



Code of Behaviour

Content of Policy

Introductory Statement	3
Rationale	3
Ethos of the school	3
Aims	3
1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school	4
2. Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour	5
Staff	5
Board of Management	6
Parents /Guardians	7
Pupils	8
3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour	9
Classroom	9
Playground(s)	9
Privacy Code	11
Other areas in the school	12
School related activities	12
4. Rewards and Sanctions	12
Rewards and acknowledging good behaviour	12
Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour	12
Involving parents/guardians in management of problem behaviour	13
Managing aggressive or violent misbehaviour	13
5. Suspension/Expulsion	13
Suspension	15
Grounds for Suspension	15
Forms of Suspension	15
Expulsion	18
Expulsion Procedures	18
Authority to Expel	18
Grounds for Expulsion	20
Appeals	21
6. Recording keeping	21
7. Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school	22

8. Reference to other Policies 22

Reference Section 24

Introductory Statement

This Code of Behaviour was devised by the staff, pupils, parents/guardians and BOM of St Finian's National School and was reviewed in January 2025 to ensure that it is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NWEB, 2008.

Rationale

As it is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) which refers to the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in Section 23(2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:

- *The **standards of behaviour** that shall be observed by each student attending the school;*
- *The **measures that shall be taken** when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;*
- *The **procedures to be followed** before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;*
- *The **grounds for removing a suspension** imposed in relation to a student; and*
- *The procedures to be followed in relation to a **child's absence** from school*

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

In St. Finian's N.S. we attempt to address co-operation between staff and pupils on a daily basis. Through our mission statement and school values we strive to provide a harmonious environment and aim to nurture the potential of everyone in the whole school community. We hope that this Code of Behaviour will attempt to continue to develop positive relationships and values which exist in the school and to act as a framework for good behaviour.

Mission Statement

St. Finian's NS is a co-educational, Catholic, primary school, which strives to provide a well - ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed. While St. Finian's NS is a school with a Catholic ethos, it also has due recognition for all other religions.

St. Finian's NS strives to promote, both individually and collectively, the professional and personal development of teachers through staff development programmes. St. Finian's NS encourages the involvement of parents/guardians through home/school contact and through their involvement in the Parents' Association.

St. Finian's NS endeavours to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community, to imbue in pupils' respect for people and property and to encourage in them the idea of being responsible.

The St. Finian's NS promotes gender equity amongst the teachers and pupils.

St. Finian's NS aims to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people. St. Finian's NS models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Catholic school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church and promotes the formation of the pupils in the catholic faith.

Ethos of the school

School Ethos:

St. Finian's N.S. is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, providing religious instruction in line with Catholic traditions. Pupils are prepared for the sacraments of First Confession, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation. The school fosters the holistic development of each pupil—spiritually, academically, and socially—emphasizing respect, inclusion, and care for the environment.

Commitment to Learning & Development:

- **High Professional Standards:** The principal and staff create a safe, active and engaging learning environment.
- **Digital Integration:** Teachers incorporate technology to enhance learning, teaching, and assessment.
- **Positive School Ethos:** Respect, good manners, and appreciation of diversity are core values.
- **Behaviour & Discipline:** Pupils are expected to be respectful, responsible, and engaged in school life.

Commitment to Sustainability:

St. Finian's N.S. promotes environmental, cultural, social, and economic sustainability, ensuring pupils develop the knowledge and skills needed to contribute positively to the world.

This vision guides our school community in fostering a respectful, inclusive, and future-focused learning environment.

Our school values are: We do our best, we are brave and we are kind
Our school motto is BestBraveKind

Aims

In devising this code of behaviour, St Finian's National School staff hopes to create an orderly environment in which pupils can, through developing self-discipline, make progress in all aspects of their development.

This code of behaviour clearly outlines the school's expectations for each member of the school community, to make the school a great place for teaching and learning.

- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community
- To assist parents/guardians and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour, and to seek their cooperation in the application of these procedures
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school
- To foster a caring attitude to one another and the environment
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption

1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school

St Finian's recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to understand these differences. A high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school. It requires cooperation among staff and then between staff, parents/guardians and pupils. The limits of behaviour are clearly defined here. Teachers will make the children aware of the consequences beyond these limits. Consistency of implementation leads to clarity and a sense of fairness for all.

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

- Each pupil is expected to be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults
- Each pupil is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own belongings
- Each pupil is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual
- Each pupil is expected to do his/her best both in school and for homework.

- Each pupil is expected to be on their best behaviour when representing the school, this includes school tours, outings and walking to and from school.

There is recognition that factors influencing children's behaviour may sometimes need to be considered and accommodated. In this case The Continuum of Support will be implemented where required. Each class is required to draft their own rules through consultation and discussion within the class group and they will reflect the level of the students in the class. These rules will be kept to a minimum and be recorded in age appropriate language. Each class is required to adopt school values and supplement with values per year group.

They will be stated positively, stating what to do as well as the desired behaviour. Rewards for good behaviour and sanctions for unacceptable behaviour will be clearly outlined.

Prior to registering a pupil, the principal teacher will provide the parents/guardians of the child with a copy of the school's code of behaviour and may require parents/guardians to confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them and they will make every effort to comply with the code.

2. Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour

The Board of Management and the Principal have overall responsibility for the implementation and on-going monitoring of this policy. All members of the school community have opportunities to make suggestions through their representatives on the BOM or directly to the Principal. This policy will apply to all students during all school related activities either on or off site.

In St Finian's NS we take a whole school approach to promotion of positive behaviour. Effective teaching and an engaging curriculum have a very positive effect on student behaviour along with good classroom management and positive teaching methods. Clear standards of behaviour are communicated and discussed at staff meetings and other informal meetings with SNAs. Parents/guardians are given a copy of the Code of Behaviour upon enrolment. Children are involved in developing rules and agree to them within the class. They will then understand how their behaviour and the learning of others are linked together. Rules are reinforced to children with SEN during class time and with their support teachers and SNAs. All staff / new teachers are made aware of children with medical diagnoses.

St Finians use the PBL (Positive Behaviour for Learning) model for day to day behaviour strategies in the classroom. We believe that students will be rewarded for positive behaviour. Classes are allowed autonomy on how it is implemented with their groups as different reward systems work differently in different classes.

In the event the PBL does not have the desired effect with individuals in a class we use individual and more personalised strategies to target behaviours.

Staff

Opportunities for staff to deepen their understanding of the factors that affect behaviour and that help students to change behaviour happens at staff meetings, particularly at the first staff meeting in September of each year. Staff can access reports relating to their new class on Aladdin. Time is allocated at the end of each year for teachers to have a hand over and any behavioural or disciplinary issues are discussed. For children who may present with behavioural difficulties arising from their special education needs, specific strategies are in place through the use of IEPs with behavioural targets and the Continuum of Support documents. These IEPs and Continuum of Support documents are passed on to the new class teacher and all relevant staff involved with this child.

Staff are trained in the PBL programme at the beginning of the year. The PBL team goes through the protocols for the PBL system.

This code is communicated to new and temporary staff by the principal and PBL team. The code is communicated to parents/guardians who enrol a child in St Finian's as part of their enrolment pack.

The school's SPHE curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship. The following activities are samples of tools utilised to develop these skills in children:

- Circle Time
- Stay Safe Programme
- 101 Games for Better Behaviour
- Developing Citizenship
- Continuum of Support Documents
- Cooperation and team building activities
- PE games
- Projects
- Science Fair
- Fair Day
- School plays
- Cultural days
- Incredible years programme
- PBL
- Berry Street Programme
- Middletown training for Autism
- Zones of regulation

Board of Management

The BOM has overall responsibility for school policies. The Board supports the Principal and staff in implementing the code. The Board ensures that the code is communicated to all members of the school community.

The Board of Management formally recorded the adoption of the code of behaviour at the BOM meeting. The code will be reviewed and adopted yearly in the last term each year or when new guidelines are implemented by a relevant state agency through the Department of Education and Science.

