

St Gabriel's NS

Cowper Street

Dublin 7

Code of Behaviour

2024

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1. Code of Conduct

The staff and Board of Management of St. Gabriel's National School recognise that good behaviour and conduct is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school. In St. Gabriel's NS we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our students and parents/guardians.

In St. Gabriel's N.S., we have adopted a Restorative approach to behaviour in our school, one which aims to build positive relationships and friendships throughout the community and beyond. It also helps to respond to conflict and arguments, if they do occur, in a healthy way that moves us towards connection and healing.

Please see attached appendix on Restorative Practices (Appendix 1: "What is Restorative Practice (RP)?").

While we have been working restorative practices for several years now, since 2022 we have adopted a more formal approach to the implementation of Restorative Practices funded by the School Completion Programme.

We also have many staff members trained in 'Incredible Years' and these behaviour management methodologies complement each other and are embedded in the school community.

The Board of Management of St. Gabriel's N.S. has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests 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 premises. Parents/guardians have a responsibility to support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, reinforcing good standards of behaviour with their own children and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school in the appropriate way.

2. Aims & Principles of the code

- *To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour, which ensures the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community*
- *To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment*
- *To promote self-esteem and positive relationships recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences*
- *To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviours*
- *To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others*

- *To enable teachers to teach without disruption*
- *To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the school website, newsletters, availability of policies and an ethos of open communication*
- *To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy*

3. School Rules

The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to tolerate these differences. It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, parents/guardians and pupils. Every effort will be made to ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner. The limits of behaviour are clearly defined, and children become familiar with the consequences of behaviour beyond these limits. The over-riding principle governing this code is **respect** - respect for ourselves and others, for our own and others' property and for the environment.

The school expects the highest standard of behaviour from its pupils including the following:

1. We always do as a member of staff requests straight away and in a quiet manner.
2. We sit at our place of work and allow others to work as well.
3. We always show respect for all staff during the school day.
4. We show respect for the property of the school, other children's property and their own belongings.
5. We show respect for all other pupils.
6. Bullying in any form is strictly forbidden.
7. Bad language in class or in the school environment will not be tolerated.
8. School uniform must be worn except on P.E. days.
9. Mobile phones or similar electronic devices are not allowed in school.
10. We are expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual.

4. Whole school approach

The Board of Management and the principal have overall responsibility for the implementation and on-going monitoring of this policy. However, all staff members have responsibility for their own classes and for the general school population when on yard duty or on any organised out-of-school activity or as the teacher who observes the behaviour in any area of the school.

Senior students have a role to play (for example, through our Buddy/Friendship Keepers system) and parents or other members of the school community may make comments or suggestions directly to the principal. The school values the support and co-operation of parents in the promotion of this strategy. The policy shall apply to all students during all school related activities.

It is the policy of St. Gabriel's N.S. to actively promote good behaviour and as such we have adopted the use of the Incredible Years programme and a Restorative approach to behaviour in our school, one which aims to build positive relationships and friendships throughout our community and beyond.

As part of our on-going efforts to promote positive behaviour, time will be allocated at some staff meetings for discussion regarding the implementation of the Code. Staff will be given opportunities to share their experience of both positive and negative behaviour and to learn from collective wisdom. Anything arising will be brought to the attention of the Board of Management.

Teachers will use various strategies to promote good behaviour including "Golden Time", star/reward charts, stickers, homework passes, weekly lottery/raffle, lucky dip, extra responsibilities in class and in the school, singling out for exceptional worthwhile achievements and efforts, best line, class dojo, attendance raffle, attendance competition, and other incidental means of praise or reward.

To facilitate new members of staff in becoming familiar with practices within the school, discussion regarding the implementation of the code will always form part of the first staff meeting held each September.

A copy of the code will be available to both parent and teachers on the school website. The code will also be given to parents whenever they enrol a child in the school.

The principal will lead an assembly for pupils each week. This will be an opportunity to reinforce good conduct among the pupils. High standards of work and behaviour will be emphasised. Pupil of the Week awards will be given out at assemblies to pupils chosen by their teacher as having shown excellent standards of behaviour and kindness towards others.

5. Class Rules

While the school has expanded on these principles to outline the "school rules", each class is required to draft their own class rules or charter each year, through consultation and

discussion within the class and they will reflect the age and maturity levels of the students in the class. These rules will be kept to a minimum. They will be recorded in simple language and will be stated positively, telling students what to do as well as what not to do. The rules will be referred to regularly and will form part of SPHE lessons. Where difficulties in following these rules arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage to help support the child.

