



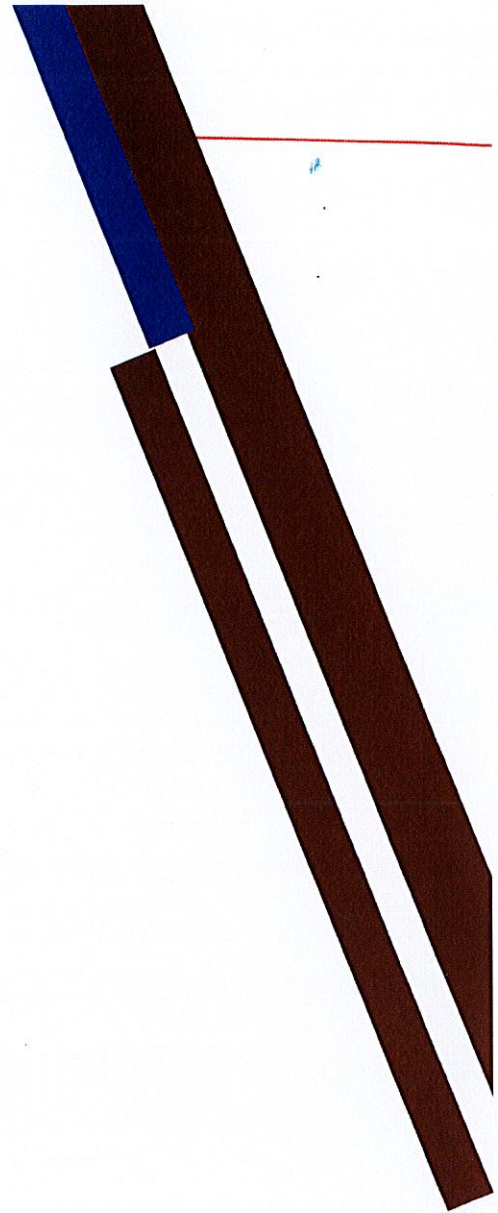
St. Joseph's Fermoy

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Aligned with the LAOS Domains

Principal:
Geraldine Burke

Ratified by BoM:



School Name:	St. Joseph's Fermoy
Roll Number:	18377A
Address:	Barrack Hill, Fermoy
Eircode	P61YR82
Telephone:	025 32284
Email:	office@stjosephsfermoy.com
Principal:	Geraldine Burke
Deputy Principal:	Gary Flynn
Chairperson, BoM:	Kieran McCarthy
School Opening Time	08:50:00
School Closing Time	13:30 for infants 14:30 for all other classes
Patron	Cloyne
Designated Liaison Person	Geraldine Burke
Deputy Designated Liaison Person	Gary Flynn
School Website	https://www.stjosephsfermoy.ie/
Plean Scoile Folder:	5 Policies and Procedures
Aligned Domains (LAOS 2022):	Domain 2: Managing the Organisation and Domain 3: Leading School Development
SSE Focus Area:	Ensures statutory compliance, safe practices and governance structures, supporting SSE evidence for effective and accountable school operation.

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CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

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Introduction

This Code of Behaviour has been developed by the Board of Management of St. Joseph's Fermoy in accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the **Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools** issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (now Tusla – Education Support Service). It also operates in conjunction with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy, developed in accordance with the Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, and with the school's obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017).

The Code sets out the standards of behaviour expected of pupils and the procedures to be followed when those standards are not met. It forms a central part of the school's overall approach to creating a positive, inclusive, safe and effective learning environment.

This policy applies to all pupils enrolled in the school and to all school-related activities, whether on or off the school premises.

Rationale

The Board of Management recognises that effective teaching and learning take place in an atmosphere characterised by mutual respect, responsibility, fairness and care.