- The Board of Management provide a comfortable, safe environment
- They support the Principal and staff in implementing the Code
- They ratify the Code
- They ensure that the Code is communicated to the whole school community
- They are called to a meeting to deal with serious breaches of behaviour if they arise.

Parents /Guardians

- Co-operation between staff and parents/guardians is strongly encouraged. All staff are open and approachable; however prior appointments have to be made with class teachers. Notes can be sent through the school journal to arrange an informal, initial meeting with parents/guardians.
- The code of behaviour is communicated to parents/guardians on the enrolment of their child in the enrolment pack.
- The code of behaviour is on the school website and is available at the office.
- Parents/guardians support the school in the promotion of positive behaviour and the maintenance of high standards of behaviour in the following ways:
 - Parents/guardians ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually
 - Parents/guardians encourage their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work
 - Parents/guardians are aware of and cooperate with the school's rules and system of rewards and sanctions especially in the case of the implementation of the Continuum of Support
 - Parents/guardians attend meetings at the school if requested
 - Parents/guardians help their children with homework and ensure that it is completed
 - Parents/guardians ensure their children have the necessary books and materials for school.

- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems/information which may affect the child's behaviour/progress
- Be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and support its implementation
- Furnish the school with any relevant reports from other agencies e.g. psychological reports or any relevant documents that are related to the child.
- Smoking is not allowed anywhere on the school grounds
- Parents/guardians are asked to park their cars with due regard to the school warden and are asked to respond to his requests
- Dogs are not allowed on the school yard
- On wet days, doors of the school will open at 8:50 and supervising teachers will monitor classes.
- Parents/guardians are asked to ensure that children have healthy lunches every day, with a treat on Fridays only
- Correct school uniforms should be worn by all children. Tracksuits should be worn on PE days only. Teachers will advise as to PE days for their classes.
- A routine of cleanliness should be established in the home for each pupil
- Parents/guardians of junior infant children should ensure that their child is toilet trained. They should be able to remove coats with ease. Lunches should be easily accessed by the child- e.g. oranges should be peeled, containers should be easily opened by small fingers and yogurts should have an accompanying spoon.
- Parents/guardians are required to send a note / Aladdin note stating the reasons for the child's absences in a timely manner. In order to comply with the Education Welfare Act 2000, a pupil's absence of twenty days in one school year must be reported to the National Educational Welfare Board. Parents/guardians are informed of this reporting.
- Parents/guardians need to send a note if children have to leave early
- Parents/guardians and community to adhere to the parking guidelines when dropping off students
- Parents should know that we strive to create a safe and secure environment for all staff and students in the school. We have a zero tolerance approach to threats, violence, abuse and harassment of any kind.

Pupils

Pupils play a part in the on-going implementation of the code of behaviour.

- Help with the drafting rules for the classroom
- Listen to teachers and act on instructions/advice
- Pupils must accept the authority of all staff in the school community
- Show respect to all members of the school community
- Respect all school property, their own property and the property of others
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.

- Avoid nasty remarks, name-calling, swearing, bullying
- Include other pupils in games and activities
- Bring correct materials/books to schools
- Do homework set by teacher
- Follow school and class rules
- Wear the school uniform and take pride in their appearance
- If needed, mobile phones must be switched off and left in the office, during school hours
- Do nothing to disrupt the teacher from teaching
- Walk in orderly fashion until they reach their own yard
- Stay within the boundaries of the specified play area and only leave with the express permission of the adult in charge
- Take part in school assemblies
- All children stop and walk slowly to lines when bell rings
- On wet days children remain seated at all times unless otherwise instructed

3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour

As a staff we agree that the most effective methodology that teachers develop in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place.

Positive strategies are used throughout the school, as per the PBL programme, to promote good behaviour and to prevent misbehaviour. Good behaviour is expected at all times while in school and also when representing the school outside of the school.

Classroom

St Finian's staff use the following methods to manage behaviour effectively in the classroom.

