



# St. Mary's B.N.S.

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## **St Mary's Boys National School**

### **Positive Behaviour Policy**

**June 2010**

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## **Foreword:**

This Positive Behaviour Policy constitutes the St Mary's Boys National School (BNS) Code of Behaviour for the purposes of Section 23(2) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

In accordance with Section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, parents wishing to enrol a child in St. Mary's BNS, shall be provided with a copy of this Positive Behaviour Policy and it shall be a condition of registering a boy as a student of the school that the parents of the boy confirm in writing, that the Positive Behaviour Policy is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such a code, by their son.

In St. Mary's BNS, we strive to foster an atmosphere that is characterised by respect for all. We try to achieve this by encouraging such qualities as good behaviour, tolerance, courtesy, respect for self and others, and a good relationship among all members of the school community. Adults in particular have a responsibility to give example and to set the tone in trying to achieve the above. Our behaviour policy adopts the motto..... **“Catch the pupils being Good!”**

We wish to accommodate the individuality of each child, while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a safe environment. It is essential that each child appreciates and understands that, with this right, come certain, personal responsibilities. Much time is spent in class discussing the expectations of the school, with regard to each child's behaviour, both inside and outside the classroom.

School and class rules are stated in a positive manner in terms of what pupils should do, and rules are kept to a minimum. Classes agree on “Class Rules” at the beginning of each year. School rules are clearly stated in this policy and all pupils will be familiar with them following class discussion. Rules will be age appropriate with clear, agreed consequences. It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff, pupils and parents.

Following consultation with Parents, Teachers, and Board of Management, this policy was formally ratified at a meeting of the Board on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2010.

A Certificate of Co-operation with the Code of Positive Behaviour must be signed on behalf of each boy attending St. Mary's BNS. (Copy of Certificate may be found at the back of this document.)

## **1. Mission Statement**

**St Mary's is a Dublin City Catholic Primary School committed to encouraging and supporting each boy to reach his full potential.**

- We believe in the Gospel values of respect, fairness, equality and we regard good manners as the touchstone of these values.
- We promote an atmosphere where the boys enjoy coming to school, are happy working here and feel they belong to a caring community.
- We foster a love of education in a disciplined and safe atmosphere where the boys are enthusiastic and active in their approach to learning for life,
- We are a school community where parents, teachers and the parish seek to work in partnership, for the welfare of the boys.
- We expect our school community to have a respect for the environment as we strive to maintain our 'Green School' ethos.
- We respect diversity in our school and in a New Ireland.

## **2 Aims of the Policy**

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships.
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour.
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood. through the School Booklet, availability of policies and an ethos of open communication.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

### **3. RULES**

#### **3.1 General School Rules:**

- ◆ Boys should behave with kindness, courtesy and respect towards their fellow pupils, teachers and adults in general.
- ◆ The boys should be clean and neat at all times. Except for designated PE days, the school uniform must be worn at all times. No ear-rings are allowed in school.
- ◆ Each boy is expected to be punctual. Pupils should be in school before 9.00am each morning.
- ◆ They should have respect for property--- their own, the property of others and public property, including the school.
- ◆ Any interference with the rights of others – especially interfering with the work of other pupils is unacceptable. Movement in the classroom should be orderly, and running within the school is prohibited at all times.
- ◆ All schoolwork and homework should be done to the best of the pupil's ability.
- ◆ Pupils should have all books and materials required.
- ◆ Pupils should be honest and truthful at all times.
- ◆ Pupils may not leave the classroom or school without permission.
- ◆ Pupils must follow instructions from staff immediately.

#### **3.2. Class Rules:**

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the pupils. These reflect and support the school rules, but are presented in a way that is accessible to the children. Class rules should be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. They should, where possible, emphasise positive behaviour, (eg. "Walk" and not "Don't run"). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual differences. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

#### **3.3 Playground/Yard Rules:**

At break and lunch time, pupils are under the supervision of designated teachers to ensure that standards of safety are observed. Directions given by the designated teacher are to be strictly adhered to. Pupils must accept that any teacher who corrects them acts with the full authority of the school management.

- ◆ Pupils must go to the yard at "Little Break" at 11.00am and at "Big Break" at 12.30pm. Pupils who have permission to stay in, (by request from parent), must stay in a designated area of the school.
- ◆ Pupils are required to line up in an orderly manner at the end of break. On wet days they remain in their classrooms for breaks, where they will engage in appropriate activities.

They must observe directions given by their class teacher and the supervising teachers and safety procedures must be followed at all times. Failure to follow these rules may result in a boy being removed from the class until break is over.

