

St. Luke's School, Douglas **Code of Behaviour**

School Ethos & Mission Statement

This code was developed in consultation with parents, staff, pupils and the Board of Management.

The Board of Management, parents and staff have a shared responsibility for maintaining desirable standards of behaviour throughout our school, thereby ensuring a supportive and stimulating atmosphere, which is conducive to learning, is fostered within the school. The following school rules are in place for the safety and well being of all children attending St. Luke's School.

Under Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of each school must prepare and make available a Code of Behaviour in respect of its students.

The Act requires that the school Code of Behaviour be prepared in accordance with Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB). NEWB must also advise schools on matters relating to the conduct of students and must "promote and foster, in recognised schools, an environment that encourages children to attend school and participate fully in the life of the school." *Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 Section 10.*

The Education Welfare Act 2000 requires that our code of behaviour should specify the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil; the measures that may be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe these standards; the procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled; the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil; the procedures to be followed relating to notification of a child's absence from school.

In St. Luke's School we endeavour to create a well-functioning, stimulating, happy and safe environment which promotes the dignity and individuality of every pupil, including those with special educational needs, enabling them to reach their full potential. We aim to educate the whole child in a Christian atmosphere in partnership with parents/guardians, Board of Management and the wider community.

Rationale

The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences.

It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among and between staff, parents and pupils. Every effort will be made to ensure that the code of behaviour is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner.

The aims of the Code of Behaviour of our school are:

- To encourage and recognise good behaviour:
- To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
- To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
- To develop pupils' self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.

- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance 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.

Implementation

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Rules will be kept to a minimum, will emphasise positive behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

It is accepted that there is a need for sanctions to register disapproval of unacceptable behaviour. We have a set of sanctions, which contain a degree of flexibility to take account of individual circumstances.

General Guidelines for the promotion of Positive Behaviour

Students are more likely to behave well when:

- There are standards that set high expectations for student behaviour
- Parents support the school by encouraging good learning behaviour
- There are good relationships between teachers, parents and students and a happy school atmosphere
- Adults model the behaviour that is expected from students
- There are positive everyday interactions between teachers and students
- There are good school and class routines
- There are clear boundaries and rules for students
- Students themselves recognise and affirm good learning behaviour
- Pupils are involved in the preparation of the classroom rules
- Pupils are expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times.
- Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable.
- Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
- Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.
- Pupils are expected to obey a teacher's instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
- Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing, stating the reason for absence.

Affirming Positive Behaviour

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

Strategies/Incentives

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment on a child's exercise book.
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group/ at assembly.
- Individual class merit awards, points awards or award stamps.

- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Written or verbal communication with parent.

Procedures:

Dealing with concerns, formal and informal:

If a problem arises the usual procedure is that the parent will meet with the class teacher with a view to resolving the difficulty. If the matter is unresolved, the parent should meet with the principal. The next step is that the parent should meet with the chairperson of the Board of Management. After that the complaint should be lodged in writing with the chairperson of the Board of Management.

The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross, will be judged by the teachers and/or Principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours, as follows:

Examples of minor misdemeanours:

Interrupting class work /Arriving late for school /Running in school building /Talking in class line/ Leaving seat without permission at lunch time / Placing unfinished food/ drink cartons in class bin/ Leaving litter around school/ Not wearing correct uniform/ Being discourteous/unmannerly/ Not completing homework without good reason/ Not having homework signed by a parent if class policy/ Endangering self/fellow pupils in the school yard at break time.

Examples of steps to be taken by teachers when dealing with minor misdemeanours:
Verbal reprimand / reasoning with pupil

Examples of steps that may be taken when dealing with regular occurrences of minor misdemeanours

Phase 1 (within the classroom)

Write story of what happened/fill in behaviour form
Note in homework journal to be signed by parent
Temporary separation from peers
Sending to another teacher.
Inform parents

Phase 2:

- 1) Send to Principal
- 2) Class teacher meets one/both parents
- 3) Principal meets one/both parents concerning behaviour.

Examples of serious misdemeanours

Constantly disruptive in class / Telling lies/ Stealing/ Damaging other pupil's/school property
Bullying/ Back answering a teacher / Leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission/taking photographs of staff/students with mobile phone without their permission/knowledge/placing photos or derogatory comments about fellow students or staff on internet/ Cyber bullying/ Text bullying
Consistently not working to full potential / Using unacceptable language
Deliberately injuring a fellow pupil.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with serious misdemeanours:

- 1) Follow steps as in minor misdemeanours
- 2) Send to Principal

- 3) Principal sends note in Journal to be signed by parent
- 3) Principal meets with one/both parents
- 4) Chairperson of Board of Management informed and parents requested to meet with Chairperson and Principal

Examples of Gross Misdemeanours

Setting fire to school property / Damaging property on school premises/ Deliberately leaving taps or fire hose turned on / fire alarm set off / aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher/pupil/any adult.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with gross misdemeanours

- 1) Chairperson/Principal to sanction immediate suspension pending discussion with parents and in accordance with due process and fairness procedures. Expulsion will be considered in extreme case in accordance with legislation, due process and fairness procedures.