6. Incentives/Reward System

Please note within all of the following, we have adopted a Restorative approach to behaviour in our school, one which aims to build positive relationships and friendships throughout our community and beyond and therefore every attempt will be made to encourage those who are involved in misbehaviour to work with staff and other pupils to address the misbehaviour in a non-punitive manner and that any sanctions list below/process below will only be used when all restorative avenues have been exhausted. This is reinforced through our use of Incredible Years.

All teachers in St. Gabriel's N.S. will operate a reward/positive reinforcement system within their classroom. This will be explained to children at the beginning of the school year and will be operated on a consistent basis. Rewards will be given to children based on this system to incentivise good behaviour. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school.

Praise

The following are some samples of how praise will be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A positive behaviour note home to parents/guardians via email
- A visit to another member of staff or to the principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- Reward at school assembly

Disapproval

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and to discourage inappropriate behaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the inappropriate behaviour, with due regard to the age and emotional development of the child.

The following stages will be used to show disapproval of inappropriate behaviour. Please note they are not always followed in the format listed.

- Ignoring inappropriate behaviour
- Distract child with an alternative activity
- Peer to peer support
- Reasoning with pupils including advising them about the consequences of their actions
- Restorative Circle
- Verbal reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
- Temporary removal from group (within the class or on the yard)
- Note to parent/guardian via email or Aladdin connect
- Reflection sheet (kept on file by teacher)
- Referral to another teacher/classroom
- Verbal communication with parents/guardians
- Withdrawal of privileges, responsibilities or extra duties
- Recording instances of repeated inappropriate behaviour (on Aladdin) and referral to the principal
- Formal written communication with parents/guardians
- Referral to the principal and the Chairperson or other member of the Board of Management
- Formal meeting with parents/guardians
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular area, except on the grounds of health and safety. Occasionally, other prudent, unlisted steps may be taken.

Initially instances of inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with by the class teacher. This will include children being advised about their behaviour and about how to improve. Discussion about behaviour and its consequences will form part of Social, Personal & Health Education (SPHE) lessons at all class levels. 'Good Friends Week' takes place at the start of every school year to promote positive relationships among the children. Teachers will actively promote positive behaviour and aim to "catch" repeated offenders at activities where they can give positive feedback, thus promoting better behaviour.

However, where these strategies have failed and where inappropriate behaviour is more serious or persistent it will be necessary to involve others including the principal, parents/guardians and the Board of Management. The principal and staff may also seek assistance from NEPS, NCSE, HSE, TUSLA or other agencies.

7. Unacceptable Behaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised by this policy:

- Minor
- Serious
- Gross

Inappropriate behaviour falls into one of above three categories – minor, serious or gross. Teachers and/or the principal will make judgements based on a common-sense approach having regard to the age or vulnerability of the child and the gravity and frequency of any inappropriate behaviour.

Dealing with instances of unacceptable behaviour is the responsibility of the class teacher, the supervising teacher at break-times or the teacher who observes the behaviour. Any instances of misbehaviour dealt with at break times should also be brought to the attention of the class teacher.

Minor Inappropriate behaviour

The following are examples of possible minor inappropriate behaviour:

Interrupting class work, running in the school building, littering around the school, not completing homework without good reason (to include a note from a parent/guardian), talking out of turn.

Teachers will take the following steps when dealing with Minor Inappropriate behaviour.

Phase 1

- Reasoning with the pupil
- Verbal reprimand
- Time out to reflect
- Where appropriate, noting instances of yard inappropriate behaviour on Aladdin and informing class teacher

Regular occurrences of Minor Inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with as follows:

Phase 2

- Temporary separation from peers (within the classroom)
- Referral to another teacher/classroom
- Discussion with parents/guardians about misbehaviour
- Loss of privileges, e.g., some of their Golden Time

Phase 3

- Formal letter from school principal informing parent/guardians of continuous misbehaviour (Yellow Card)

Serious Inappropriate behaviour

The following are examples of possible serious inappropriate behaviour:

Constantly disruptive in class, telling lies, stealing, damaging the property of others, bullying, answering back a teacher, endangering self or fellow pupils in the class or the yard, using Unacceptable language, deliberate and continual noncompliance, discourteous or unmannerly behaviour, leaving school premises without permission.

