



Code of Behaviour

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1. Introductory Statement:

Stratford National School aims to provide a positive, secure and friendly learning environment, where children, teachers, parents and the wider school community work in partnership and develop positive, respectful relationships. The school has an important role in children's moral and social development as well as their academic development. This code seeks to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated, in tandem with the acknowledgement of the rights of each child to an education in a relatively disruption free environment. The code of behaviour will provide clarity for staff and parents on the management of behaviour, while the children are on the school premises or engaged in school activities. It was devised by school staff in consultation with the Student Council, parent body and Board of Management of the school. This policy will be followed by all staff in the school.

2. Aims of the Code

In devising the code, consideration was given to the needs and circumstances of the school. Stratford NS is an inclusive school, which aims to ensure fair treatment of all regardless of age, gender, race/ethnic background and/or ability. The aim of this code is to

- Create a well ordered, safe and caring environment conducive to learning
- Create a positive school climate that encourages and promotes positive behaviour, self-esteem and respect
- Assist children in taking responsibility for their own behaviour within the school environment
- Enable teachers to teach without disruption
- Encourage the involvement of home and school in the implementation of this policy

3. Principles of the Code

- Stratford National School has high expectations for the behaviour of all members of the school. The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to understand these differences.
- The educational needs of children whose behaviour is unacceptable will be balanced with the educational needs of the other children in the school.
- Our school is committed to provide positive support for all children.
- A high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, parents and children. Every effort will be made to ensure that the code of behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- It is not school policy to inform parents of every minor behaviour-related incident. This is at the discretion of the individual teacher in line with our code of behaviour. Parents will be informed of all incidents of serious and gross misbehaviour.

4. Rights and Responsibilities

The school's code of behaviour is founded on following beliefs:

- **School Safety**
 - All members of the school community have a **right** to feel safe.
 - Everyone has a **responsibility** to help create and sustain a safe school environment.
- **School Respect**
 - All members of the school community have a **right** to be treated with respect.
 - Everyone has a **responsibility** to treat others with respect.
- **School Communication**
 - All members of the school community have the right to communicate.
 - Everyone has a **responsibility** to allow others to communicate also.
- **School Learning**
 - All members of the school community have a **right** to learn.
 - Everyone has a **responsibility** to allow others to learn

5. Rules of the School

- All children should show appropriate respect to all school staff in their language and actions. They should listen to and follow their instructions in a timely manner.



- All children should show respect to other children in the school in their language and actions.
- All children should strive to complete all classwork and homework to the best of her/his ability.
- All children should treat their own property, the property of others, and the property of the school with respect and care.
- All children should arrive and leave on time each day. If a child is absent, an explanatory note from parents must be submitted to the teacher through Aladdin.
- All children may not leave the premises without permission from parents. If, under exceptional circumstances, a child needs to leave school during the school day, they must bring a note to explain the reason. The note must be lodged with the class teacher by using the Aladdin Connect app or by writing a note in homework notebooks at the beginning of the day and must be signed by the child's parent/guardian.
- All children should wear the full prescribed school uniform, with due attention given to a high standard of personal hygiene and neat presentation.
- Children should follow their class rules regarding hand-raising and leaving one's seat to show due regard for the rights of others to work without distraction.
- Running in the school building and on the concrete pathways around the building is forbidden.
- The use of mobile phones is strictly forbidden. Any phones must be switched off and remain in the child's bag for the entire school day. Children may not use any mobile phone/tablet on school premises unless the equipment is school property or supervised by a member of staff. Violation of this rule will result in confiscation, and parents will be requested to come and collect it.
- Children should bring a healthy lunch to school in line with school guidelines on healthy eating. Chewing gum is banned.
- **Any form of bullying is totally unacceptable. Please see 'Stratford NS Bí Cineálta Anti-bullying Policy' on the school website, www.stratfordns.ie.**

5.1 Class Rules

Each classroom will have their own list of rules which will broadly reflect the school rules, be age appropriate, and be communicated clearly to all children in the room.

6. Strategies for Promoting Positive Behaviour:

In Stratford NS, we aim to actively promote a happy atmosphere and positive school environment. This includes practices and strategies to affirm and encourage positive behaviour.

