

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR POLICY

1. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This policy statement is based on previous codes of behaviour in St. Martin's as well as codes and practices in the school. It was formulated between March and October 2009 following consultation with children, principal, staff, parents and the Board of Management. It is also being introduced in accordance with the NEWB Guidelines regarding a "Developing a Code of Behaviour".

2. RELATIONSHIP TO THE SPIRIT OF THE SCHOOL

St. Martin's Mission Statement states that "Our school will endeavour to create an environment in which our students can work to their academic potential and develop into well rounded, responsible, independent citizens, with respect for self, others and the world".

It goes on to state "We hope to achieve this by creating a safe, happy and caring school environment". It is on these ideals of safety, happiness and care that this Code of Behaviour is based.

Efforts will be made by all that the school adopt a positive approach to discipline and will therefore place a greater emphasis on praise and rewards rather than sanctions.

"Respect : Means treating others as you would like to be treated"

3. AIMS

The aims of this policy are:

- to inform and guide children of the correct and appropriate way to behave in the school environment with due care for themselves and others.
- to provide for the safe and effective operation of the school.
- to develop pupils self esteem.
- to develop self discipline in the children in St. Martin's.
- to facilitate the education of each child and the delivery of the curriculum throughout the school.
- to foster caring attitude to one another and the environment.

4. SCHOOL RULES

School rules are kept to a minimum. Where possible should always be stated in the positive. They may be adjusted so as to be age appropriate.

Rules give rights to children. With rights come responsibilities. Our school rules are written accordingly and are divided into areas of Safety, Happiness and Care.

They encourage children to think and act in a positive way. Each rule consists of a statement beginning 'I will...'

Our school rules are outlined in Appendix 1. Teachers may have class rules also which should be age and class appropriate.

5. AFFIRMING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentive than on sanctions.

While rewards do promote good behaviour, it is essential to remind children so that they know that good behaviour is expected because it is the right thing to do and not just because there is a reward for it.

Reward may consist of any of the following and will vary according to the age, interests and nature of the children's positive behaviour. Rewards may be of an Individual, class or whole school nature. A sample of possible rewards is as follows:

- Oral praise for written work or giving best effort.
- Recognition of good behaviour through certificate, cards/notes home to parents.
- Recognition of some certain responsibility or duty
- Praise in front of the class group / whole school (Tiónól)
- Stamp books
- Homework passes
- Extra class treats
- Video/DVD time
- Extended play time
- Hot Dog Day
- Visit of mobile cinema
- Medals presentation at Tiónól
- Games in the classroom

6. DISCOURAGING MISBEHAVIOUR

Naturally there will be times when despite the best efforts to emphasise positive behaviour, misbehaviour will occur. Misbehaviour is unacceptable because it can be hurtful to others and may disrupt the teaching and learning in our school. Misbehaviour will be treated firmly yet fairly with due regard to age and emotional development of each child in question.

While it is impractical to list every type of behaviour, the following are the kinds of acts that are considered misbehaviour:

Interrupting class work, school or homework not being completed, distracting others, being late, speaking disrespectfully to another pupil or any member of staff, rough play, being disorderly, throwing objects, eating/chewing gum during class time, swearing/use of bad language, bullying (see Anti - Bullying policy), disrespect for school property or the property of others.

The following procedures will be followed in cases of repeated misbehaviour.

- Children are asked - What "should" you have done? This may take the form of a written reply.
- Reasoning and/or reminding the child in question of school rules.
- Reprimand may or may not include time out.
- Temporary separation from peers.
- Loss of minor privileges (this may be left to teacher's discretion).
- Break time detention to do written work under supervision.
- Severe reprimand and referral to the principal / another class teacher.
- In the case of misbehaviour continuing, parents are called where strategies to monitor and improve behaviour are agreed. The needs of each individual child will be taken into account here.
- Continuous misbehaviour or instances of serious misbehaviour will lead to suspension (with B.O.M. approval, parents notified in writing and/or reduced time in school (e.g. half-days).
- In instances of repeated suspensions, or instances of extreme misbehaviour, a child may be expelled (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by Circular and Welfare Act 2000).

7. TEACHERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

A teacher's responsibilities include:

- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- Recognise and affirm good work.
- Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
- Implement a series of class rules in line with the school's Code of Behaviour
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

8. PARENTS/GUARDIANS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.

- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour.
- Ensure that their child presents in their uniform each morning.
- Ensure that their child has the correct books and equipment in order to participate fully in school.

APPENDIX 1

Each child in St. Martin's has a right to be SAFE in school. Each child has a responsibility to ensure others are SAFE also.

School Rules to be Safe:

- In the classroom:

- I will sit properly in my place.
- I will walk in the classroom.
- I will keep my bag and equipment tidy.
- I will take care with my equipment and only use it in the correct way.
- I will come to school in full uniform.
- I will wear my hair correctly and ensure any earrings are safe for me and others.
- I will be on time.
- I will use the toilet correctly.
- I will have a healthy lunch.
- I will try to be in the right place at the right time.
- I will only leave the classroom with permission.

- In the Yard/Other places:

- I will be gentle.
- I will line up when the bell rings.
- I will use yard equipment correctly.
- I will stay within the school grounds unless directed by a member of staff.
- During wet breaks, I will remain in the classroom, eat properly and sit while eating.
- I will wait for Betty to cross the road.

Each child in St. Martin's has a right to be HAPPY in school. Each child has a responsibility to ensure others are HAPPY also.

School Rules to be Happy:

- In the classroom:

I will do my best.
I will say 'please', 'thank you', and 'excuse me'.
I will share.
I will listen to others.
I will encourage others.
I will 'have a go', even if I'm not sure.
I will do my homework.
I will take my turn.
I will tell the truth.
I will say nice things to others.
I will say 'Hello' and 'Goodbye'.
I will smile, to show I'm happy.

- In the Yard/Other Places:

I will play fair
I will enjoy my break and ensure others enjoy it too.
I will make sure no one is left out.

Each child in St. Martin's has a right to be CARED for in school. Each child has a responsibility to CARE for others and their environment.

School Rules for Caring:

- In the classroom:

I will keep things tidy.

I will help others.

I will share with others.

I will call people by their proper name or a name they like.

I will be kind to others.

I will be a friend.

I will treat others property (including school property) with respect.

I will do some one a favour without being asked.

I will treat all others (teachers, pupils, staff) with respect.

- In the Yard/Other places:

I will help anyone who is hurt.

I will include people who are being left out.

I will pick up litter if I see it.

I will walk when the bell rings and line up properly.

I will do as I'm asked by the teacher on the yard.

I will set a good example to younger children.