All incidents of bullying will be dealt with as outlined in the school's Anti-Bullying Policy (See separate policy).

Teachers will take steps as outlined from Phase 2 above, but depending on the inappropriate behaviour may proceed to the following steps when dealing with Serious Inappropriate behaviour.

When dealing with any type of misbehaviour staff should strive to use a restorative approach (and/or use of the Incredible Years programme). Staff as such use the following questions to investigate an incident:

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

These questions may be used in a restorative circle with several children and staff participating. An account of incidents which require formal restorative circles will be entered on Aladdin.

Suspension will be used as a sanction where all attempts at reasoning with the pupil have failed and where all other efforts of the school in consultation with the parents/guardians of the pupil have failed to achieve a satisfactory conclusion. Following formal verbal discussions, a letter outlining items discussed will be sent to parents/guardians.

Communications to parents regarding the suspension of a pupil, or the possibility of considering suspension as a sanction, will be in writing (Red Card). (Copies of all correspondence will be retained).

Regular occurrences of Serious Inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with as follows:

- Parents/guardians will be invited to meet class teacher, the principal and/or the chairperson to discuss repeated serious incidents of inappropriate behaviour.

Gross Inappropriate Behaviour

The following are examples of gross inappropriate behaviour:

Bringing weapons or dangerous substances to school, persistently engaging in activities which have been identified by members of staff as dangerous or inappropriate, leaving school premises without permission, deliberately injuring any member of the school community, aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff or a pupil (e.g. physical violence, striking, nipping, biting, spitting).

Persistent incidents of serious inappropriate behaviour will be classified as gross inappropriate behaviour.

Teachers will take the following step when dealing with Gross Inappropriate behaviour:

- Principal and Chairperson are informed immediately and suspension sanctioned.

8. Suspension

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents/guardians will be utilised. Communication with parents/guardians may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances. When all efforts have been made to communicate with parents/guardians and they refuse or fail to engage with the school, a referral will be made to the Tusla Child and Family Agency, Social Work Department.

For gross inappropriate behaviour or repeated instances of serious inappropriate behaviour, suspension may be considered. Parents/guardians concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Where there are repeated instances of serious inappropriate behaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson, teacher and the principal. If the parents (and the pupil) do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous inappropriate behaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other

interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross inappropriate behaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the health and safety of pupils and teachers, the Board has deferred responsibility to the principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents/guardians. However, if it is not possible to contact the parents/guardians, the child will be removed to another class for the remainder of the day and will take home with them a letter (Red Card) detailing the reason for suspension, length of suspension and requirements for readmission to school.

Further suspensions will require Board of Management approval. This approval may be obtained at a regular meeting of the Board or at an emergency meeting at which the Chairperson and Principal have outlined to the Board the reasons why they feel it is necessary to impose a further suspension.

In line with the requirements of the Education Welfare Act (2000), the Board of Management will inform the Tusla Educational Welfare Services when any pupil's period of suspension equals or exceeds six school days in any school year.

When a student is suspended, the parents/guardians will be requested to remove the student from the school. The principal will meet with the parents/guardians to outline the decision to implement the suspension and will present the parents/guardians with a written statement of the terms, duration and date of the termination of the suspension.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following, or during a period of suspension, the parents/guardians may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parents/guardians (and pupil) must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and 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 and will not have a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils. The principal in consultation with the parents/guardians, the class teacher and the pupil (if appropriate) will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil, if required, and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

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 Chairperson of the Board and the principal.

9. Expulsion

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil in an extreme case (see p.80/81/82, Developing a Code of Behaviour; Guidelines for Schools), e.g., where repeated incidents of serious inappropriate behaviour interfere with the educational opportunities of fellow students or where there is a threat to the health and safety of either students or staff. Where expulsion is considered the school authorities shall have tried a range of other interventions and shall have formed the opinion that they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour. This sanction would be imposed under the terms of the Education Welfare Act (2000). Suspension/expulsion procedures are in accordance with the Education Act (1998).

10. Before/After School

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before the official opening time of 8.50a.m. or after the official closing time of 1.30p.m. (infants) and 2.30p.m. (other classes) except where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management. Pupils involved in such activities, or engaging in online learning activities which are set by teachers, are expected to behave in accordance with school behaviour policy during these times.

