



Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement

St. Peter's School embraces a holistic, child-centred approach that honours each pupil's individuality. We guide students toward self-discipline and positive behaviour, nurturing their engagement in learning within a supportive environment. Our discipline is grounded in understanding each child's background and strengths, encouraging positive growth through tailored reinforcement and respect—for themselves, their peers, staff, community, and environment.

The Code of Behaviour has been devised by the principal and staff of St. Peter's School in consultation with the Board of Management, and will be made available to all members of the school community. It is informed by a solution-focused, proactive approach, restorative practices, Developing a Code of Behaviour Guidelines for Schools (NEWB 2007), the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and our patron's values of hospitality, compassion and respect. Parents/guardians of students due to enroll in the school will be requested to sign the attached form confirming their acceptance of the Code of Behaviour. This Code of Behaviour Policy is designed to reflect the Health and Safety policy of St. Peter's School and its primary function is to ensure the safety of staff and students alike.

Rationale

A structured Code of Behaviour fosters a safe, predictable, and nurturing environment, critical for students with social, emotional, and behavioural needs. The policy will recognise and accommodate their diverse needs ensuring every child feels respected and understood. The long-term goal is to support students to move from externally expected criteria to internal self-discipline.

Aims

In developing this Code, we've tailored it to our school's unique context and needs. Its purpose is to foster a safe, structured environment where pupils build self-discipline, feel secure, and progress across all aspects of their development. The Code outlines expectations for the entire school community to maintain a supportive setting for teaching and learning. Effective behaviour management thrives on a unified, school-wide approach. This includes consistency among school staff, collaboration with parents and professionals, and shared values across the community. The code of behaviour provides consistent

guidance to all parties. Staff are committed to responding to behaviour positively, focused on encouragement and growth, with aims of;

- To maintain an educational environment that is guided by our mission statement and allow the school to function in an orderly way where students can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- To encourage consistency of response to both appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.
- To promote positive behaviour and foster a sense of responsibility and emotional regulation recognising the differences between students and the need to accommodate these differences.
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the availability of policies and an ethos of open communication.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.
- To provide guidance for students, school staff and parents/guardians on behavioural expectations.

Guidelines for Behaviour in the School

The school recognises the variety of differences of students 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 between students, staff and parents/guardians.

School Rules

Rules are kept to a minimum and are phrased in a positive manner using language accessible to the students in classrooms, practical rooms, hall, yards, on school outings, and travelling to and from school.

1. We have a strict policy of 'kind hands, feet, and words' in all communication and behaviour in our school.
2. Be prepared – ensure you have materials needed as per your timetable.
This may include:
 - 2.1 Classroom needs (including schoolbag, stationary, books, pencil case)
 - 2.2 A snack if needed, a drink in a secure reusable bottle or plastic bottle of water. No fizzy drinks or cans allowed.
3. When your teacher gives you homework, complete it in the required time and have it signed by parent/guardian.
4. Be kind and respectful towards all staff and students.
5. Mobile phones, iPads, and other electronic devices should always be kept safely in lockers during school hours unless a class activity allows the use of an iPad which will be indicated in advance

Expectations

Students are ***expected*** to:

- Show respect to and be tolerant others.
- Use respectful language throughout school.
- Accept the authority of staff.

- Follow agreed class rules behaviour.
- Participate in class activities.
- Observe health and safety around the school.
- Respect school property and the property of others.
- Take responsibility for their actions.
- Be open to learning appropriate strategies for communicating their needs.

School staff are **expected** to:

- support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour.
- be cognisant of their duty of care and act as role models by managing their own emotions and their responses to inappropriate behaviour.
- create a safe, welcoming atmosphere for their pupils.
- develop and nurture a sense of self-esteem in each pupil.
- praise positive behaviour.
- facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential.
- recognise and provide for individual differences as far as is reasonable.
- be respectful and fair.
- keep opportunities for disruption to a minimum.
- keep a record of behaviours of concern.
- provide support for colleagues.

Parents/Guardians are **expected** to:

- ensure students attend school regularly and on time (ready for bus or dropped in at the agreed time).
- encourage students to follow the school's Code of Behaviour.
- support the student to learn and practice good behaviour and to have a positive attitude towards themselves, other people and towards the school.
- co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is of concern.

The Board of Management is **expected** to:

- provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- support the principal and staff in implementing the code.
- ratify the code.
- ensure the code is communicated to the whole school community.

Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Behaviour

The Board of Management and the Principal have overall responsibility for the implementation and on-going monitoring of this policy. However, all staff members have responsibility for their own classes and for the general school population.

Positive strategies for managing behaviour

- Each student's individual learning style is recognised and catered for and documented in their Student Support Plan (SSP), a part of the overall Student Support File (SSF).

