



Scoil Náisiúnta Tobar Mhairéide

## ST MARGARETS NS CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

The aim of the policy is to develop self-discipline in each child by encouraging good behaviour. This policy is based on the recommendations set out by the National Education Welfare Board in relation to section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

The code recognizes the right of every child to receive an education in an environment reasonably free from disruptive behaviour. The teachers put more emphasis on rewards than on disciplinary actions because they believe that this approach will ultimately achieve the best results. The Code of Conduct will be taught to the students in class. The same rules apply to all children in the school.

***The support and cooperation of parents is essential for the policy to be effective.***

For children with special educational needs the rules will be stated in their ILP. The teacher or specialists will check that the rules are communicated in a way that students with special educational needs can understand them.

**Aims:** The school wishes to achieve the following aims:

- The school is allowed to function in an orderly, calm manner in which there is a positive and friendly atmosphere
- An atmosphere is created in which there is respect and kindness towards others, young and old
- Positive behavior and self-discipline are encouraged among the children so that social, physical, academic and religious differences can be acknowledged.
- The safety and welfare of all members of the school community is ensured
- Parents and pupils are helped to understand the systems and procedures that are part of the Code of Conduct and their cooperation is requested in the implementation of these policies
- Ensures that the system of rules, awards and sanctions is applied in a fair, consistent manner
- Ensures that pupils, teachers and parents are provided guidance on behavioural expectations.



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- Fosters the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils

### School Rules:

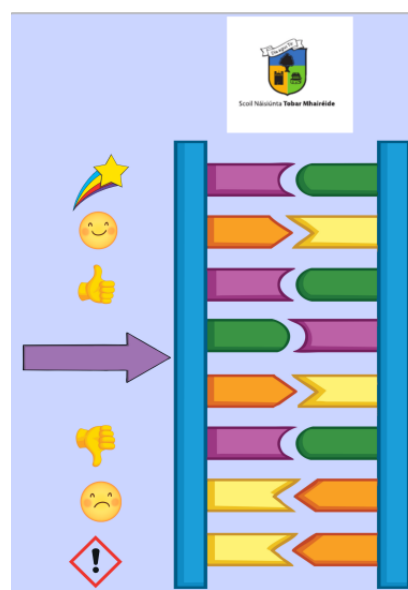
1. Respect: We respect everyone and everything in our school and outside.
2. Organised and Ready- we are organised and ready to learn every day, and have everything we need with us.
3. Learning Atmosphere- we create a positive atmosphere for all of us so that we can learn well.
4. Safety- we always behave in a safe manner around the school.

### Infant Classes

In relation to the Infant Discipline System, the pupils are taught the rules at the beginning of the term. A graduated ladder is in clear view in the classroom. All the children start in the centre of the ladder every day. If good behaviour is shown, the class teacher will move a child up a step on the ladder. If they manage to reach the top of the ladder, they get a prize (A positive note/sticker etc.)

They are put down the ladder, when they don't adhere to the school rules. They are asked to reflect on their behaviour in the first step. If the misbehaviour continues and they are put on the second step down, they will have to sit out for a period of 5 minutes. If the misbehaviour continues, they will speak to the appropriate teacher. ( Ms Keegan)

For regular or serious misbehaviour the instructions set out in the policy regarding suspension can be followed.





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## (D.F.L. – Discipline for learning)

### All School System- Classes 1st -6th

This system places a particular emphasis on good behaviour. It is better to catch the pupils doing the right thing rather than the pupils who break the rules. With this system, the child understands that misbehaviour will be sanctioned and good behaviour will be reinforced.

Discipline for Learning (DFL) is a system of POSITIVE discipline where the emphasis is on recognizing and affirming the children in class who behave well. It is a matter of 'catching the children being good' rather than spotting the 'bad behaviour'. The children know the rules and know that if they abide by them they will be recognised and rewarded and equally that if they don't they will be sanctioned.

### The DFL system consists of 3 parts:

- Rules
- Value work (cards in journals)
- Sanctions

### Rules (to be learned and seen throughout the school)

1. Respect: We respect everyone and everything in our school and outside
2. Prepared and Ready- we are prepared and ready to learn every day, and we have everything we need with us.
3. Learning Atmosphere- we create a positive atmosphere for all of us so that we can learn.
4. Safety- we always behave in a safe way around the school.

### Rewards

1. Cards in the diaries: 4 weeks without a sanction – Homework Pass
2. Special raffle prizes/ Mystery Tour/ Prize wheel
3. Other prizes to be decided between pupils/teachers in class.



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### **Sanctions (Recorded on the class ladder)**

*Verbal warning comes first*

1. Name on the ladder
2. The child is moved to a single table in the class (for a short period of time)
3. Half an hour is spent outside the class in another class
4. Conversation about the behaviour with Ms Gorman & a note home
5. Principal's office - name in the Principal's Diary \* (if x3 names are in the black book, the parents will be called)
6. The parents will be called.
7. The parents will be called in to the office, it is explained to them that the next step is to suspend the child.
8. Suspension- it will last up to three days. (In-school suspension is an option depending on the background and severity of the actions)
9. The child will be expelled from school.