6.1 Strategies for Promoting Positive Behaviour in School

The positive strategies which we implement to promote good behaviour, to prevent behavioural difficulties and to deal with incidents of unacceptable behaviour in school are:

- We have respect for diversity and individual children's needs.
- We enhance children' self-esteem through the effective delivery of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum. The methodologies used by class and SEN teachers are included but not limited to talk and discussion, circle time, drama, and written/pictorial responses.
- We see the development of emotional intelligence, the building up of resilience, respect and tolerance of diversity, the teaching of empathy and emotional literacy as vital components of our SPHE curriculum.
- A range of approaches are used to promote positive behaviour in the school, including a restorative approach to rebuilding relationships, reflection techniques, and individualised support programmes.
- We foster communication with home and school via homework diaries, notes, newsletter, informal and formal meetings and our school website.
- We understand that effective teaching and learning are closely linked to good behaviour. We believe that positive acknowledgement and reinforcement is a very effective way of promoting good learning behaviour.

6.2 Strategies for Promoting Positive Behaviour on the Yard

The positive strategies which we implement to promote good behaviour, to prevent behavioural difficulties and to deal with incidents of unacceptable behaviour on the yard are:

- We communicate a clear and concise set of rules to all children, in line with their age and ability, and enforce them consistently.



- We discuss these rules at staff meetings, during class circle times, during assemblies, and in individual classes.
- We reflect upon and review these rules and amend them where necessary on a termly or yearly basis.
- All members of the school community work together to create a happy and peaceful yard environment. We encourage older classes to model positive behaviour.
- We acknowledge and affirm positive behaviour on yard on an ongoing basis

6.3 Rewards and Acknowledgement of Positive Behaviour

In our school we place a greater emphasis on rewarding positive behaviour than on sanctions. We believe that children are more likely to behave well when:

- They are encouraged to see that the code works in a fair way to the benefit of all
- The standards are clear, consistent and widely understood. There are good relationships between staff, parents and children.
- They are taught that rules and rights come with responsibilities, as detailed in the SPHE programmes which are delivered.

Other strategies that help encourage good behaviour are:

- Positive, respectful interaction between staff members and children
- Good school and classroom routines
- Clear boundaries for children
- Recognising and giving positive feedback about behaviour
- Positive behaviour rewards and incentives, used at the discretion of the class teacher and/or principal where deemed effective.

An individualised reward plan may be put in place for specific children, to promote positive behaviour (see [Appendix 8](#)).

7. Restorative Approach

In our school we take a restorative approach to resolving conflict. Within a restorative approach, the emphasis is on restoring relationships rather than exacting sanctions. The building, nurturing and repairing of relationships is a key issue in supporting learners in schools. Restorative practice focuses on finding an acceptable way forward for all parties involved in a dispute.

7.1 Conflict Resolution Approaches

We recognise that there are three distinct approaches to resolving conflict:

- **Negotiation:** The children are taught the skills needed to negotiate with others in times of conflict. We teach children to clearly and directly communicate if another child is behaving in a way that is upsetting them. Children are encouraged to say 'Stop' if someone is teasing them or annoying them in some way. We see this assertive communication as a very important step in each child's personal development.
- **Mediation:** Mediation is regularly used to help children resolve conflict. The mediator helps children in a dispute to resolve their differences amicably and aims to create win-win solutions. Mediators encourage children to communicate their feelings and to give an account of what happened. In the mediation process children are encouraged to listen and to understand the situation from both sides. Mediators must be impartial and non-judgemental.
- **Arbitration:** Unfortunately, not all conflicts are resolved through negotiation and mediation. Sometimes conflicts are resolved through arbitration where the teacher or principal intervenes and decides whether sanctions are necessary to end a conflict.

7.2 Restorative Approach Questions

A restorative approach is used in our school as a tool when dealing with conflict. In the process of arbitration, the teacher or principal may lead a restorative practice session. Children have conversations based around a series of questions. These questions are as follows:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking/feeling at the time?



- What are you thinking and feeling now?
- Who has been affected by this?
- What do you need to move on?
- What needs to happen now, so that harm can be repaired?

8. Behaviour Management Strategies, Interventions and Sanctions

It is important to note that the following general behaviour management strategies, interventions and sanctions will be used in tandem with restorative practice, positive behaviour management, and typical preventative interventions such as reasoning, modelling of behaviour, physical proximity, pre-teaching of rules and routines, and advice on how to improve.