- Ground rules / behavioural expectations in each class are consistent with the ethos as expressed in the code of behaviour and set a positive atmosphere for learning
- Pupil input is requested in devising the class rules
- Teachers ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave
- A clear system is in place to acknowledge and reward good behaviour. Sanctions are used for misbehaviour
- Classroom management techniques ensure a variety of activities and methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation
- Timetabling/routine.

Playground(s)

- A yard code has been established. This is communicated to staff at staff meetings and to pupils by their class teacher.
- Children must stay in the playground designated for their class. Children cannot leave the playground without the permission of the supervising teacher or adult
- Children may not run in such a manner that the teacher or adult on duty may feel would be a danger to the other children. Kicking and rough behaviour are strictly forbidden.
- As a rule, children should not be allowed back into the school during playtime, with the exception of a supervised toilet break.
- At the end of each break on hearing the bell sound, all children should stop playing and walk to their respective class lines.
- Each class walks into the school in single file (see Fire Evacuation Procedures)
- No food/drinks to be taken out to the yard
- Operation of a points system for all yard lines, where necessary.

Guidelines for dealing with incidents while on yard duty:

- Any incident – (accident/misbehaviour) should be investigated, checked and reported to the class teacher or principal if necessary. Sanctions should be administered by the class teacher or by the principal if the incident is deemed to be of a serious nature.
- If the supervising teacher or SNA notices frequent occurrences of misbehaviour, the child's name should be submitted to the class teacher (see Disciplinary Procedure).
- The teacher should examine all falls and injuries. If the injury is a minor graze or bump and the injury necessitates dressing, the supervising teacher or SNA will deal with this

in situ. A first Aid kit is available in all yards.

- All head bumps and more serious injuries are recorded on a google form and reported to parents/guardians immediately
- If the injury is deemed to be of a very serious nature and the parent cannot be contacted, or if contacted cannot come to the school in a short time, the school will call an ambulance. See Health/Illness procedures.

First Aid

- First Aid Kit is available on each yard during break times
- Only teachers/school staff should administer first aid to children.
- Class teacher/Principal should be called for serious injury. All cuts, bruises, bumps should be reported to class teacher.
- There is a number of staff that has received first responders training.

Yard Boundaries

- Climbing on walls, sheds, trees, fences etc. is not allowed
- Children may not enter school without permission from the supervising adult.
- Only tennis balls / soft balls are allowed to be kicked on the yard. Basketballs are allowed in senior yard

Toilets

- Senior Yard: Supervising teacher allows two helpers to bring younger children to the toilet, if needed. Helpers escort the child from the yard to the toilet. Helpers stand at the toilet door. They do not enter toilets with younger children.
- Junior Yard: Supervising teacher or SNA can monitor the child going to the toilet from the yard as it is located at the door to the yard.

Yard Code

- Respect, courtesy and co-operation should be shown towards each other and supervising adults at all times.
- Respect for each other's safety
- Children should be friendly to each other and include each other in games.
- Respect for environment – no litter/ pulling at trees/ kicking mulch
- Remain within white lines, not up on the bank or on the grass (except with the express permission of the adult on duty).
- Arrangements for supervision in the playground are organised by the principal at the beginning of each year. A timetable is drawn up for all staff including SNAs and adhered to at all times.
- SEN children are monitored by SNAs. All children are visible at all times.
- Creation of a quiet activities zone within the playground is allowed for.
- On wet days children remain in the classroom - suitable board games, jigsaws, drawing materials, activities are provided by the teacher.
- The children are supervised by the yard teachers/SNAs on returning from the playground, and by their class teacher when going out to the yard.

- Incidents of misbehaviour on yard are managed by time out and reporting to class teacher at end of break

Privacy Code

The use of any recording on any device which breaches the privacy of any member of the school community will be regarded as a gross breach of discipline.

Other areas in the school

At the start of the year and at the start of terms, children are reminded about the importance of positive behaviour in all areas of the school grounds.

School related activities

Standards of behaviour outlined in the code of behaviour are expected during school tours, games and extracurricular activities, and all school-linked events/activities both on and off site, this includes travelling to and from school.