### **A child can be sent to a higher graded sanction if the behaviour is serious:**

The exceptions are:

- Violence- Step 6
- Bullying- Step 6
- Racism- Step 6
- Homophobia- Step 6
- Using a mobile phone - Step 6

### **Procedures**

Students have a new start every Monday.

The rules are clear to the children, and they understand that if they are broken there is a sanction and if they are followed there will be a stamp of praise.

All classes (1st-6th) participate, no exceptions.



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There will be a poster of the rules in every class and on the walls throughout the school.

Each class will have a ladder on which the steps are written.

The rules will be mentioned often in class, as well as being broken down at the start of the new school year.

Recognition will be available to students every week, unless a rule is broken

There will be a prize for a certain amount of happy faces.

Every Friday the teachers in charge will go to the classes to praise and record their notes on the ladders. (2 teachers in charge)

The students with certificates will be acknowledged at school assembly.

Weekly assembly will reference and reinforce the system positively. Students who are not doing well are spoken to primarily in the office or in class, not in public.

### **Suspension:**

Suspension: \* See Appendix 7 Schools, under Section 23 (2) of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 are required to specify in their code of conduct, the procedures to be followed if a student is suspended or expelled from school .

Before suspending a child, consideration will be given to:

- Type & seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- Impact of behaviour
- Intervention efforts to date
- Whether or not suspending is the most appropriate option for the student.
- The possible impact of the suspension, usually an attempt will be made to undertake another intervention before suspension and the school staff will explain the reasons why that intervention was not successful.

If a child is suspended the school will follow the following steps:



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- The School will ensure that all members are afforded a fair and unbiased investigation
- The process will include these steps:
  - o An impartial inquiry will be conducted to collect data.
  - o The parents will be informed in writing, in person or by phone about the incident.
  - o The parents will have the opportunity to discuss the suspension with the principal.  
(Except in cases of immediate suspension)

*If the suspension stands, the Principal will notify the Student's parents in writing regarding the suspension.*

- **The letter will contain the following:**

- o Period of suspension
  - o Reasons for suspension
  - o Any Program of Study to follow
  - o Arrangements for returning to school, and any commitments the student and parents must make.
  - o Provision of appeal to the Board of Management, right of appeal to the Secretary general of the Department of Education and Science.
  - o Or in cases of less than three days, if an appeal is involved the student must complete the suspension. If found in the student's favour the suspension will be cleared from the student's records.
- A child can be suspended for up to three school days the first time and up to ten school days thereafter.

### **Expulsion:**

A student is expelled from the school when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude that student from the school, after the Board has complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.



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The Board of Management alone has the Authority to expel a child from school. Expulsion is a very serious step and one that must be taken by the Board of Management in serious cases of behaviour.

### **Grounds for Expulsion:**

- The school should make every effort to ensure that clear processes are in place to avoid expulsion, including, as appropriate:
  - o Meeting with parents and the student to facilitate efforts to improve the unacceptable behaviour of the child.
  - o Ensure that the student understands what will happen if his/her behaviour continues.
  - o Ensure that all other options have been explored
  - o Seek advice from the following agencies: (National Educational Psychology Service, TUSLA, National Behaviour Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Illness Services, National Council for Special Education

### **A student should be expelled in the following circumstances:**

- The student's behaviour has a serious adverse effect on the education of other students.
- There is a significant real threat to the health and the safety of the students or others while the student is at school.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property or repeated theft of material. The reasons for expulsion are the same as the reasons for suspension.

*The main difference between them is that the school authorities have tried a range of interventions, and they believe that they have exhausted all possibilities in trying to achieve a change in the student's behaviour.*

### **Immediate Expulsion:**

***The Board of Management has the authority to expel a child from school immediately in exceptional cases e.g. the following cases:***

- A serious threat of violence against other students or members of staff



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- Acts of serious violence or assault
- Providing drugs to other students in the school.
- Sexual assault.

### **Expression of concern:**

If a parent has reason to express concern about any incident, the parent should only report the information to the class teacher or the principal.

### **Acceptance of the Policy:**

A parent/ guardian will have to read and sign a copy of the Code of Behaviour before the new child takes a place at the school. If there are any changes, these changes will be communicated to the parents.

### **Parents are responsible for their children's behaviour when they come to school.**

The attitude and support of parents towards the school and towards the teachers helps a lot with the behaviour of the children.

The staff will ensure that the school is an open and welcoming place for parents so that they do not hesitate to come and talk to the school staff.

Communication between the school staff and the school parents is very open. If there is cause for concern regarding children's behaviour parents are contacted.

### **Children with Additional Needs**

The sanctions set out in this policy may not apply to children with additional needs. The children may have individual discipline programmes, that are set out in their Continuums of Support.





