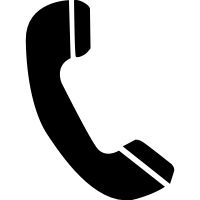
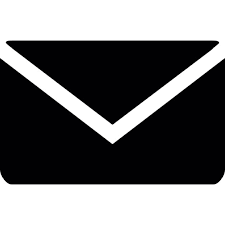
**St. Joseph’s Primary School**

**Templemore,**

**Co. Tipperary**

** 0504 31141**

[**principal@stjosephstemplemore.ie**](mailto:principal@stjosephstemplemore.ie)

****



**St. Joseph’s Primary School**

**Templemore**

**0504 31141**

**Code of Behaviour**

**Contents**

**1. Introduction**

**2. Policy formulation**

**3. Aims & objectives of the code**

**4. Whole school approach**

**5. Standards of behaviour**

**5.1 Pupils**

**5.2 Staff**

**5.3 Parents/guardians**

**6. Promoting positive behaviour**

**7. Inappropriate behaviour**

**8. Procedures for suspensions & expulsions**

**8.1 Suspension**

**8.2 Expulsion**

**9. Notification of a child’s absence from school**

**10. Records**

**11. Anti-bullying policy**

**11.1 Best practice in the prevention of bullying**

**11.2 Definition of bullying**

**11.3 School contact personnel**

**11.4 Education & prevention strategies**

**11.5 Investigation & follow-up procedures**

**11.6 Working with pupils affected by bulling**

**11.7 Supervision & monitoring**

**11.8 Prevention of harassment**

**11.9 Policy adoption**

**11.10 Communication**

**11.11 Implementation review**

**12. Policy ratification**

1. Introduction

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of St. Joseph’s Primary School has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for its Pupils, Staff and Parents.

**The Code of Behaviour details:**

1. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school;
2. The whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour. St Joseph’s follows the Incredible Years teacher classroom management programme
3. The measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards;
4. The procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
5. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil
6. The school’s Anti-Bullying Policy; and
7. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child’s absence from school.

The Code of Behaviour of St. Joseph’s Primary School has been developed in accordance with *‘Developing a Code of* *Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools’, National Educational Welfare Board, 2008*.

2. Policy Formulation

In formulating this policy the Board of Management completed the following steps;

1. Parents and Staff were informed that an initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was available and they were invited to make submissions on the content of the code within a specified timeframe.
2. Class teachers were requested to discuss the topic of ‘rules’ with their classes and submit a list of pupils suggestions to the sub committee
3. The initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was reviewed and where appropriate amended in-line with the feedback received.
4. The finalised draft of the policy was submitted for the Patron’s Approval

3. aims & objectives of the Code

**The aims and objectives of the code are**:

* To allow the school to function in an orderly way where all 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 school staff, parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation 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

4. Whole School Approach

The Board of Management recognises the importance of creating consistent values, policies, practices and relationships that support the Code of Behaviour. Such an environment may only be formed by involving the entire school community and in this respect the Board acknowledges the importance of the roles played by, the principal, teachers, ancillary staff and parents in the review and operation of the Code.

5. Standards of Behaviour

**5.1 Pupils**

**General Behaviour**

Each pupil is expected to:

* be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults
* speak kindly
* show kindness to others
* show respect for the property of, the school, other children and their own belongings
* attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual
* do his/her best both in school and for homework
* to be assertive, not aggressive
* have fun!

**Classroom Behaviour**

Each pupil is expected to:

* listen – to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking
* work – to the best of his/her ability
* value – school property and the belongings of fellow pupils
* keep- hands, feet & objects to oneself
* follow – the direction of his/her teacher
* obtain – his/her teachers permission to leave the classroom
* respect – the teacher, other pupils and visitors to the classroom

**Playground (Playing Pitches) Behaviour**

Each pupil is expected to:

* play – safely avoiding any games or play that are rough or dangerous
* follow – the directions of the playground supervisor(s)
* remain – on school grounds at all times
* obtain – permission before re-entering the school building during break times
* respect – the staff on supervision and fellow pupils
* avoid – swearing, fighting or name calling

**Behaviour in other School Areas**

Each pupil is expected to:

* walk and no talk– in the school corridors
* keep to the left on stairs
* say hello!