- ◆ The yard should be a safe and happy place for the pupils during break time. Pupils must stay in their designated “play areas”. Pupils are allowed to run and play mini football games.
- ◆ All dangerous activities are strictly forbidden. A list of these would include fighting, wrestling, buffalo charge, jockey backs, mock fights, “the bumps”, any form of kicking and some variations of chasing games that evolve from time to time.
- ◆ Climbing is not allowed, especially on furniture, in the toilets, on the walls and on the windowsills.
- ◆ In exceptional circumstances, pupils, with permission, may remain in the school building at lunchtime. If a pupil is unwell, he may, with permission, sit on a chair in the corridor.
- ◆ Pupils must ask permission to go to the toilet while in the yard.
- ◆ There are designated “Quiet Areas” in the yard where no running or physical activity is allowed.
- ◆ Lunch must be eaten in class. Time is given before each break to eat and take a drink. No food or drink may be taken to the yard.
- ◆ For unacceptable behaviour in the yard, pupils will be asked to take “time out” for a designated time, in the “Sin-Bin” area of the yard. A record of these boys will be kept and pupils whose names are in the “book” three times, will be required to spend a break time in the “Sin-Bin”.

### **3.4. Out of School Rules:**

**St Mary’s boys have a long standing tradition of behaving very well on visits, matches and trips outside of the school. The staff encourages a sense of pride and a sense of representing the school on such occasions.**

1. Pupils should walk in an orderly line to and from chosen venues.
2. Pupils must follow instructions from their teachers.
3. At all times, pupils must behave with respect towards members of the public.

### **3.5 Before / After School:**

Parents are reminded that the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before the gates are opened at 8.40am or after the official closing time of 2.30pm, except where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the BOM. Pupils involved in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with school behaviour policy during these times.

## **4. Incentives**

### **4.1 Vision**

Part of the vision of St. Mary’s BNS, is to help pupils achieve their personal best—academically, intellectually and socially. All pupils deserve encouragement to attain their

own best. Pupils will be encouraged, praised and listened to at all times by adults in the school. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given;

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book or homework journal.
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class.
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Special recognition at end of year awards ceremony.

#### **4.2 Reward Samples**

- ◆ A system of merit marks of stickers,
- ◆ Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- ◆ Homework vouchers.
- ◆ Certificates.
- ◆ Golden Time.
- ◆ Student of the Week.
- ◆ Small prizes/sweets.

### **5.Unacceptable Behaviour**

**Misbehaviour falls into one of three categories - Minor, Serious or Gross.**

Teachers and/or the Principal will make judgements based on a common sense approach having regard to the age or vulnerability of the child and the gravity and frequency of any misbehaviour. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour, parents will be involved at an early stage.

The following is a non-exhaustive list:

#### **5.1 Examples of Minor Misbehaviour:**

- Interrupting class work.
- Arriving late for school.
- Running in the school building.
- Littering around the school.
- Being discourteous or unmannerly.
- Not completing homework without good reason, (to include a note from parent or guardian).
- Talking out of turn.
- Being disruptive in class.

- Disobedience.
- Minor breaches of General, Class or Yard Rules.

### **5.1 Examples of Serious Misbehaviour:**

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation), which falls short of gross misbehaviour. (Please refer to **Anti-Bullying Policy**)
- Telling lies.
- Rudeness or disrespect in addressing a staff member.
- Deliberate continuous disobedience.
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft.
- Use of unacceptable language.
- Persistent name calling.
- Inappropriate behaviour or gestures.
- Serious breaches of General, Class and Yard Rules.
- Persistent Minor Misbehaviour will be classified as Serious Misbehaviour.

### **5.3 Examples of Gross Misbehaviour:**

- Verbal abuse or physical assault on a teacher or pupil.
- Leaving school premises without permission.
- Endangering self or fellow pupils in the class or yard.
- Bringing weapons or dangerous substances to school.
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behavior towards a staff member or pupil.
- Serious theft
- Serious damage to property
- Very serious breaches of General, Class and Yard Rules.
- Persistent incidents of serious misbehavior will be classified as Gross Misbehaviour.

## **6. Sanctions**

### **6.1 Features**

Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises. Each teacher may administer mild sanctions or equivalent, without referral to the Principal. In particular, a teacher may exercise discretion as to whether behaviour in this category needs to be brought to the attention of the Principal.

However sanctions should relate as closely as possible to the behaviour. Therefore a child, who does not do his work in class or has not completed his homework, may be detained at break time to finish the work.

The use of sanctions or consequences should be characterised by certain features;

- It must be clear why the sanction is being applied.
- The consequence must relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.
- It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions.
- Group punishment should be avoided as much as possible.
- There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences
- It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus.

The following steps will be taken when the children behave inappropriately. They are listed generally, in order of severity. The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the features by which sanctions should be characterised. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupils devise strategies for this. A number of these sanctions may be applied together depending on the severity of the misbehaviour in question. Teachers may use the misbehaviour to form the basis of a class discussion or “Circle Time” activity to focus on the positive behaviour that may come from the discussion. Consistently denying a pupil access to a particular part of the curriculum as a general sanction, is not appropriate.