8.1 Aims of Behaviour Management Strategies, Interventions and Sanctions

The behaviour management strategies, interventions and sanctions detailed in this section aim to:

- Help children learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- Help children recognise the effect of their behaviour on others
- Provide children with the opportunity for meaningful reflection on their behaviour
- Help children understand that they have choices about their own behaviour
- Reinforce the boundaries set out in the school rules and/or class rules
- Signal to other children and staff that their well-being is being protected
- Prevent disruption of teaching and learning
- Keep everyone safe

8.2 Examples of Minor, Serious and Gross Misbehaviour

Unacceptable behaviour can be defined as minor, serious or gross misbehaviour and will be judged by the teachers and Principal with regard to the gravity and severity of such misdemeanours.

8.2.1 Minor Misbehaviours

Examples of minor misbehaviour include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Breaking the agreed class rules, including during lunch and yard time
- Leaving litter around the school
- Being discourteous and unmannerly
- Not completing homework without good reason
- Isolated acts of disrespect/unkindness to any staff member/ child/ parent/ visitor
- Rough play on the yard, including play fighting and wrestling
- Disrupting the play of other children
- Playing in the toilets
- Returning to the school building without asking permission
- Exclusion of others from joining in games

8.2.2 Serious Misbehaviours

Examples of serious misbehaviour include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Regular acts of disrespect/unkindness to any member of the school community
- Regular instances of speaking out of turn, interrupting others, disruption and being inattentive
- Regularly breaking agreed class rules
- Deliberately refusing to co-operate with instructions
- Using a mobile phone during school hours
- Vandalism of school property
- Answering back to any staff member/ child/ parent/ visitor
- Persistent minor misbehaviours, for example lying, rough play in the yard, not completing homework without good reason etc
- Using unacceptable language



Items on this list identified as 'regular' falls under serious misbehaviour if a minor misbehaviour is consistently repeated. Teacher judgement of the specific case and how often the behaviour is occurring will determine whether it is deemed minor or serious.

8.2.3 Gross Misbehaviours

Examples of gross misbehaviour include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards any member of the school community or visitor.
- Any act of assault against any staff member/child/parent/visitor
- Intentional physical abuse of another child
- Engaging in any action that would injure a child intentionally or unintentionally
- Verbally abusing a teacher or fellow child
- Involvement in racial or discriminatory incidents
- Inappropriate touching and displaying of body parts (age appropriate)
- Deliberately endangering self or fellow children during all school activities
- Deliberate damage to the property of another child/children
- Leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission
- Using objects as weapons in school (catapults, sticks, etc.)
- Stealing
- Destruction of school property
- Bringing weapons to school (such as sharp objects, knives and guns of any kind)
- Repeated and vehement refusal to comply with instructions
- Persistent incidences of minor or serious misbehaviour at school.

8.3 Interventions

All members of staff have a shared responsibility in operating the school's code of behaviour. All staff are expected to familiarise themselves with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and Child Protection Policy. Copies of all school policies can be requested from the school office or viewed on the school's website.

The staff member who has dealt with or observed the misbehaviour will communicate incidents of notable behaviour to the class teacher and record the incident on the children's Aladdin profile. Interventions are used in school as part of a plan to change behaviour and are used as part of a wider plan to help children learn. Interventions are used in a respectful way that help children to understand the consequences of their behaviour and to take responsibility for changing the behaviour. In particular, teachers are aware that interventions should:

- Diffuse and not escalate a situation
- Preserve the dignity of all parties
- Encourage self-reflection
- Be applied in a fair and consistent way
- Be timely and age appropriate

Staff use agreed interventions and teachers know the level of intervention they are authorised to apply. S.N.A.s are not responsible for children's discipline or classroom management. Their role is to remind and to advise.

8.4 Behaviour Management Strategies

Stratford NS uses a variety of sanctions or consequences as part of its Code of Behaviour. The use of sanctions or consequences is characterised by the following 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 it breeds resentment
- There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences
- It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus



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 children devise strategies for this.