**Behaviour during School Outings/Activities**

Each pupil is expected to:

* follow – his/her teacher’s directions at all times
* remain – with the teacher/supervisors and group of pupils at all times
* behave – politely towards those they meet on such trips
* observe – the rules of general good behaviour

**Appropriate behaviour in relation to digital usage**

Refer to Acceptable User Policy for:

* Web browsing & downloading
* Email & messaging
* Social Media
* Personal Devices
* Images & Videoing
* Cyber bullying
* School website / educational websites

In the event of a misuse of any of the above, appropriate sanctions will apply.

**5.2 Staff**

It is the Principal’s responsibility to ensure the school’s Code of Behaviour is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils. However, the Deputy Principal ensures each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school, in practice & policy.

Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class. They will:

* Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in an age appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year
* Incredible Years Ethos is to the core of our Code of Behaviour
* Ensure the rules are displayed in the classroom
* Encourage self-discipline and positive behaviour
* Ensure there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times
* Implement the reward/sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner
* Keep a written record of all incidents of continued, serious or gross misconduct. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and, the consequences of its repetition
* Inform pupils when instances of misbehaviour on their part are being recorded
* Report repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the Principal

**5.3 Parents/Guardians**

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive behaviour in school. Parents/guardians can assist the school by encouraging their children to abide

by the school rules, encouraging punctuality and regular attendance and by ensuring that homework is given due time and effort.

Should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child’s behaviour they are welcome to make an appointment to discuss their concerns.

In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour parents will be invited to participate in the intervention process.

6. Promoting Positive Behaviour

Positive behaviour is encouraged and reinforced throughout the school. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and on yard, so that positive behaviour is instantly recognised and rewarded. Special attention will be paid to pupils who have previously been associated with poor behaviour so that not only good behaviour but also improvement in behaviour is acknowledged.

The **Incredible Years** ethos has been embedded into the culture of St Joseph`s Primary School.

To this end there are agreed strategies in place which come under the following headings:

* **Building positive relationships: with parents and the entire school community**
* **Becoming a proactive teacher: through the use of verbal/non-verbal strategies**

**Non-verbal**:

* Thumbs up
* ”T” for the toilet
* Dino`s 5
* Talking meter
* Happy gram

**Verbal:**

* Proximity praise
* Specific pupil praise
* Compliment circle
* Use of positive greetings & farewells
* Use of creative ways to gain pupil`s attention eg “ 1,2,3 eyes on me...”
* Establishing predictable routines & planning for transitions
* Use of “when...then …" commands

These strategies will be taught & used consistently at each class level. Pupils will be involved in drawing up of own class rules through collaborative discussion.

The final set of agreed rules will be displayed in a prominent position in the classroom.

**A reward scheme for promoting positive Behaviour will be used. Such rewards will include:**

* Dojo points system inc special privileges following the accumulation of set points
* Low cost/no cost rewards
* Lucky Dip
* Marbles in a Jar leading to specific privileges
* Golden Time
* Gradual removal of homework items

**We will endeavour to decrease inappropriate behaviour by:**

* Teaching “ignoring” strategy
* Use of “Time-Out” chair
* Loss of agreed privileges

**Special privileges:**

* Star chart/lucky dip after 6 stars
* Marble jars
* Golden time
* 30 points 'Buddy day',  50 Homework voucher, 100 'Special prize'
* Ticket system(3 tickets lucky dip)

7. Inappropriate Behaviour

**In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. The Code also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed.**

**Level One**

**Level 1: Behaviours**

Level 1 behaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and common areas. Students learn through their mistakes.  To this extent, responses to the daily behaviours, which occur in school, will be developmentally appropriate, instructive and positive. Children will be taught what is expected and how they should behave.  Listed below are some examples of the types of Behaviour that are included in Level 1.  Please note the list is not exhaustive.

* Failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers
* Disturbing the work or play of others
* Disrespectful language, tone, or manner
* Ignoring staff requests

**Level 1: Disciplinary Actions**

Consequences for Level 1 behaviour are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour.  Teachers will discipline students at level 1.  Some examples of Level 1 responses are:

* Verbal reprimand/reminder(s)
* Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
* Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
* Prescribing additional work
* Loss of privileges
* Parent contact
* Behaviour contract

**Level 1: Supportive Interventions**

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

* Classroom-based interventions, such as ***Restorative Practice*** or class meetings, with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members)
* Discussion of behaviour with the child
* Informal notes regarding incident/intervention/date recorded in the Incident Book.  This information would be useful should a problem persist

***The following Restorative Questions will be used to Address Harm:***

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

**Level Two**

**Level 2: Behaviours**

Level 2 behaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and well being of the students and staff.  Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 2.  Please note the list is not exhaustive.

* Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
* Behaviour which is dangerous to self or others (e.g. shoving, pushing, slapping, kicking, punching, hitting, biting)
* Inappropriate use of digital technology (as per AUP)
* Cyber bullying
* Intentionally damaging school or personal property
* Intentionally setting off Fire Alarm
* Stealing
* Cheating
* Use of profanity
* Derogatory reference to another person’s race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin
* Repeated ,disrespectful language or behaviour toward an adult or child
* Possession or use of dangerous objects, e.g. any kind of knives, etc.
* Leaving the school without permission during the school day or leaving the care of school staff during school outings.

**Level 2: Disciplinary Actions**

The disciplining of students for Level 2 behaviour is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour and developmentally appropriate levels.  The disciplinary actions at Level 2 are administered by the Class teacher & Principal, and include the formal notification of parents, with written documentation.  Some examples of Level 2 responses are:

* Report submitted to the Board of Management
* Meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s)
* Reduced day, with consent from parents
* Suspension from school of one to five days, depending on the severity of the behaviour
* Implementation of extensive Behaviour management plan

**Level 2: Supportive Interventions**

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

* Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Assistant Principals or Principal, HSCL
* Implement action plan
* Agree on a behavioural plan
* Consult: NEPs, Continuum of Support; Behavioural, Emotional & Social difficulties
* Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education and Education Welfare Officer
* Referral of a child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent)

**Level Three**

**Level 3: Behaviours**

Level 3 behaviours are considered the most serious violations.  These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal well being of the pupils and staff of the school.  They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment.  Situations, which include illegal activity, may result in contact with the Garda Síochána after parental involvement.  Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 3.  Please note that the list is not exhaustive.

* Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
* Setting fires
* Possession or intentional possession or use of weapons
* Violent fighting or intentionally causing physical harm to others
* Under the influence or in the possession of alcohol, illicit drugs and solvents
* Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, physical condition, handicap, or ethnic origin

**Level 3: Disciplinary Actions**

Behaviour at Level 3 may involve suspension from school. The length of the suspension will depend

upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour.  Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension is contained in this document.  Level 3 responses:

* **Suspension from school for one to five days:**

This response will occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour or Level 2 behaviour of significant severity.  The Principal following due process and procedure, can issue a suspension

* **Suspension from school for five to ten days:**

This response will occur with the repeated incidence of Level 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this Behaviour.  A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management

* **Expulsion:**

Repeated incidents of Level 3 behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled

8. Procedures for Suspensions & Expulsions

**8.1 Suspension**

**Definition of Suspension:**

**‘requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days’**

*Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board*

***Authority to Suspend:***

The Board of Management of St. Joseph’s Primary Schoolhas formally and in writing delegated the authority to impose an ‘**Immediate Suspension’** to the Principal Teacher. An ‘Immediate Suspension’ may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally and in writing delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an ‘**Automatic Suspension’** for named behaviours detailed in this policy. An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the

Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

The Board retains its authority to suspend a student in all other cases/circumstances.

**Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension**

An **‘Immediate Suspension’** will be deemed to be necessary where after a preliminary investigation the Principal reaches the determination that the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety and wellbeing of pupils or staff of the school. An ‘Immediate Suspension’ may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

An ‘**Automatic Suspension’** is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of St. Joseph’s Primary School, having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by Health & Safety Legislation, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur ‘Automatic Suspension’ as a sanction;

* Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff

or

* Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property

or

* Leaving the school without permission during the school day.

