likely to have a positive impact on school atmosphere. When parents/guardians are listened to and where concerns are taken on board it is more likely than not to contribute to a positive and healthy working climate within our school.

## Children with Special Needs

All children are required to comply with this Code of Behaviour. The school recognises the challenges that children with special needs have and the assistance they may require in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents/guardians and the class teacher. All stakeholders will work closely to ensure optimal support is given. Professional advice from relevant experts will be sought. The dangers caused by certain behaviour including threat of children with special needs are considered under the Code of Behaviour. All pupils are subject to the possibility of all sanctions under St. Laurence’s BNS Code of Behaviour depending on the circumstances and events of each individual case.

## Setting Standards

All members of the school community should, in their behaviour, reflect values such as –

- Respect for self and others
- Kindness and willingness to help others
- Courtesy and good manners
- Fairness
- Readiness to resolve difficulties
- Forgiveness

The school aims to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised, and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

The following are some samples of how praise may be given –

- A quiet word to show approval
- A comment in a pupil’s journal or homework journal
- A visit to principal for commendation

- A word of praise in front of group or class
- Delegating some responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parents/guardians
- Recognition at assembly

To promote good behaviour in St. Laurence’s BNS our school will do the following –

- Students are given responsibility in this school
- Students are empowered to see behaviour, policy/Code of Behaviour works in a fair and positive way
- Students can see that their parents/guardians support the Code of Behaviour
- Students can see their parents/guardians speak in a positive way about teachers
- The school promotes positive everyday interaction between teachers and students
- The school promotes clear school and class routines
- The school implements clear rules for all students
- The school will recognise and affirm good behaviour both inside and outside the school
- Staff student relationships will be marked with warmth and empathy but also when required by objectivity, professional detachment, fairness, and consistency

### **Classroom Behaviour – Acceptable**

- Do what you are told immediately
- Listen attentively
- Come with everything you need for school
- Do your best work and let others do theirs
- Stay in your workplace unless told otherwise
- Respect others and their property
- Walk quietly and line up quietly
- Gentle manners at all times
- Be honest – Tell the truth
- Show kindness and respect

### **Corridor Behaviour - Acceptable**

- Walk on the left-hand side
- Walk in single file
- Walk on the left when we are going up and down the stairs
- Never run on the corridors
- Quiet when moving around the school
- Always allow adults right of way
- We recognise that teachers have a duty to ensure that these simple rules are followed by all pupils

### **Yard Behaviour – Acceptable**

- Move carefully. No chasing or rough play
- Recognise the rights of others to be safe, secure, comfortable, and content in our yard
- Any problems go to teacher or Special Needs Assistant
- First bell freeze. Second bell walk quietly to line

- Line up in an orderly fashion and await arrival of teacher

### **Class Rewards for Behaviour**

- Verbal Commendation
- Stickers/stamps
- Pens, pencils, etc.
- Commendation from principal
- Help out in a younger class
- Certificates
- IT time
- Extra PE
- Golden time
- Raffle – Lucky draw end of week

### **Classroom Behaviour - Unacceptable**

#### **Level 1 - Not taking responsibility:**

- Incorrect uniform
- Late to class/school
- Not signing diary

#### **Level 2 - Not behaving responsible:**

- Disturbing class
- Interrupting teacher
- Failure to follow instructions
- Not completing class-work/homework
- Rough play
- Foul language

#### **Level 3 – Serious offence:**

- Disobeying teacher
- Insolent behaviour
- Significant disruption of lesson

#### **Level 4 – Behaviours which may lead to detention:**

- Teasing
- Name calling
- Threatening with objects
- Vulgar/rude signs or gestures
- Property damage
- Stalking
- Physical contact
- Spreading rumours
- Spitting
- Graffiti
- Insulting notes

- Sexual comments
- Racist comments
- Inappropriate use of technology
- Disrespect

## Sanctions

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by –

- Helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- Helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- Helping students to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- Helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour

A sanction may also –

- Reinforce the boundaries set out in the Code of Behaviour
- Signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to –

- Prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
- Keep the student, other students, and adults safe

## Suspension, Detention and Expulsion

Before serious sanctions, detention, suspension, or expulsion are used, the normal channel of communication between school and parents/guardians will be utilised. Where it is proposed to detain a pupil after school hours the parents/guardians or guardians will be notified. Communication with parents/guardians may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances. For gross misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents/guardians concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss instances of serious misbehaviour. The chairperson of the board of management will be informed, and the parents/guardians will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet principal and chairperson of the board. Suspensions will be in accordance with the rules for National Schools and Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the board may authorise the chairperson or principal to sanction and initiate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending discussion of the matter with parents/guardians.