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development. These may include

- Reasoning with pupil.
- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class (Children will not be deprived of engagement in a curricular area, except on the grounds of Health or Safety).
- Completion of Behaviour Check-ins or Behaviour Reflection Sheet ([Appendix 2](#)) – a non-exhaustive variety of templates are available to meet the needs of the child
- Prescribing extra work (eg. Reflective essays)
- Loss of privileges (eg. Golden Time)
- Detention during break-time.
- Teacher communicating with parents.
- Referral to Principal.
- Principal communicating with parents.
- ‘Time’ for reflection and family-discussion.
- In-School Supervision – see [Appendix 4](#)
- Suspension
- Exclusion from school

Developing Codes of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (NEWB, 2008) has informed this Code of Behaviour. These guidelines acknowledge a child’s right to education, but also the occasional need for a school to suspend or expel children where serious and/or gross misbehaviour occurs.

In the investigation of alleged misbehaviour, and in decision making around what, if any sanction should be imposed, it should be clear that fair procedures are adopted. These fair procedures have two essential parts:

- The right to be heard; and
- The right to impartiality.

8.5 Behaviour Management Strategies on School Trips/Outings

The above steps for behaviour management on the yard will also be applied to school trips/outings. Reflection time in the hall/lunchroom can be substituted for reflection time of an appropriate length in a designated area, or standing with a teacher/S.N.A.

8.6 Behaviour Management Strategies for Incidents of Serious Misbehaviour

In the case of the incidents of serious misbehaviour as detailed above in Section 8.2.2, the following steps will be taken:

- If the behaviour occurs on yard, the child is sent immediately to the hall for the remainder of yard time to reflect/cool down.
- If it occurs in the classroom, the child is sent to a quiet area of the room or to the support room or hall accompanied by an adult to reflect/cool down.
- The principal is informed, as well as S.E.N. staff, where applicable.
- The child’s parents are informed via telephone call (along with the parents of the other child/children involved in the incident, if relevant/necessary).
- A Behaviour Reflection Sheet ([Appendix 2](#)) is sent home to be signed by a parent and returned to the class teacher on the following school day. Parents may be asked to complete the reflection sheet with their children depending on the individual details of the incident, eg time of day, age of child, etc.
- Yard time may be curtailed/ separation from peers may be enforced for a period of time, at the discretion of the class teacher and/or principal.



- The principal may decide to implement an in-school supervision for the remainder of the school day (see [Appendix 4](#))
- In exceptional circumstances, the principal may decide to implement an immediate suspension for the remainder of school day if the safety of other children and/or staff members is deemed to be at risk. The school's procedures for suspension and recordkeeping must still be applied.

If another incident of serious misbehaviour occurs within the subsequent four-week period, the following steps will be taken:

- Principal will be informed, along with S.E.N. teacher(s) where applicable.
- Parents will be contacted via telephone and informed.
- The principal, in agreement with the parents and in the best interest of the child, may decide that the child will be sent home for the remainder of school day if the safety of other children and/or staff members is deemed to be at risk.
- An in-person meeting will be scheduled with the parents/principal/class teacher/S.E.N. teacher, the goal of which will be to formulate an Individual Behaviour Plan ([Appendix 3](#)) and decide upon its contents and timeframe.
- The class teacher and S.E.N. teacher(s) will draw up an Individual Behaviour Plan for the child, in line with NCSE behaviour management guidelines. The child will also be given the opportunity to be a participant in the formation of the plan, if possible. This plan should be communicated to and signed by all parties, once completed and endorsed by the child's parents.
- The Individual Behaviour plan will be communicated to the child clearly.
- The plan will be enacted, reviewed, refined and expanded upon where necessary.
- Support from outside agencies may be suggested by class or SEN teachers, following consultation with the principal. Such agencies may be public (e.g. Tusla, Barnardos, Lucena) or private (e.g. recommended play therapists or art therapists) depending on the specific case.
- Some incidents of misbehaviour may result in the Principal informing the Board of Management of the school and/or referring cases of misbehaviour to the Board of Management.

In a small minority of cases of repeated and/or intentional serious misbehaviour, suspension and/or expulsion may need to be considered. Please see sections 9 & 10 below for more information.

9. Suspension

Suspension is defined as "requiring the child to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days". During the period of a suspension, the child retains their place in the school.

9.1. Authority to Suspend

The Board of Management of Stratford NS, in consultation with the Principal, has the authority to suspend a child.