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### **Roles & Responsibilities:**

- The Board of Management has a central role to ensure that the policy is implemented in the school.
- The staff at the school play a central role in the implementation of this policy with the support of the parents and students.
- The Principal, Deputy Principal and Assistant Principal 2, will coordinate and monitor the code with support from staff.
- Understanding and support from the students and parents in the implementation of the code will be expected.

### ***Implementation Date:***

*Timetable for the review: This policy will be reviewed in September 2024, and various aspects will be amended, as necessary.*

***Ratification & Communication:*** *The Board of Management ratified this policy on 20th December 2023.*

*A copy of the policy was posted on the school's website on 8th of January 2024.*

Signed:  
**Mary Flood,**

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed:  
**Danielle Keegan**

Acting Principal

Date: **20.12.23**



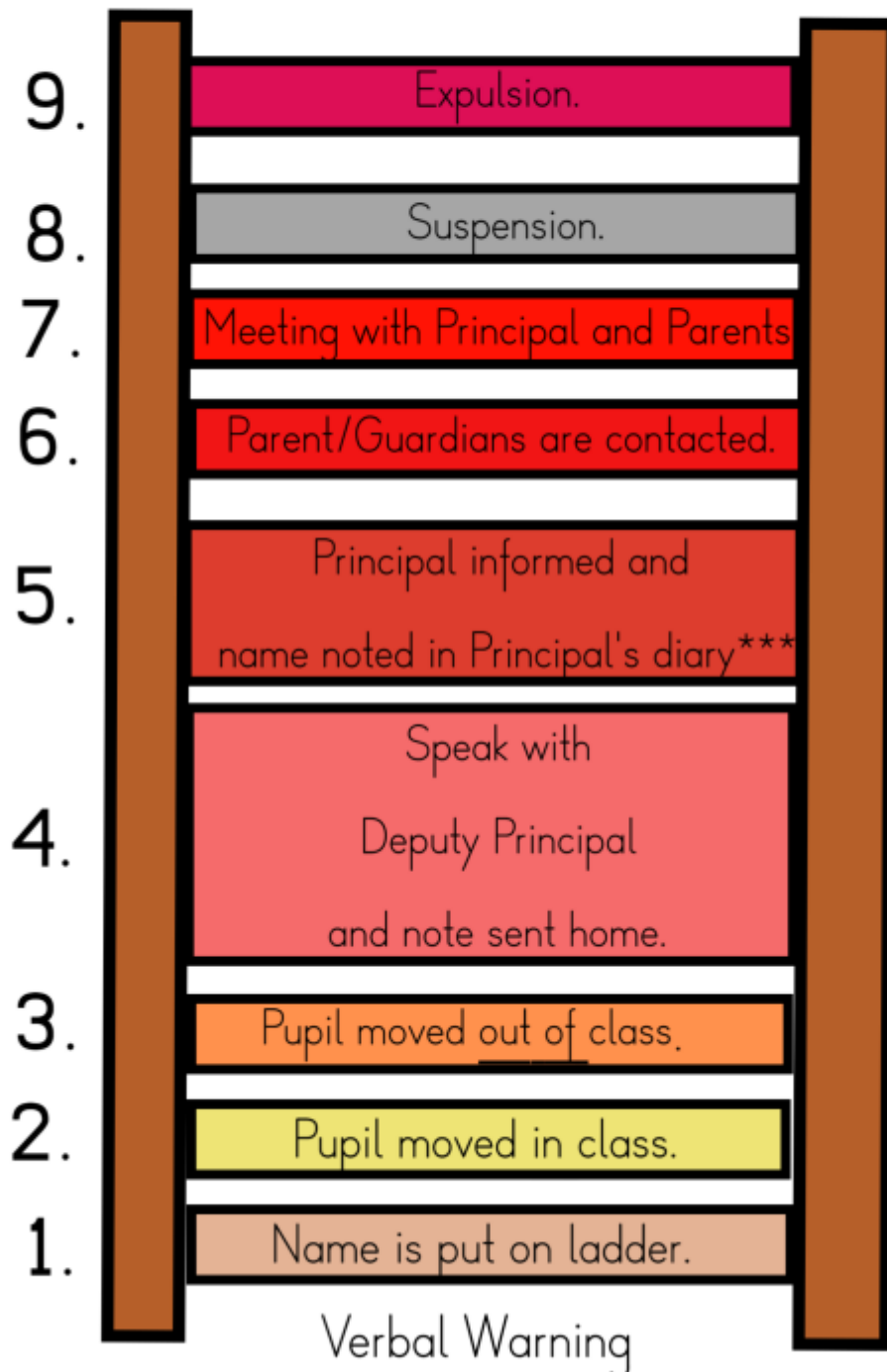
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# ST MARGARETS NS CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

## Behaviour Ladder



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Shooting star, Happy face, Thumbs up, Large purple arrow, Thumbs down, Sad face, Warning sign

Progress scale with ten horizontal bars of varying colors (purple, green, orange, yellow) between two vertical blue bars.