(It should be noted that these lists consist of examples only: It is not meant to be a totally comprehensive list of misdemeanours and procedural steps.)

Should it be deemed necessary/helpful, the advice of the School Psychologist will be sought and an assessment requested, if necessary.

School rules will apply on all school outings and on any school-related activities.

Suspension/Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as detention, suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

The education welfare officer must be notified in writing by the BOM of the reasons for the suspension. The EWO is then required to make 'all reasonable efforts' to consult with the principal, the pupil, parents and any other appropriate persons and to convene a meeting of the people involved. A pupil cannot be expelled until 20 days after the EWO has been notified of the decision of a Board of Management to expel. Under Section 29 of the Education Act and section 26 of the Education (Welfare) Act a parent or the National Educational welfare board may appeal an expulsion or suspension where cumulative period of suspension in any school year exceeds 20 school days. An appeal must be held within 30 days of the receipt of the appeal. The secretary general of the DES shall notify both parties in writing of the determination of the appeal, and issue to the BOM such directions as are deemed necessary for the purposes of remedying the matter. The Board of Management is bound to implement whatever directions are issued.

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 school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff.

The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying is deliberate and repeated verbal, psychological or physical aggression by an individual or group against others. The most common forms of bullying are aggressive physical contact, name-calling, intimidation, extortion, isolation and taunting. Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to cooperate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with this Anti-Bullying Policy.

We are committed to raising the awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour. Every pupil has the right to enjoy his/her time in St. Luke's free from bullying both inside and outside school. We will not tolerate unkind actions or remarks even if these are not meant to hurt. We regard bullying as a very serious matter.

A stable, secure learning environment is necessary to achieve the highest possible quality of education for children. This is as true at home as at school. Bullying behaviour, by its very nature undermines and dilutes the quality of this environment and imposes psychological, and often, lasting damage. Whatever the source (pupil, parent, etc) it is recognised as affecting not only those immediately involved, but everyone in the classroom, in the home, in the school and in the wider community. It needs to be recognised that bullying behaviour is not confined to pupils and schools alone; it is prevalent in society, in the workplace and in the home

Bullying behaviour can be:

Verbal e.g. name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats, hurtful remarks, comments about physical appearance, 'slagging'

Physical e.g. hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting, jostling, pushing around, damage to property, extortion, intimidation

Social/emotional e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures, passing notes, 'whispering', insults,

Psychological e.g. spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and e mail messages, inappropriate use of camera phones

Possible Signs and Symptoms: (Victim)

- Anxiety about travelling to and from school
- Unwillingness or refusal to attend school
- Sudden deterioration in performance at school
- Pattern of physical illnesses – headaches, stomach pains
- Unexplained changes in either mood or behaviour or both
- Visible signs of stress – stammering, withdrawal, nightmares, insomnia, crying, loss of appetite, bed wetting
- Out of character comments about other children
- Possessions missing or damaged
- Unexplained bruises or cuts or damage to clothing
- Reluctance to say what is wrong
- Begins to bully other children
- Continuously making excuses to explain away any of the above.

These signs do not necessarily mean that bullying is taking place, but when repeated or recurring in any combination they should always be investigated.

Possible Attitudinal signs (in a bully)

- Hot-tempered and quick to anger
- Impulsive – acts without thinking or considering the consequences of his or her behaviour
- Low tolerance for frustration
- Difficulty conforming to rules
- Needs to dominate and subdue others
- Brags about his or her superiority over other students
- Aggressive toward adults
- Good at talking themselves out of situations
- Little empathy – has difficulty understanding others’ perspectives and feelings
- Engages in antisocial behaviour (e.g. stealing, vandalism, substance use)
- Enjoys putting down others
- Treats animals cruelly
- Disrespects authority
- Enjoys fighting
- Refuses to admit fear

Our anti-bullying charter

- Every pupil in St. Luke’s School has the right to enjoy his/her learning and leisure time free from intimidation, both in the school and in the surrounding community.
- Our school community will not tolerate any unkind remarks or action, even if these were not intended to hurt.
- Pupils should support each other by reporting all instances of bullying
- Bullying will be taken very seriously
- We are a ‘telling school’ – bullying is too important to ignore.