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected. In no circumstance will a student be sent home from school prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will issue in due course, but no later **than 2 school days** after the imposition of the suspension. Such a notification will detail:

* the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
* the reasons for the suspension
* any study programme to be followed
* the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be completed no later than 2 school days after the incident the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss;

* the circumstances surrounding the suspension,
* interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.

The Board of Management of St. Joseph’s Primary School acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given;

1. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.

**Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions:**

In cases other than those of Immediate or Automatic Suspension the following procedures will apply;

Where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management of St. Joseph’s Primary School will initiate a formal investigation of the matter.

The following procedures will be observed;

A written letter containing the following information will issue to Parent(s)/guardian(s);

1. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in suspension
2. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled **no later than 5 school days** from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed

The Board of Management of St. Joseph’s P.S. acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

1. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
2. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Where a decision to suspend has been made the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision. The letter will confirm:

* the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
* the reasons for the suspension
* any study programme to be followed
* the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
* the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to

appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.

**8.2 Expulsion**

**Definition of Expulsion:**

‘A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.’

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

**Authority to Expel:**

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

**Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:**

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will apply:

1. **A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required)**

As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s);

1. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
2. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than **5 school days** from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond
3. **The Principal (or BoM Nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management**

Where the Principal (or nominee) forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal (or nominee) makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

In this event the Principal (or nominee) will:

1. inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
2. ensure that parent(s)/guardians have records of: the allegations against the student; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
3. provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)
4. **Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal’s (or BOM’s Nominee) Recommendations & the Holding of a Hearing**

If, having considered the Principal’s report, the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student a hearing will be scheduled.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing

1. as to the date, location and time of the hearing
2. of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
3. that they may if they so choose be accompanied at the hearing

The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that;

1. the meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
2. the principal (or BoM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other’s presence
3. each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party
4. the parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose
5. **Board of Management Deliberations & Actions following the Hearing**

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled the Board

1. Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.
2. **Will not expel the student before the passage of 20 school days** from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification
3. Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
4. Will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer
5. Will suspend the student, if it is deemed likely that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils or staff.
6. **Confirmation of the Decision to Expel**

Where the **twenty-day period** following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing that the expulsion will now proceed. They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of St. Joseph’s Primary School acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

1. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
2. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

9. Notification of a Child’s Absence from School

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should adhere to the following procedures when notifying the school of a pupil’s absence;

* The school should be notified of the absence on the first day the pupil returns to school
* The reason for the absence should be notified to the class teacher
* The absence should be notified in writing by **letter / using the school journal**
* Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided
* Significant absences cause by ill health (i.e. absences longer than 10 school days) should be certified.

The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more, where the child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular.

10. Records

A standardised record system will be used to track an individual pupil’s Behaviour. Such records will contain;

* Incidents of misbehaviour,
* interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
* Evidence of improved behaviour
* Any sanctions imposed, and the reasons they were imposed

Pupils will be told when a record is being made about their behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained.

All records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

11. Anti-Bullying / CYBER Bullying Policy

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of **St. Joseph’s Primary School** has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school’s overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published by the Department of Education & Skills in September 2013.

**11.1 Best Practice in the Prevention of Bullying Behaviour**

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

* A positive school culture and climate which-
  + is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
  + encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
  + promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
* Effective leadership;
* A school-wide approach;
* A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
* Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
  + build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
  + explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
* Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
* Supports for staff;
* Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
* On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

**11.2 Definition of Bullying**

In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* bullying is defined as follows:

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

* deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
* cyber-bullying
* identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person’s membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school’s code of behaviour.