9.2. Grounds for Suspension

Suspension is considered to be a last resort. It may occur in the case of the following:

- Instances of gross misbehaviour
- The child's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education and/or welfare of other children.
- The child's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
- The child is responsible for serious damage to property

A single incident of gross misbehaviour will be grounds for suspension. The following factors will be considered before a child is suspended based on a single incident:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date
- Whether suspension is a proportionate response
- The possible impact of suspension on the child in question.



9.3. Procedures for Suspension

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, for example gross or repeated serious misbehaviour, the school will observe the following procedures:

- The child and their parents/guardians will be informed about the complaint, that it will be investigated and that it may result in suspension. Where practical, parents will be informed by telephone. In the event of the parents being non-contactable by phone, an email will be sent with details of the incident and a request for a meeting.
- The parents and child will be given an opportunity to meet with the Principal to discuss the incident and respond before any sanction is imposed.
- If a child and their parents/guardians fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will inform them in writing advising them of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour.
- Any decision to suspend will be given in writing to the parents.
- A record of the suspension will be placed on the child's Aladdin file. This record will include incident report files and copies of relevant emails.
- Any child suspended will be expected to complete the work they should have completed in class, at home.
- In exceptional circumstances, parents may be asked to come to the school immediately to remove their child from the school, if the child's presence in school represents a serious threat to the safety of other members of the school community. In this instance, the parents will meet with the principal to discuss the event and a decision will be made with regard to the suspension of the child in consultation with the parents. The paperwork requirements listed above will be shared with the parents.
- If parents are asked to remove a child from school and the child is subsequently suspended, that day may count as day 1 of the suspension.

9.4. The Period of Suspension

A child should not be suspended for a period exceeding 3 days without Board consultation. However, the Board may authorise the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson, to impose a suspension of up to three days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion. The maximum period that may be imposed by the Board for any one suspension is 10 days, unless the Board is considering expulsion.

9.5. Appealing a Suspension

The Board of Management has placed a ceiling of three days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. The Board will formally review any proposal to suspend a child, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the child has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

9.6 Reporting a Suspension

If a student is suspended for a period of not less than 6 consecutive school days, then the school is obliged to report this to Tusla Education Support Services (TESS). If a student is suspended for a shorter period(s) then it must be counted in the aggregate number of absences and if the student exceeds 20 days absence (including any suspensions) then this should be reported through the normal referral and reporting processes.¹

10. Expulsion

A child is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

10.1. Authority to Expel

The authority to expel a child is reserved to the Board of Management.

¹ From <https://www.tusla.ie/tess/information-for-schools/education-welfare-service-tess/#:~:text=If%20a%20students%20is%20suspended,the%20needs%20of%20a%20child?>



10.2. Grounds for Expulsion

Expulsion of a child is a very serious step, and one that will only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. A proposal to expel a child requires serious grounds such as:

- The child's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- The child's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- The child is responsible for serious damage to property.

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference is that, where expulsion is considered, the Board of Management will have tried a series of other interventions and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the child's behaviour.

10.3. Expulsion for a First Offence

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a child should be expelled for a first offence. The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the code could include:

- A serious threat of violence against another child or member of staff
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Supplying illegal drugs to other children in the school
- Sexual assault

10.4. Procedures for Expulsion

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing where Principal and the parents, or a student aged eighteen years or over, put their respective cases to the Board in each other's presence.
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

These procedures assume that the Board of Management is the decision-making body in relation to expulsions. It is a matter for the Board of Management to decide which of the tasks involved in these procedural steps requires separate meetings and which tasks can be accomplished together in a single meeting, consistent with giving parents due notice of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for a Board hearing.

Steps 1 to 6 as outlined above are detailed in "Developing a Code of Behaviour – Guidelines for Schools", issued by the Tusla Educational Support Services (TESS) (formerly the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB)) pages 83 – 86 will be followed. In the event of an appeal the appeals process under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will be followed.

10.5. Review of Use of Expulsion

The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion in the school at two-yearly intervals or as required to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school, and to ensure that expulsion is used appropriately.