What to do:

- Ask the child what is wrong (perhaps avoid the word ‘bullying’)
- Always let them know that they can tell you anything they wish
- Don’t fob them off with ‘sticks and stones’
- Never laugh at them
- Telling them to ‘Hit back’ only makes matters worse. Teaching them to be more confident and assertive, and to tell, is more effective
- If it is school-situated or school-related inform the school immediately.

What we do:

- All allegations of bullying are treated seriously, no matter how trivial they may appear. We endeavour to make it worthwhile telling
- All incidents are referred to the principal/deputy principal/class teacher/ yard supervisor
- Parents/guardians of both bully and victim will be notified.
- We encourage children to tell if they see someone being bullied. It is our view that there are never innocent bystanders in bullying.
- If it is concluded that a pupil has been engaged in incidents of bullying behaviour, they, and their parents/guardians are told formally that they are in breach of the school’s code of behaviour. This may be recorded in the school records.
- Sanctions, where deemed necessary, are applied as per code of behaviour
- We believe both the bully and the victim are in need of help.
- Several adults always supervise the playground.
- The school’s anti-bullying policy is always discussed and explained to the pupils.

Bullying is a learned behaviour; therefore it can be unlearned.

Most children, with help and support can overcome this problem. We will endeavour to do our best to enable all parties to move on.

Attendance Policy**The aims of the attendance policy in St. Luke’s School are to:**

- Encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually.
- Share the promotion of school attendance amongst all in the school community.
- Inform the school community of its role and responsibility as outlined the Act.
- Identify pupils who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems
- Ensure that the school has procedures in place to promote attendance/participation.
- Develop, subject to available resources, links between the school and the families of children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems.
- Identify and remove, insofar as is practicable, obstacles to school attendance.

The school will ensure that:

- The importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school.
- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.
- Pupil attendance is recorded daily.
- Parents or guardians are contacted when reasons for absences are unknown or have not been communicated.
- Pupil attendance and lateness is monitored.
- The Education Welfare Act obliges the principal to notify the Education Welfare Officer assigned to the school where a pupil is not attending school regularly or where a pupil is

absent from school for an aggregate of twenty (20) school days or more during the school year.

Punctuality

School is open from 8.25a.m. Children are required to be in their classrooms not later than 8.30 a.m. All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. Parents/Guardians are advised that the safety and well being of children arriving before 8.25 a.m. and those remaining after school closes at 2.10p.m. (Infants 1 hour earlier) is the sole responsibility of parents as no arrangements exist for the supervision of children on the school grounds outside these times. The school will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. If a child arrives late to school (after 8.30am) the class teacher will note the arrival time. The parents of pupils who are consistently late will be contacted by the principal. If a child is leaving school for any reason during the school day, a parent must sign on departure and on return.

Attendance (see Appendix 1 for separate attendance policy)

Section (21) (9) of the Act states that: “a pupil’s absence can only be authorised by the Principal when the child is involved in activities organised by the school or in which the school is involved”. The school principal cannot authorise a child’s absence for holidays or non-school activities during school time.

Reasons for pupils’ absences must be communicated in writing, by parents/guardians to the school and will be retained by the school. To facilitate this, such communications should not be in the homework diary, but on a separate page or sheet of paper. If a child is absent, when the child returns to school s/he should give/send a written note to the class teacher that contains the child’s name, the dates of absence and the reason for the absence. These notes will form a record that may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school. The school will contact parents when the school does not receive a written explanation for the child’s absence.

Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by:

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.
- Notifying the school (in writing) if their children cannot attend for any reason.
- Working with the school and education welfare service to resolve any attendance problems
- Making sure their children understand that parents support and approve of school attendance.
- Discussing planned absences with the school.
- Refraining, if at all possible, from taking holidays during school time.
- Refraining from withdrawing children during school time for non-school activities.
- Showing an interest in their children, a positive self-concept and a positive sense of self-worth.
- Informing the school in writing of the reasons for absence from school, by phone on the first day of absence and in writing when pupil returns to school.
- Ensuring, insofar as is possible, that children’s appointments (with dentist etc.), are arranged for times outside of school hours.
- Contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters.
- Notifying, in writing the school if their child/children, particularly children in junior classes, are to be collected by someone not known to the teacher.

- If a child normally travels on the school bus, parents must inform the school if there is a change to the normal routine.

Pupils

Pupils have the clear responsibility:

- to attend school regularly and punctually.
- to inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence.
- for promptly passing on absence notes from parents to their class teacher.
- for passing school correspondence to their parents, on the specified day.

Strategies for promoting good school attendance

The Board of Management is committed to providing a positive school atmosphere, which is conducive to promoting good school attendance. In this regard:

- The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, is flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
- The school will promote development of good self-concept and self-worth in the children
- Support for pupils, who have special educational needs, are in place in accordance with DES guidelines
- Internal communication procedures are in place to inform teachers of the special needs of pupils
- A reward system may be introduced for promoting good attendance at school
- The assistance of the Education Welfare Officer will be utilised
- The class teacher will monitor the attendance rates of pupils in the first instance, and the class teacher will notify the principal of any concerns regarding the attendance of any child
- Pupils with a poor attendance record will, insofar as is practicable, be supported in an effort to improve their attendance.