### **Detention**

Detention shall be considered for serious breaches of the code. This shall be for one hour after school. This will only occur with the consent of the principal in consultation with the relevant teachers and parents/guardians.

### **Suspension**

A student may be suspended by the board on the recommendation of the principal following investigation into behaviour.

Parents/guardians, students involved in behavioural issues should be made aware of school policy regarding suspension and expulsion.

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. 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 others
- The student’s continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property

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

### **Factors to consider before suspending a student**

#### **The nature and seriousness of the behaviour**

- What is the precise description of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been?
- Has the problem behaviour escalated in spite of the interventions tried?

#### **The context of the behaviour**

- What are the circumstances of the incident of serious misbehaviour?
- What factors may have triggered incidents of serious misbehaviour?
- What is the age/stage of development and cognitive ability of the student?
- Are there any factors that may need to be associated with the behaviour e.g., particular home circumstances or special educational needs?

#### **The impact of the behaviour**

- How are other students and staff affected by the student’s behaviour?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?
- Does the behaviour have a particular or greater impact on some students or teachers?
- Does the student understand the impact of their behaviour on others?

#### **The interventions tried to date**

- What interventions have been tried?
- Over what period?



- How have the interventions been recorded or monitored?
- What has been the result of those interventions?
- Have the parents/guardians been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviours?
- Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought where appropriate?
- Are there other interventions such as mediation or family conferencing available?
- Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?
- Have other agencies been asked for help?
- Does the student’s behaviour warrant suspension?
- Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student?
- Will suspension allow additional or alternative interventions to be made?
- Will suspension help the student to change the inappropriate behaviour?
- How will suspension help teachers or other students affected by the behaviour?
- Will suspension exacerbate any educational vulnerability of the student?

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend a student. When a preliminary assessment or the facts confirm serious misbehaviour that could warrant a suspension the school should observe the following procedures –

- Inform the student and parents/guardians of complaint
- Give the parents/guardians and student opportunity to respond

A student should not be suspended for more than three days except in exceptional circumstances where the principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed in order to achieve a certain objective. If a suspension longer than three days is being considered by the principal, the matter should be referred to the board of management for consideration.

When implementing the suspension, the principal should provide in writing, to the parents/guardians of the student, the decision to suspend. The letter should confirm –

- The period of the suspension and the date on which the suspension begins and ends
- The reasons for the suspension

### **Expulsion**

In the rare event of an expulsion procedure being set in motion the following factors will be considered before the procedure commences.

#### **The nature and seriousness of the behaviour**

- What is the precise description of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been?
- Has the problem behaviour escalated in spite of the interventions tried?

#### **The context of the behaviour**

- What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour?

- What factors may have triggered incidents of serious misbehaviour?
- Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour?
- How are other students and staff affected by student’s behaviour?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning in the class?
- What interventions have been tried?
- Over what period?
- What has been the result of these interventions?
- Have the parents/guardians been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?
- Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling being sought where appropriate?
- Have the parents/guardians been involved with any support agencies or support services for help in solving this problem.
- Has any other agency been asked for assistance?
- Is the board satisfied that no other intervention can be tried or is likely to help the student to change their behaviour?

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

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal
- A recommendation to the board of management by the principal
- Consideration by the board of management of the principal’s recommendations and the holding of a hearing
- Board of management deliberations and actions following the hearing
- Consultations arranged by the educational welfare officer
- Confirmation of the decision to expel

The board of management has the authority to expel a student in an extreme case or where repeated incidents of gross misbehaviour interfere with the educational opportunities of fellow students or where there is a threat to the health and safety of either students or staff. This sanction would be imposed under the terms of The Education Welfare Act (2000).

Expulsion procedures are in accordance with The Education Act 1998.