11. Record Keeping

It is vital that clear records are kept for incidents of repeated minor misbehaviours, serious or gross misbehaviour, suspensions and expulsions. While records may be handwritten, it is considered good practice to scan them and upload to Aladdin, while keeping paper copies in the children's files. Parents are notified of incidents through Aladdin or verbally at the start and end of the school day. Parents are asked to countersign behaviour reflection



sheets and to return to the school. Records are kept by the relevant class teachers, the principal and teachers on yard duty and stored in hard copies in the children's files and soft copy in Aladdin.

The list of records to be kept include, but are not limited to:

- Yard duty incident logs ([Appendix 7](#))
- Yard incident reports on Aladdin for more serious incidents
- Behaviour logs
- Behaviour reflection sheets
- Behaviour letters ([Appendix 1](#)) - notifying of persistent minor misbehaviour
- Teacher notes
- Emails sent to parents regarding behaviour
- Incident reports ([Appendix 5](#)) where children or adult are hurt deliberately by a child
- ABC charts ([Appendix 6](#))

12. Bullying

Bullying is prohibited at Stratford NS. The school has in place a Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour. In the event of an allegation of bullying taking place, the procedures outlined in the Bí Cineálta policy will be adhered to. The sanctions as outlined in this Code of Behaviour may be used in dealing with incidents of bullying. Bullying may be considered as a serious or gross misbehaviour.

13. Children with Additional Educational Needs

While all children in the school are subject to the school's Code of Behaviour, some children come to school with special educational needs. Staff at Stratford NS have an appreciation and awareness of these complex and individual needs. These needs are taken into account during the implementation of the school's Code of Behaviour.

Where a child with special needs is in breach of the school's Code of Behaviour, the teachers will use their professional judgment in relation to regularity and level of sanctions. While teachers must be seen to be fair in the eyes of other children who may have exhibited the same type of misdemeanours, they may also show leniency in relation to children with specific learning/behavioural difficulties.

Parents of these children will be kept informed of their child's behaviour on a regular basis and may be requested to work with the school in devising effective strategies to help the child to improve his/her behaviour. The devising of such strategies may also entail contacting and meeting with relevant out of school agencies.

14. Admissions Policy

In accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, when parents are offered a place in Stratford NS, they will be asked to confirm that the school's Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by their child. This confirmation is a condition of acceptance of a place in the school and an offer of a place will be rescinded if this confirmation is not given.

15. Substitute Teachers

It is the duty of the principal to ensure all substitute teachers are made aware of the school's code of behaviour, which will be available on the school's website. Class teachers will ensure that class rules and individual behaviour plans are available for sharing with substitute teachers, to ensure consistency in the implementation of the school's code of behaviour. Behaviour plans will be uploaded to the relevant children's Aladdin profile and class rules will be available on the wall of the classroom.

16. Review

This version of the policy was ratified by the Board of Management in May 2026. It will be reviewed on a three-year cycle.

DocuSigned by:

Elaine Monev

Signed: _____ (Chairperson BOM)

Date: 5/27/2026



STRATFORD NATIONAL SCHOOL

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Appendix 1: Behaviour Letter

Behaviour Letter

Dear Parent(s)/ Guardian(s),

_____ broke the following class rules today:

Please acknowledge receiving this letter by signing your name at the bottom and having your child return it to me tomorrow.

Regards,

Parent Signature _____

Date: _____

Child Signature _____

Date: _____









Appendix 2: Behaviour Reflection Sheet

Date: _____

Dear Parent(s),

Please complete and sign this Behaviour Reflection Sheet with your child and return it to _____ tomorrow.

<p>What happened?</p> 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>What were you thinking at the time?</p> 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>What have you thought about it since?</p> 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Who was affected and how?</p> 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>What could you have done differently?</p> 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>How can you make things better now?</p> 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Signed (Parent): _____

Signed (Child): _____



Name: _____ Date: _____

Behaviour Check-In

Today is:

How I feel about today:



My act of kindness:

Reason for my rating

Something new I learned today:



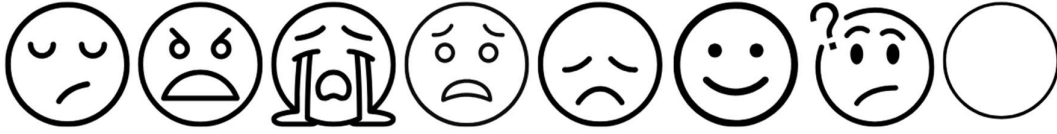
Name: _____ Date: _____

Making Good Choices

This is what I did.