School Principal

The School principal will

- Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations
- Inform the Education Welfare Officer if a pupil is not attending school regularly
 1. When a pupil has been absent for 20 or more days cumulatively during the course of a school year
 2. If a pupil has been suspended for a period of six or more days
 3. When a pupil's name is removed from the school register
- Inform parents of a decision to contact the education Welfare Officer of concerns regarding a pupil
- Insofar as is practicable, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils

Class Teacher

The class teacher will:

- Maintain the school roll-book in accordance with procedure
- Contact parents in instances where absences are not explained in writing
- Promote a reward system for pupils with exceptional attendance
- Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually
- Inform the principal of concerns she may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.

Records

Subject to the restrictions of the data Protection Act attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer to another primary school will be passed to the principal of the school by post as soon as we receive written notification is received of transfer.

Attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer from another primary school will be sought directly from previous school.

Attendance, behaviour and academic records of pupils transferring to a second level school will be sent to the school, if requested, once enrolment has been confirmed.

School Rules

School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If a school is to function efficiently it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly

Pupils will:

- line up quietly in the morning in their class lines and be ready to proceed into school in an orderly fashion when the doors are opened at 8.25 a.m.
- be on time for school every morning 8.25 a.m.
- respect the teachers and pupils in the school and all visitors to St. Luke's School
- obey the teacher's instructions
- remain seated unless told otherwise
- not interrupt the teacher
- respect school property
- not interfere with the belongings of others
- keep the classroom and school grounds tidy and litter –free
- walk safely and quietly in the corridors
- do their best in school and do homework to the best of their ability
- wear full school uniform; wear track suits on PE days as advised by the teacher
- keep mobile phones turned off in school
- remain in the school grounds at all times during the school day; a parent must sign a written request for early release and collect the child from the office
- wear school shoes, except on PE days (extremes in shoe fashion are not allowed e.g. clogs, platform or high heel shoes, high boots etc)
- not wear dangling earrings
- keep hair neat and tidy; bleached, tinted or shaved heads are not allowed; long hair must be tied back in the interests of safety and hygiene
- not wear make-up during the school day
- stop when the whistle is blown after break time and walk quietly to class line when the bell is rung
- always remain seated and wear seat belts when travelling on school bus or going on tours

The standards and rules contained in the code of behaviour would usually apply in any situation where the student although outside the school, is still the responsibility of the school. Examples include all extra curricular activities, soccer, hockey, swimming, chess, rugby, athletics, school tours etc

The Board of Management does not accept responsibility for any personal items of property mislaid, lost, damaged or stolen etc. The Board reserves the right to determine acceptable styles of dress and grooming.

Board of Management's responsibilities:

The Board of Management has responsibility to:

- ensure that the school is safe for pupils, staff and all members of the school community.
- deal with serious breaches of behaviour
- provide a comfortable, safe environment
- support the principal and staff in implementing the code
- ratify the code

Principal's Responsibilities

- Promote a positive climate in the school
- Ensure that the code of behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner
- Arrange for a review of the code as required

Teachers' Responsibilities

- 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
- 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
- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour

Pupils' Responsibilities

- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice
- Show respect for all members of the school community
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils
- Avoid behaving in any way that would endanger others
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling
- Include other pupils in games and activities
- Bring correct materials/books to school
- Follow school and class rules
- Always walk while in the school building
- Remain seated at all times in class and while eating lunch
- Never run dangerously in the schoolyard and always show respect for fellow pupils.
- Bring a note of explanation following absences
- Never leave the school grounds without the permission of the class teacher or the principal
- Respect personal property, and self, always keeping school bag, books and copies in good order
- Be in school before the bell rings at 8.25 a.m.
- Show respect for the school and be proud to wear the complete school uniform every day.

- Always be aware of personal cleanliness
- Always bring a healthy lunch to school. (Chewing gum, crisps, lollipops, sweets and fizzy drinks are not allowed)

Caring for others

- Be kind and respectful to teacher and fellow pupils by being mannerly and polite, by taking turns and by remaining silent and orderly in my class line
- Behave well in class so that all can learn
- Keep the school clean by bringing unfinished food and drinks, cartons wrappers etc home
- Show respect for the property of others, the school building and grounds

Parents'/guardians' responsibilities

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property
- Ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's schoolwork
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems, which may affect their child's progress/behaviour.

Appeals

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 Section 29). An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a student.

This code will be reviewed in 2012 – 2013