Parents/guardians who collect their children should be at the school no later than 1.30pm or 2.30pm as the school cannot accept responsibility for looking after the children after this time. If a child is continually being left after school hours, their parents/guardians may be asked to meet with the Board of Management.

If a child is being collected by anyone other than parents/guardians, parents/guardians must inform school/ class teacher of arrangements in writing by email or letter in reasonable time.

Reduced Day

Placing a pupil on a reduced school day should always be seen as short term and transitional in nature, a reintegration intervention, as a last resort and in the context of supporting the full inclusion/re-integration of the child. However, in exceptional circumstance, and when deemed necessary, a reduced timetable, may be agreed in consultation with principal, class teacher, relevant SEN staff and parents and Tulsa will be notified. This action will be time-bound, monitored regularly and every effort will be made to re-integrate the pupil into full school timetable at the earliest possible opportunity.

Children Leaving School Early

If a child needs to leave school early for any reason, e.g., dental, doctor's appointment, etc., they must be collected from the school reception at an agreed time by parents/guardians who must notify class teacher by email or note in advance of arrangements.

If a parent has not notified the school in advance that they are collecting their child early, they will be required to sign the child out at the office.

If a staff member asks a parent to collect their child early due to illness, etc., this must be noted on Aladdin by the class teacher.

11. Inappropriate behaviour on the Yard

The teacher on duty who notices inappropriate behaviour will reason with the pupil/s misbehaving. If no improvement occurs the following procedure may be followed:

- Ask the pupil/s misbehaving to accompany the teacher on duty as they patrol the yard.
- Impose a period of "time out" – up to 5 minutes – where the student will be asked to remain sitting on the bench until told to return to play.
- Inform the class teacher (who may decide to impose a further sanction depending on the seriousness of the inappropriate behaviour) and if deemed of a persistent or serious nature, provide class teacher with written report via Aladdin.
- If required, the incident will be noted in pupils record on Aladdin.
- In some cases, the teacher on yard duty may issue a Yellow Card or refer the matter to the principal.

12. 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 to manage aggressive or violent behaviour. A small minority of students may show challenging behaviour. These students will need a sustained and systematic response involving the important adults in their lives, in school and at home. Regular communication, via email or Aladdin Connect, will be completed by the class teacher, to provide continuous feedback between parents and teachers on the child's behaviour, in addition to regular verbal communication.

13. Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education 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)

14. Keeping records

In line with the school's policy on record keeping, and data protection legislation, formal records in relation to pupils' behaviour are kept in a secure location (usually on Aladdin). Copies of all communications with parents/guardians will be retained in the school.

Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school:

- Parents/Guardians must notify the school in writing (via Aladdin connect or email) of a student's absence and the reason for this absence even if verbal communication with the school has taken place.

15. Children with Additional Needs

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with additional needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and relevant staff.

These members of staff will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be considered. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be used to inform actions taken.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with additional needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

16. Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management's 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
- Recognise and affirm good work
- Prepare schoolwork and correct work done by pupils
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils
- Be courteous, consistent and fair
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum
- Deal appropriately with inappropriate behaviour
- Keep a record of instances of serious inappropriate behaviour or repeated instances of inappropriate behaviour
- Provide support for colleagues
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

Pupils' Responsibilities

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Listen to their teachers 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
- Bring correct materials/books to school including completed homework
- Follow school and class rules
- Wear their full uniform and school tracksuit on PE days only

Parents/Guardians' 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 schoolwork
- 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
- Communicate in writing 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.
- Provide their child with the correct equipment for school
- Support their child in completing homework assigned
- Ensure their child comes to school well rested
- Encourage good personal hygiene in their child
- Communicate in writing the reasons for child being late for school
- Ensure their child wears correct uniform to school

17. Reference to other Policies

Other school policies that have a bearing on the Code of Behaviour include:

- SPHE plan
- Anti-bullying

- Enrolment
- Health & Safety
- Special Educational Needs
- Child Protection

18. Success Criteria

This policy will be deemed to be successful when the following are observed:

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

19. Implementation Date

February 2024

20. Review

The code will be discussed at staff meetings and reviewed periodically.

21. Ratification and Communication

The policy will be posted on the school website and all parents notified on Aladdin Connect.

Any parent who does not have access to the internet will be advised to call to the school to obtain a hard copy.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 22/10/2024.

Signed: 
Chairperson

Date: 