This behaviour was not ok because:

This is how I felt:



bored angry sad scared lonely happy confused _____

Next time I will:

I have apologised for my actions.



Parents' / Guardians' Signature: _____



Name: _____ Date: _____

Behaviour Reflection

What choice did I make that caused a problem?

How do I feel about my behaviour?



What will I do next time?

This behaviour is not ok because

- It is not safe.
- It is unkind.
- It hurt someone.
- It damaged property.
- It disrupted learning.

What can I do to make things better?

Parents' / Guardians' Signature: _____



Name: _____

Date: _____

Behaviour Reflection

What was the problem?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mean words | <input type="checkbox"/> It damaged property. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hurt a friend. | <input type="checkbox"/> It disrupted learning. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unkind behaviour | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

How do I feel?



How do the others feel?



What can I do to make this better?

Parents' / Guardians' Signature: _____



Appendix 3: Individual Behaviour Plan

Name: _____

Date of Plan: _____

Date of Review: _____

Behaviour Target(s) (to be discussed with child)

-
-

Methods and resources used to meet the target(s)

-
-

Reward(s) if applicable

-
-

Sanction(s) if applicable

-
-

To be signed by:

Child: _____

Parent(s): _____

Teacher(s): _____



Appendix 4: In School Supervision

In school supervision may be used in Stratford National School as a sanction for some incidents of serious misbehaviour, at the school's discretion. Its primary purpose is to support positive behaviour change while ensuring continuity of learning and wellbeing for the child involved. It is not intended to be punitive. In school supervision allows the child to remain in the school environment and to continue accessing planned supports from the Special Education Team in line with their Student Support Plan. These supports, which have been developed in collaboration with parents, are central to helping the child make progress in their learning and behaviour.

In school supervision also balances the rights of all pupils. By temporarily removing the child from the classroom to work under the supervision of another staff member, the learning environment for other pupils is protected, ensuring they can continue their education in a calm and disruption free setting. A key element of in school supervision is structured reflection. The child is supported to reflect on the incident and its impact, with guidance from a nonteaching staff member. This reflective process is intended to promote self-regulation, accountability, and positive decision making. The supervision period also provides an opportunity to build a supportive mentoring relationship, which can assist the child's successful reintegration into the classroom. The child continues to access break times, recognising the importance of physical activity and fresh air for emotional regulation and wellbeing.

In school supervision is only implemented with parental agreement. Parents are invited to meet with the principal and relevant staff to discuss the incident, the supports required, and the plan for the day, including supervision arrangements. Where parental consent is not provided, an out of school suspension of the same duration will apply. All incidents, meetings, communications, and agreed actions are documented and retained in the child's records, both in hard copy and on Aladdin, in line with school procedures.



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Appendix 6: ABC Chart

Child's Name _____

Date	Antecedent: Description of what, where, who, and how right before the behaviour.	Behaviour: Description of what behaviours occurred, intensity of behaviour, duration of behaviour, etc.	Consequence: Description of what occurred immediately following behaviour, what did you do, what changed in the environment, what were others' responses, etc.	Initials



Appendix 7: Yard Duty Incidents

Date	Name of Child	Incident	Other children involved	Outcome
		<input type="checkbox"/> Rough play <input type="checkbox"/> Disrespecting others <input type="checkbox"/> Excluding a child <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate use of equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Taking another child's belongings <input type="checkbox"/> Not following instructions <input type="checkbox"/> Other		<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal warning <input type="checkbox"/> Apology <input type="checkbox"/> Time out <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour Reflection Sheet home
		<input type="checkbox"/> Rough play <input type="checkbox"/> Disrespecting others <input type="checkbox"/> Excluding a child <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate use of equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Taking another child's belongings <input type="checkbox"/> Not following instructions <input type="checkbox"/> Other		<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal warning <input type="checkbox"/> Apology <input type="checkbox"/> Time out <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour Reflection Sheet home
		<input type="checkbox"/> Rough play <input type="checkbox"/> Disrespecting others <input type="checkbox"/> Excluding a child <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate use of equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Taking another child's belongings <input type="checkbox"/> Not following instructions <input type="checkbox"/> Other		<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal warning <input type="checkbox"/> Apology <input type="checkbox"/> Time out <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour Reflection Sheet home
		<input type="checkbox"/> Rough play <input type="checkbox"/> Disrespecting others <input type="checkbox"/> Excluding a child <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate use of equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Taking another child's belongings <input type="checkbox"/> Not following instructions <input type="checkbox"/> Other		<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal warning <input type="checkbox"/> Apology <input type="checkbox"/> Time out <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour Reflection Sheet home
		<input type="checkbox"/> Rough play <input type="checkbox"/> Disrespecting others <input type="checkbox"/> Excluding a child <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate use of equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Taking another child's belongings <input type="checkbox"/> Not following instructions <input type="checkbox"/> Other		<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal warning <input type="checkbox"/> Apology <input type="checkbox"/> Time out <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour Reflection Sheet home