4. Rewards and Sanctions

Rewards and acknowledging good behaviour

Sample methodologies that are used in the school

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- Mention at assembly
- A comment/sticker on the child's copy
- A visit to another class/principal's office
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parents/guardians
- Other suitable methods already employed by individual teachers
- Pupil of the week
- Displays of work

Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour

Sanctions

This procedure will be followed in the case of repeated instances of unacceptable behaviour. These sanctions are not necessarily sequential.

- Reasoning (i.e. explaining the consequences of the misbehaviour).
- Reprimand.
- Prescribing additional work.
- Temporary separation- time out
- Loss of privileges. (privileges include representing the school at matches/ tours etc)
- Informal communication between teacher and parents/guardians

- Referral to Principal.
- Communication with parents/guardians - Parents/guardians may not be informed of every incident. It is not a realistic or reasonable expectation that a teacher will make contact with a parent/guardian for every minor behaviour contrary to the Code of Behaviour. It is a matter for the class teacher or school management to exercise their own professional judgement regarding when they need to report a behavioural concern to a parent/guardian. Typically, this would occur whereby after the class teacher, other teacher, Assistant Principal or Deputy Principal has intervened in the pupil's behaviour and despite this intervention, the behaviour has continued and the teacher has formed the opinion that parental support in the specific behaviour at school is beneficial/required.
- Suspension (See Section on Suspension)
- Expulsion (see section on Expulsion)

Involving parents/guardians in management of problem behaviour

- Parents/guardians are contacted by the principal/class teacher depending on the nature of the issue. This will be decided by the principal.
- Parents/guardians are contacted when school methods fail to correct problem behaviour. This decision is made by class teacher and principal, who would already be aware of an existing problem
- Following a school team planning meeting, parents/guardians are invited to the school and are met cordially by the teachers involved. An explanation is given and the parents/guardians are advised of the methods which will be employed to correct this behaviour e.g. Continuum of Support/Sanctions/ or other as decided at the planning meeting.
- The child will not be present, but will be informed of the plan/outcome of the meeting afterwards.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to stay in contact with the school if they have concerns. A follow up date is set at the first meeting to make sure that the plan is functioning effectively and to keep all parties informed.

Managing aggressive or violent misbehaviour

- Children with complex needs are immediately discussed with NEP's psychologist with the view to obtain an assessment.
- Through the Special Educational Needs Organiser, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Service Executive, NEPS, CAMHS
- A trained mentor for newly qualified teachers exists to support them if they have any such pupils in their class.
- Professional development is available to staff e.g. SESS, Colleges of Education, Education Centres, and NEPS school services.

5. Suspension/Expulsion

These sanctions will only be considered at the end of the following procedures.

The sanction of suspension requires the pupil to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of days. During the suspension period the pupil retains their place in St. Finian's NS.

Suspensions can provide a respite for staff and the pupil, give the pupil time to reflect on the link between their action and its consequences and give staff time to plan ways of helping the student to change unacceptable behaviour.

The Principal may suspend a pupil for a period of 3 days and/or a period of 5 days with the approval of the Board of Management. A pupil may be suspended for a maximum period of 10 days by the board of Management for serious incidents. Whereby the cumulative total of days exceed 20 days absence the suspension will be subject to a review by the BOM

Suspension

Grounds for Suspension

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 pupil requires serious grounds such that:

- The pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- The pupil's continued presence in the school at the time constitutes a threat to safety of pupils or staff.
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.
- Recording a pupil or staff member without their knowledge.