- A plan for behaviour support is included in the SSF, and is created by staff in collaboration with parents/ guardians and is regularly reviewed. On occasion further input is sought from NEPS.
- Clear boundaries for behaviour are established and clearly displayed. Staff ensure that students understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave.
- Students have an input in devising class rules where feasible at the beginning of each school year.
- Approaches to classroom management ensure a variety of activities and methodologies are provided to sustain student interest and motivation.
- There is a clear system of acknowledging and rewarding the positive behaviours which an individual is working on.
- Staff adopt a consistent approach in dealing with students.
- Every effort will be made to ensure that parents/guardians are kept informed and that they are not only told when their child has had a difficult day but also when they have behaved particularly well and succeeded in implementing rules or strategies, they find difficult.
- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for all.

Rewards

- Rewards will be age appropriate and suited to each student's individual needs.
- Verbal praise, encouragement and acknowledgement of appropriate behaviour.
- Use of reward system agreed on an individual or class basis.
- Positive communication informing parents of their child's achievement.

Therapeutic Crisis Intervention

At St. Peter's School, we are committed to creating a safe environment where all students and staff feel secure and supported. To ensure this, all staff members undergo training in Crisis Prevention Intervention for Schools (CPI), which is updated regularly. This approach is foundational to the development of our Code of Behaviour, guiding our response to potential crises and promoting emotional safety for all.

- Staff are trained to proactively prevent and de-escalate potential crisis situations with students, using positive, non-confrontational approaches. This helps prevent the escalation of behaviours of concern and supports students in managing their emotions in a positive manner.
- In the rare case of a crisis, staff are trained to intervene in a therapeutic manner, focusing on minimising harm to both students and staff. Physical intervention is only used when absolutely necessary, to ensure the safety of the student or others. Importantly, physical intervention is never used as a form of restraint but to protect from harm.
- After an incident, staff work with students to process the situation in a calm and constructive way. This allows students to reflect on their behaviour, develop better coping strategies, and move forward with a deeper understanding of how to handle future situations.

Response to unacceptable behaviour

Behavioural issues will be addressed using a consistent, proactive, restorative approach:

- When pupils engage in minor misbehaviour, staff will use redirection, positive reinforcement, and gentle reminders to help students re-engage in appropriate behaviour.

- In the case of ongoing or more serious misbehaviour, staff will work with the pupil to identify underlying issues. Strategies may include reflective discussions, behavioural goals, and potentially adjusted learning environments.
- In cases of conflict, a restorative approach will be used, allowing students to reflect on their actions, understand the impact on others, and work toward repairing relationships.
- If necessary, reasonable and proportionate sanctions may be imposed, such as temporary removal from a situation or loss of privileges. All sanctions will be applied with fairness and consistency, considering the individual needs of each pupil.

The purpose of sanctions are to;

- ✓ help students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- ✓ help them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others.
- ✓ help students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences.
- ✓ help them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.
- ✓ reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour.
- ✓ signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.
- ✓ prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning.
- ✓ keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

Serious Incidents

- Leaving school property without permission – refusing to return when requested by a member of staff.
- Persistent abusive language, actions or gestures directed towards students or staff members.
- Bullying – repeated, targeted behaviour that causes harm (physical, social and/or emotional in nature) directed at students or school staff.
- Physical violence towards another student or staff members.
- Property damage, removal of school property from premises.
- Presenting under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and/or use of drugs or other substances (including alcohol, cigarettes, vapes) on school property/school outing.
- The student's behaviour is negatively impacting the educational welfare of the other students.
- The student's presence in the school constitutes a threat to the safety of themselves, the other students, staff or other members of the school community.
- Carrying a weapon or any item which could be perceived as a weapon.
- Persistent truancy.

Serious incidents will always result in a follow up phone call with parents/guardians and may also include one of the following depending on the gravity or repetition of behaviour:

1. Letter to parents/guardians.
2. Exclusion from St. Peter's School for a fixed period of 1,2 or 3 days depending on the gravity of the offence. Upon returning to school a parent/guardian must accompany the student to attend a meeting in St Peters School with the Principal/Deputy Principal (See suspension policy).
3. A serious offence may result in loss of the student's place in St. Peter's School (See expulsion policy).

Limitations and utilisation

This document is not designed to list all the possible violations which may arise nor to state all the possible consequences of unacceptable behaviour, but to serve as a general guide to students, school staff, and parents/guardians of students to be used to solve individual problems.

This policy has been drawn up by the principal in collaboration with the staff of St. Peter's and in consultation with the Board of Management. It will be made available to all members of the school community.

This policy will be reviewed annually and amended if necessary.

Rosemary Fahy

Eoin Ó Donnagáin

Principal St. Peter's School

Chairperson to the Board of Management

Signed:

Date: 26.11.2025

Signed:

Date: 26.11.2025