Appendix 8: Individualised Reward Plans

Positive attention, praise and encouragement are important to promote the development of positive behaviour and skills. In Stratford NS, we use individualised reward plans to increase praise for the desired behaviour, while avoiding giving attention to negative behaviours and ignoring any behaviours which are safe to ignore.

The individualised reward plans will be devised by the staff working with specific children and shared with all staff members, to promote consistency of approach throughout the school.

Key features of the individualised reward plans are

- Incentives and rewards are used to teach new skills and reward positive behaviour with positive attention.
- Individual interests will be taken into account by giving the child a choice of reward at the start of each day.
- The child will be allowed to choose a friend to accompany him/ her to help develop positive relationships with peers.
- The number of stars/ stickers needed to gain a reward will be low at first to promote the desired behaviour, increasing over time as the child becomes more successful demonstrating the desired behaviour.
- “.... rewards/ incentives earned for positive behaviour are never removed due to negative behaviour.”²
- The child will receive his/her reward as soon as possible after earning it, to maintain interest in the reward system and to build positive relationships with the staff involved.

² Government of Ireland (2022) Autism Good Practice Guidelines for Schools p179
<https://tinyurl.com/AutismGoodPracticeGuidance>



Appendix 9: Physical Restraint³

'Physical restraint, as defined in these guidelines, is not permitted within any recognised school setting except in a crisis situation where there is imminent risk to students' physical safety or the safety of others.'⁴ This intervention is only used in a crisis situation, where there is a risk of serious physical harm to the child or other children.

Any physical restraint used must be:

- Timely – it is not the first option, it is only used in a crisis situation.
- Measured – it is only used for as long as it takes to maintain or re-establish safety for all concerned. Physical restraint is stopped and shadowing is used once as soon as the child can regain control and the safety of the child and others is no longer in doubt.
- Appropriately trained personnel – where possibly only appropriately trained staff should use physical restraint. The Board of Management is responsible for sourcing appropriate training for the staff.
- Reviewed – after the event, a report will be prepared using resource 1 of the guidelines p56.

The following forms of restraint will not be used in the school:

- Restraint of a student in a prone (face down) or supine (face up) position that may inhibit the student's breathing.
- Mechanical restraints: the use of any device such as a belt or item of clothing that restricts the student's capacity to move, other than for safety concerns during transport.
- Pressure points and pain holds.
- Hyperextension of joints such as forcing arms backwards.
- Headlocks.
- Using force to drag or push a student from one location to another.
- Chemical restraints such as the use of medicine to limit a student's capacity to move.

Following the event, the following steps will be taken:

- The child will be given time and space to regain composure and the adults will keep language to a minimum. The child may be brought to a quiet space such as the sensory room or the hall.
- Where appropriate, the child will remain in school and every effort will be made to repair relationships and re-establish routines.
- Parents/ guardians will be informed and invited into the school for a meeting.
- Staff involved complete the Record of Physical Restraint (resource 1 of the guidelines)
- The principal and Board of Management will be informed.
- A review meeting is held with all staff to reflect using resource 2 of the guidelines.
- Parents will meet with the relevant staff to review incident reports and review and revise the Student Support Plan in light of the incident.
- The incident will be reported to the NCSE and any other relevant organisations.

³ This guidance was taken from the document [Understanding Behaviours of Concern and Responding to Crisis Situations, Section 3.2.2](#)

⁴ [Understanding Behaviours of Concern and Responding to Crisis Situations, Section 3.2.2](#) p42