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

Before suspending a pupil the Principal/staff/BoM should reflect on the nature and seriousness of the behaviour, the context of the behaviour, the impact of the behaviour, the interventions tried to date (where applicable), whether suspension is a proportionate response and the possible impact the suspension will have on all concerned. (consult pg 72 of the NEWB 'Developing a Code of Behaviour – Guidelines for Schools')

Forms of Suspension

Suspension may take the following form;

- **Immediate Suspension** – The Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the physical and/or emotional well-being and safety of pupils or staff of the school, or any other person.
- **Automatic Suspension** – A decision may be reached, as part of the school's policy on sanctions, and following consultation by the Principal and/or BoM with the teachers and parents, that particular named behaviours incur suspension as a sanction.
- **Rolling suspension** – A pupil should not be suspended from school shortly after returning to school unless –
 - the pupil engages in serious misbehaviour that warrants suspension and
 - fair procedures are observed in full and
 - the standard applied to judging the behaviour is the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student.
- St. Finian's NS does not impose informal/unacknowledged suspensions. Any imposed withdrawal of a pupil from attendance for part or full school day is a suspension and will be treated as such. All guidelines will be followed accordingly.
 - St. Finian's NS does not impose open-ended suspension. All suspension periods will be clearly decided upon and communicated to the pupil, parents and staff.

Fair Procedures in Respect of Suspension

Fair Procedure will be followed in relation to all suspensions. The two essential parts to fair procedure are

- **The right to be heard**
- **The right to impartiality**

The **right to be heard** means:

- The right to know that the alleged misbehaviour is being investigated.
- The right to know the details of the allegations being made and any other information that will be taken into account.
- The right to know how the issue will be decided.
- The right to respond to the allegations
- Where the possible sanction is of a serious nature, the right to be heard by the decision making body (may be the Board of Management or the Principal or Principal and member of teaching staff)
- Where the possible sanction is of a serious nature, the right to ask questions of the other party or witnesses where there is a dispute about the facts.

The **right to impartiality** means:

- The right to an absence of bias in the decision maker
- The right to impartiality in the investigation and the decision making.

Fair procedure does not demand the formality of a courtroom. The level of formality for a 3 day suspension is less than for a longer suspension or expulsion. (Wright v Gorey Community School – High Court 2000)

Implementing the Suspension

When the sanction of suspension is to be imposed the Principal will notify the parents in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm

- The period of suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin
- The reasons for the suspension
- Any study programme to be followed
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and parents (for example, the parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour.
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. (Education Act 1998, Section 29), where the total no. of days exceed 20 days. A Section 29 Appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent.

The school will make allowances for parents with reading difficulties and/or language issues in the communication of the letter to them, once parents inform the school of such needs.

Grounds for Removal of a Suspension

A suspension may be removed by the Board of Management if the Board decides for any reason that the suspension should be removed or if the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills directs that it be removed following an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

After the Suspension Ends

The period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents about the suspension.

Reintegrating the pupil

St. Finians NS will make every reasonable effort to ensure that the pupil takes responsibility for catching up on work missed and will make every reasonable effort to assist the pupil in this regard.

The pupil will be monitored by the class teacher and Principal to help ensure any feeling of anger and/or resentment does not lead to further problem behaviour.

Clean Slate

As is standard practice in St. Finians NS, the pupil will be made aware that they have a clean slate in the eyes of the school teaching staff and should work to build on this opportunity for a fresh start. A record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed though once the sanction has been completed the school should expect the same standard of behaviour of this student as of all other students.

Records & Reports

Written/Typed records will be kept of

- The investigation
- Decision-making process
- Decision and rationale for the decision
- Duration of the suspension and conditions attaching
- Principal's report to the Board of Management
- Report to TUSLA if suspension is for 6 school days or more in any school year.
- A note of the behaviour and sanction will be added to the pupil's file by the Principal and a note will be added to the Classroom file by the class teacher.
- Records are written in a factual and impartial manner and retained.

Expulsion

Expulsion Procedures

A pupil is expelled from St. Finian's when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him/her from the school, having complied with the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Authority to Expel

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil from St. Finian's. This authority rests only with the Board of Management.

Grounds for Expulsion

The Board of Management of St. Finian's may decide to expel a pupil for what they view as an extreme case of unacceptable behaviour. St. Finian's will not expel a pupil unless significant steps have been taken to address the misbehaviour and will take steps to avoid the expulsion of a pupil by:

- Meeting with the parents and the pupil to try find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour. A Behaviour Management Plan will be formulated and implemented by the school. This plan will be formulated in consultation with the parents and where appropriate, with the pupil. Such a plan must receive support of teachers, parents and the pupil involved.
- Making sure the pupil understands the possible consequences of his/her behaviour, if it should persist.
- Ensuring all other possible options has been tried.
- Seeking the assistance of the relevant support agencies.