**However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour**.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school’s code of behaviour.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, *DES, 2013.*

**11.3 School Contact Personnel**

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

Class teachers & Principal

*(see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):*

**11.4 Education & Prevention Strategies**

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:

**School-wide approach**

* A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community
* The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
* The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions
* Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils’ lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention
* School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
* Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant
* and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school. See Acceptable Use Policy
* Involvement of the students in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Buddy system, mentoring and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support
* Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
* The school’s anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s)s are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school (every year)
* The implementation of regular (e.g. per year/per term/per month/per week) whole school awareness measures (DEIS: Social & Emotional Targets) e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; annual Friendship Week and parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; regular school or year group assemblies by principal, deputy principal, teachers etc.
* Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in ‘telling’. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly
* Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
* Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class
* Hand note up with homework
* Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school
* Anti-bully or Niggle box
* Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf
* Administer a confidential questionnaire (Sociogram) as needed
* Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place
* Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied
* The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils’ use of mobile phones
* The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school e.g. P.D.S.T. / R.S.E. Tutors

**Implementation of curricula**

* The full implementation of the S.P.H.E. curricula and the R.S.E. and Stay Safe Programmes
* Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes
* School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, Friendship Formula , Time to Talk, Copping on Programme, Friends for Life, Stop Think Do
  + Some of these programmes are delivered by School Completion programme
* Circle time
* Restorative Practice
* School wide delivery of lessons on **Relational aggression** (Friendship Formula & Seeing Red) **Cyber Bullying** ( Be Safe-Be Web wise, Web wise Primary teachers’ resources, Prim Ed Resources)
* Delivery of the Garda S.P.H.E. Programmes. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardaí, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying
* The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately

*(see Section 6.5 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools)*

**11.5 Investigation & Follow-Up Procedures**

The school’s procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

**The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame);**

**The school’s procedures must be consistent with the following approach.**

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

**Reporting bullying behaviour**

* Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school
* All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher
* Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (S.N.A.s), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher

**Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach (see section 6.8.9)**

* In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant)teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
* Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible
* Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach
* Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved
* All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;
* When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek

answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;

* If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other’s statements;
* Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher
* It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)
* In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to

the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils;

* Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school’s anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;
* It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school

**Follow up and recording**

* In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
  + Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased
  + Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is

Practicable

* + Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable
  + Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s)s or the school Principal or Deputy Principal
* Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
* Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school’s complaints procedures
* Refer to the school’s relevant policy
* In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children

**Recording of bullying behaviour**

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner

The school’s procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

**Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred**

* All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. Consideration needs to be given to where the records will be made e.g. incident book. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher
* While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
* The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated

**Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred**

* If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
* The school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher.

**Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)**

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

a) In cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and

b) Where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable. As a DEIS band 2 school, with a number of special needs children having behavioural difficulties, we are take cognisance of this when making a report

(c) St. Joseph’s considers behaviours that come under the category of “Gross Misbehaviours” as per our Code of Behaviour to be formally reported to the principal / deputy principal.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. All bullying incidences / reports, incidences of Gross misbehaviours and incidences regarding children protection & welfare will be kept in a designated folder in the office. References to these reports will also be kept in a specific diary for each academic year, also housed in the office. All records must be kept until the child has reached 21 years of age.

**Established intervention strategies:**

* Teacher interviews with all pupils
* Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
* Working with parent(s)/guardian(s)s to support school interventions
* No Blame Approach
* Circle Time
* Restorative interviews
* Restorative conferencing (see school restorative practices policy)
* Sociogram questionnaires will be utilised as needed under the auspices of the DEIS, Social, Emotional& Behavioural planning as deemed necessary
* Peer mediation where suitable training has been given
* The DEIS team also plan in co-operation with SCP & HSCL in tandem with above. Programmes include:
* The Friendship Formula
* Copping on Programme
* Seeing Red
* Time to Talk
* Prim Ed series of Anti Bullying / Cyber bullying lessons
* Webwise

*(see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools)*

**11.6 Working with Pupils Affected by Bulling**

The school’s programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows **(see Section 6.8.16 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):**

* All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.
  + Restorative Practice circles
  + Buddy / Peer mentoring system
  + Group work such as circle time
* If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour
* Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher

*(see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools)*

**11.7 Supervision & Monitoring**

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

**11.8 Prevention of Harassment**

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

**11.9 Policy Adoption**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on **Thursday 2nd May 2019.**

**11.10 Communication**

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents’ Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

**11.11 Implementation Review**

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents’ Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

**12. Policy Ratification**

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of **St Joseph’s Primary School**at its meeting

held on **Thursday 2nd May 2019.**

Signed: Pat Heffernan, Chairperson, Board of Management