### **6.2 Examples of Sanctions**

#### **6.2.1 By the teacher:**

1. Reasoning / discussion with pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve

3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class
4. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened, to be signed by Parent.
5. Loss of privileges, eg Golden Time.
6. Communication with parents by note in Homework Journal.
7. Detention in the corridor during break-time for uncompleted homework.

### **1.2.2 By the Principal (in the case of persistent misbehaviour)**

1. Reasoning / discussion with pupil.
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
3. Loss of privileges.
4. Communication with parents by phone or letter.
5. Immediate Suspension by Principal.
6. Referral to Board of Management by the Principal.

### **6.2.3 By the Board of Management:**

Suspension or Expulsion from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000)

## **2. Suspension and Expulsion**

On very rare occasions, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a pupil from the school. Nevertheless, St. Mary's BNS must and does reserve the right to invoke these sanctions should the circumstances so require.

There are two types of Suspension; Immediate Suspension by the Principal and Suspension by the Board of Management.

## **1. Immediate Suspension by the Principal**

1. The Board of Management has authorized the Principal to suspend a pupil or pupils from school for a maximum of 3 days where:
  - (a) the continued presence of the pupil or pupils in the school at the time would, in the opinion of the Principal, represent a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff of the school, or any other person.
  - (b) the continued presence of the pupil or pupils in the school at the time would, in the opinion of the Principal, represent a serious threat to the right to education of another pupil or pupils.
- 7.1.2 Should the Principal decide to suspend a pupil from the school for a maximum of 3 days, the parent will be contacted immediately to take the pupil home. The pupil will be removed from the classroom and supervised until the parent arrives to collect pupil.
- 7.1.3 The Principal will also inform the parent in writing of the reason(s) for the suspension and the term of the suspension. A copy this letter will be sent to the Chairperson and Secretary of the Board of Management.
- 7.1.4 The Board of Management may authorise a further period of suspension, up to a maximum of 10 school days, to allow for further consideration by the Principal and for consultation with the pupil's parents or guardians. In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Management may authorise a further period of suspension in order to enable the matter to be reviewed.

## **7.2 Suspension by the Board of Management**

The Principal may, following consultation with a teacher or teachers, refer the on-going misbehaviour of a pupil to the Board of Management. The Board has authorised the Chairperson (or in the absence of the Chairperson the acting Chairperson), and the Principal, to suspend a pupil. Prior to such a suspension being considered, the parent(s) will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and Principal. At this meeting, the misbehaviour and any previous cases of misbehaviour will be discussed and where appropriate, alternatives to suspension may be considered. This may require the parents to give a written undertaking to ensure that their son will comply with what has been agreed. Following this meeting, (or if the parents fail or refuse to attend without good reason, the date on which this meeting would otherwise have taken place), the pupil may be suspended by the Chairperson and the Principal.

## **7.3 Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement):**

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent(s) may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent(s) must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the Positive Behaviour Policy and the

Chairperson and Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff or unduly disrupt the education of the other pupils. The Principal, in consultation with parents, class teacher and pupil (where appropriate), will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and the pupil may be re-admitted formally to class.

#### 7.4 **Expulsion**

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule of National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

#### 7.5 **National Education Welfare Board:**

The Principal is required to report all Suspension and Expulsion in accordance with the NEWB (National Education Welfare Board), reporting guidelines. (Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 21 (4) (a).)

#### 7.6 **Appeal**

Parents may appeal suspensions (over 20 days in any one school year) and expulsions to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended).

### 8 **Children with Special Needs**

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place, where necessary, in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning support/ resource teacher, and or Principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable.

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

## **9 Parental Concerns and Grievance Procedures**

In implementing this Positive Behaviour Policy, we recognise that this requires a high level of co-operation between staff, parents and the wider school community, all of whom have a common aim in fostering a positive school environment where there is mutual trust and respect and a high degree of consensus about standards of behaviour.

Any parent who may have a concern about any aspect of this policy and/or its implementation as regards their son should feel free to raise that concern with the school. We believe that communication with parents is vital in this regard and would prefer to address any concerns a parent may have at the earliest possible stage.

Any parent who has a concern should, firstly, contact the pupil's teacher. Where a parent does not believe this is appropriate given the nature of the concern or having spoken to the class teacher needs to raise the concern further, the parent should make an appointment with the Principal. Where a parent believes that his or her concerns have not been adequately addressed by these means, the parent may contact the Chairperson of the Board of Management and request that the concern be considered by the BOM.

**Please keep the policy document safely at home for future reference.**

**Ratified by BOM June 2010  
Updated May 2014**

# **Appendix 1**

## **Certificate of Co-operation with the Code of Positive Behaviour**

**The safety and well-being of all boys attending St. Mary's B.N.S. is of the utmost importance to us. With this in mind, a Code of Positive Behaviour has been put in place and ratified by the Board of Management.**

**We request that parents read the policy carefully with their son(s) and discuss the contents. Please sign the following undertaking and return this form to the school.**

**I confirm that I have read this policy with my son(s)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **and that we have discussed the contents together.**

**Signed by Parent/Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