A proposal to expel may be made if serious grounds exist whereby

- The pupil's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, the key difference is that when expulsion is considered in St. Finian's, a series of other interventions will have been tried and the Board of Management believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour.

Automatic Expulsion – Expulsion for a first offence

The Board of Management may impose the sanction of expulsion for the following offences;

- A serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff or visitor to the school.
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
- Sexual assault
- An action which results in the intentional serious injury or death of another pupil or member of staff or visitor to the school.

Determining the appropriateness of expelling a student

The Board of Management will undertake a detailed review of a range of factors in deciding whether to expel a student. The Board will consider the factors as outlined on pg 82 of 'Developing a code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools'.

Procedures in respect of expulsion

The Fair procedures based on the principles of natural justice as outlined in the section of this document dealing with suspension apply.

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviours that could warrant expulsion, and/or persistent misbehaviour that result in the persistent disruption to learning and/or property that could warrant expulsion exist, the procedural steps will include: (pg.83 'Developing a Code of Behaviour – Guidelines for Schools, NEWB)

- 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 recommendation
- If required, the holding of a hearing.
- Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
- BOM to notify the EWO/TESS with an intent to expel and child will remain suspended for 20 school days from the date of confirmation that the EWO/TESS has received letter of intent.
- Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

It is a matter for the Board of Management to decide which of the tasks in these procedural steps requires separate meetings and which tasks can be accomplished together in a single meeting. Parents will be given due notice of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for the Board hearing

Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents/guardians (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) 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. Accordingly, our school will advise parents/guardians of this right of appeal and associated timeframe if it has been decided to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. Appeals to 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)

6. Record Keeping

Teachers will keep records of all PBL reflection sheets and sanction cards given to children. Parents are asked to sign these and so is the principal
Yard behaviour will be monitored and recorded

7. Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (2)(e) states that the code of behaviour must specify, *"the procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school."* Section 18 stipulates that parents/guardians must notify the school of a student's absence and the reason for this absence.

- Parents/guardians are made aware of the Education Welfare Act and its implications.
- Parents/guardians /guardians are reminded to send in a note informing teachers in writing of their child's absence from school and the reason for this absence
- The school uses the standard forms/internet (Aladdin programme) to report on pupil absences to the National Education Welfare Board.

8. Reference to other Policies

List and check other school policies that have a bearing on the code of behaviour e.g.

- SPHE plan
- Anti-bullying
- Enrolment
- Record keeping
- Health & Safety
- Equality
- Special Educational Needs

Success Criteria

- Observation of positive behaviour in classrooms, playground and school environment
- Consistent implementation of practices and procedures listed in this policy by staff
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents/guardians and pupils.

Roles and Responsibility

Name the people who have particular responsibilities for aspects of the policy

- The BOM will ratify the policy and monitor its success
- All staff along with the whole school community has responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- The Principal will coordinate and monitor the implementation of this policy in conjunction with staff, management, pupils and PBL team.

Implementation Date

The revised policy will be implemented at a BOM meeting: February 2025

Timetable for Review

The new policy is reviewed and revised at the end of every school year or when deemed necessary.

Signed on behalf of BOM 

Date:

Reference Section

- Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008
- Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2007 - provides for certain changes in the hearing of Appeals under S29 of the Education Act, 1998
- Education (Welfare) Act, 2000
- Education Act, 1998
- Circular 22/02 Appeals Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998. (DES website). Deals with appeals under the following headings:
 - (1) Permanent exclusion from a school
 1. Suspension
 2. Refusal to enrol
- Department of Education and Science Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post Primary Schools (1993) available on DES website
- Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes
- Management Board Members' Handbook. Revised 2007. CPSMA: A suggested Code of Behaviour & Discipline for National Schools
- INTO (2004) Managing Challenging Behaviour: Guidelines for Teachers
- INTO (2006) Towards Positive Behaviour in Primary Schools
- INTO (1995) Enhancing Self Esteem
- The Education Act 1998. The Education Welfare Act 2000. Questions and Answers, INTO
- The Principal's Legal Handbook Oliver Mahon B.L. IVEA 2002 Ch. 2 School Discipline
- Responding to Bullying. First Steps for Teachers. The Cool School Programme. NE Health Board
- Investigating and Resolving Bullying in Schools. The Cool School Programme. NE Health Board
- Stop it! Steps to Address Bullying. Wexford Education Network. Wexford Area Partnership.
- Working Together – to promote positive behaviour in classrooms, CEDR, Mary Immaculate College of Education
- Achieving Positive Behaviour. A Practical Guide. Patricia Dwyer. Marino
- PBL documents Available on School Drive

20 Rules of the School

1. Pupils should arrive for school no later than nine o'clock. A good rule should be: 'Be in line at 5 to 9'. Pupils must go straight to line and wait to be collected by teacher.
2. The complete school uniform must be worn at all times. On days when pupils have P.E. the school tracksuit and runners must be worn. Hooped/Looped/Dangled Earrings are not permitted. Studded Earrings are permitted. The wearing of make-up is not permitted.
3. Pupils returning to school after an absence must provide a written explanation signed by parents/guardians/guardian.
4. No child may leave the school premises during school hours unless he/she is collected by a parents/guardians/guardian or appropriate designated person.
5. On wet days, pupils are to remain seated during break time and may leave their places only with the permission of the teacher on duty.
6. Courtesy and respect and good manners should be shown to everyone at all times.
7. Pupils must show courtesy to adults (staff and parents/guardians) by standing to one side and allowing them in and out doors first. Pupils are also reminded that saying "Please" and "Thank You" is expected of them.
8. Pupils must walk to and from classrooms in silence and in an orderly fashion. Talking is not permitted in corridors, as it is disruptive to other classes.
9. When pupils are away from the school e.g. school tours, swimming, playing games, etc. they are to behave as if in the school and in a manner that will reflect well on the school.
10. 'Mitching' and vandalism of school property are regarded as serious breaches of school discipline.
11. The pupil's behaviour and attentiveness in class must be of such a standard as to allow the teacher conduct the class without undue disruption and to allow the other pupils learn to the best of their abilities.
12. Pupils must do all homework prescribed by the teacher. Failure to do so requires a written explanation from parents/guardians/guardian.
13. Pupils must eat a healthy lunch every day. Crisps, fizzy drinks, sweets, chocolate, popcorn or chewing gum are forbidden. Cans and glass bottles are also forbidden.
14. Pupils should be free to come to school, take part in the day's activities and go home without being bullied. Bullying is regarded as one of the most serious breaches of school discipline and is dealt with accordingly.
15. Using mobile phones or any digital recording device and/or 'connected device' is forbidden. In an exceptional

circumstance that a parents/guardians requires their child to keep a mobile phone with them, it must be excused by a written note, powered off, handed to the teacher and collected at the end of the day. Any recording devices will be confiscated by the teacher and handed to the Principal/Deputy-Principal/Assistant Principal or Class teacher and will only be returned by them to a parents/guardians/guardian.

23

16. Out of courtesy, a pupil who is tardy to class should apologise to teacher for their tardiness.
17. Rough play and 'mock' or 'mess' fighting is not allowed in the school yard. Pupils must freeze at first bell and go to their line after the second bell rings once directed by the Yard Supervisors until their teacher collects them.
18. Bicycles or scooters must be walked out of the schoolyard.
19. The distribution of Christmas Cards, birthday invitations and/or birthday party packs is not allowed by pupils on the school premises. Parents/guardians must use the Aladdin Class Connect Feature on their Connect app to issue invitations.
20. Stud earrings only allowed. No facial piercings or makeup allowed. Pupils may be asked to remove jewellery deemed to pose a health and safety hazard. Make-up is not permitted.