A clear and consistently implemented Code of Behaviour:

- 1 Supports the school's ethos, vision and mission
 - 2 Promotes positive relationships within the school community
 - 3 Encourages pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and learning
 - 4 Ensures that all pupils can learn in a safe, orderly and supportive environment
 - 5 Provides clarity and transparency for pupils, staff and parents/guardians
-

Aims

The aims of this Code of Behaviour are to:

- Create a positive school climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- Support pupils in developing self-discipline, responsibility and respect for others
- Ensure fairness, consistency and proportionality in responding to behaviour
- Balance the educational needs of individual pupils with the needs of the wider school community
- Provide a place where pupils can feel safe to learn, play and be themselves
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption
- Promote pupil wellbeing, dignity and inclusion
- Comply fully with legislative, regulatory and inspection requirements

Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This Code of Behaviour is informed by, and operates in compliance with, the following:

Constitution of Ireland

Education Act 1998

Education (Welfare) Act 2000

Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007

Equal Status Acts 2000–2018

Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004

Disability Act 2005

Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act 1997

European Convention on Human Rights Act 2003

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Health and Safety legislation

Data Protection Acts and GDPR

Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2024), implemented from the 2025/26 school year

Children First Act 2015

Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)

Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018

Guidelines for the Use of Reduced School Days in Schools (Department of Education)

Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Board of Management (BoM): The body managing the school on behalf of the Patron

Parent: As defined in the Education Act 1998

Pupil: Any child enrolled in the school

Sanction: A consequence applied in response to behaviour that breaches the Code

Suspension / Expulsion: Formal disciplinary measures applied in accordance with legislation and due process

Core Principles

This Code of Behaviour is underpinned by the following principles:

Respect: For self, others, property and the learning environment

Fairness and Natural Justice: Clear procedures, impartial decision-making and the right to be heard

Consistency: A shared and predictable approach to behaviour across the school

Positive Reinforcement: Emphasis on encouraging and acknowledging positive behaviour

Proportionality: Responses to behaviour are appropriate to the nature and seriousness of the behaviour

Scope of the Code

This Code applies to:

All pupils enrolled in the school

Behaviour during the school day, on school premises and during school-related activities

Behaviour during off-site activities, trips, tours and extracurricular events

Behaviour that impacts on the school community, including online behaviour, where relevant

Anti-Bullying Policy Integration

In accordance with Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, implemented from the 2025/26 school year, the school's Anti-Bullying Policy operates within, and forms an integral part of, this Code of Behaviour. The Anti-Bullying Policy sets out the school's prevention and education strategies and its procedures for investigating and dealing with allegations of bullying.

Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 Board of Management

The Board of Management:

Approves, ratifies and reviews the Code of Behaviour

Ensures compliance with legal and regulatory requirements

Ensures fair procedures are followed in cases of serious disciplinary action

8.2 Principal

The Principal:

Leads the implementation of the Code

Ensures consistent application across the school

Supports staff in managing behaviour

Communicates with parents/guardians as required

8.3 School Staff

Staff members:

Create a safe working environment for each pupil

Model positive behaviour and respectful relationships

Teach, promote and reinforce behavioural expectations

Apply agreed procedures consistently

Maintain appropriate records

8.4 Parents / Guardians

Parents/guardians are expected to:

Support the school in implementing the Code

Encourage positive behaviour and respect for school rules

Engage constructively with the school where concerns arise

8.5 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

Behave respectfully and responsibly

Follow school rules and expectations

Take responsibility for their actions

Standards of Behaviour

The school expects pupils to:

Treat all members of the school community with respect and kindness

Engage positively in learning

Follow instructions from staff

Respect school property and the property of others

Contribute to a safe and inclusive school environment

Unacceptable behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

Bullying, harassment or discrimination

Disruption of teaching and learning

Aggressive, threatening or unsafe behaviour

Damage to property or theft

Promoting Positive Behaviour

The school adopts a proactive, whole-school approach to promoting positive behaviour, including:

Clear expectations and routines

Positive reinforcement and feedback

Age-appropriate reward systems

Strong relationships between staff and pupils

Opportunities for pupil voice and responsibility

Examples of the reward strategies used across the school include praise and class reward systems. Individual teachers may adapt these for their class in an age-appropriate way.

Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour

The school uses a graduated, problem-solving approach:

Early intervention and support

Engagement with pupils and parents

Consistent use of agreed sanctions

Focus on behaviour, not the individual

Ongoing review and support

Sanctions are applied to help pupils learn from their behaviour and may include:

Verbal reminders

Loss of privileges

Reflection or restorative activities

Detention or time-out (age appropriate)

Written communication with, or a meeting involving, parent(s)/guardian(s)

Referral for additional support, such as a behaviour support plan or an in-school or external support service

Suspension or, as a last resort, expulsion, in accordance with the Suspension and Expulsion section and Appendices D and E

The sanction selected in an individual case is proportionate to the behaviour and takes account of its seriousness, whether it is a single incident or a pattern, the pupil's age and stage of development, any SEN or additional needs, and any interventions already tried under the Ladder of Intervention at Appendix A.

Suspension and Expulsion

Suspension and expulsion are used only as measures of last resort and in accordance with statutory requirements.

Procedures will ensure:

Fair procedures and natural justice

Parental notification

Right of appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998

The detailed procedures followed by the school in respect of suspension — including the authority to suspend, the grounds on which suspension may be considered, the distinction between an Immediate Suspension and an Automatic Suspension, notification and meeting timelines, and the grounds on which a suspension may be lifted or reduced — are set out in Appendix D. The procedures followed where expulsion is being considered are set out in Appendix E. Procedures for notifying the school of a pupil's absence, and the related reporting obligations to Tusla Education Support Service, are set out in Appendix F.

Communication and Implementation

This Code of Behaviour is:

Communicated to parents and pupils

Available on request and via the school website where applicable

Discussed regularly with pupils

Implemented consistently across the school

Records and Documentation

The school maintains appropriate records relating to behaviour incidents, interventions, suspensions and expulsions in line with data protection requirements.

Training and Awareness

Staff receive guidance and training as required to support effective implementation of this Code, including:

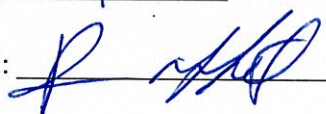
Behaviour management strategies

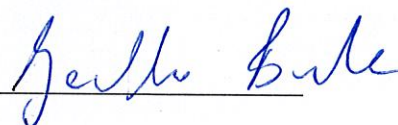
Supporting pupils with additional needs

Child safeguarding and wellbeing

Monitoring and Review

The policy will be reviewed regularly. It will be reviewed by the full staff and Board of Management every two years. The next review of this policy will occur during the school year of 2027/28.

Signed: 

Signed: 

Chairperson: Kieran McCarthy

Principal: Geraldine Burke

Date: 5/10/26

Date: 5/10/26

Appendix A: Ladder of Intervention

(Operational Behaviour Support Framework)

This Ladder of Intervention outlines a graduated, consistent and supportive approach to responding to pupil behaviour. It reflects a whole-school, problem-solving approach and ensures that interventions are proportionate, fair and focused on supporting positive behaviour change.

Level	Description	Examples of Interventions	Responsibility
Level 1: Universal Support	Positive behaviour support for all pupils	• Clear expectations and routines • Positive reinforcement and praise • Modelling of expected behaviour • Classroom management strategies	Class Teacher / All Staff
Level 2: Targeted Support	Additional support for pupils experiencing emerging difficulties	• Reminder of expectations • Restorative conversation • Temporary loss of privilege • Behaviour reflection activity • Communication with parents/guardians	Class Teacher / Principal
Level 3: Intensive Support	Sustained and structured intervention for ongoing or serious behaviour	• Individual behaviour support plan • Increased monitoring and review • Formal meetings with parents/guardians • Referral to in-school supports or external agencies (where appropriate)	Principal / SEN Team / BoM (as required)
Level 4: Formal Sanctions	Serious response where behaviour significantly impacts safety or learning	• Suspension (in accordance with legislation) • Consideration of expulsion procedures (as a last resort)	Board of Management

All interventions are documented, reviewed and adjusted as required to support the pupil's wellbeing and educational progress.

Appendix B: Behaviour Incident Record

(Confidential – School Use Only)

Item	Details
School Name	St. Joseph's Fermoy
Pupil Name	
Class / Group	
Date of Incident	
Time	
Location	
Staff Member Recording	

Description of Incident (factual and objective):

[DETAILS OF INCIDENT]

Type of Behaviour:

- ☐ Minor
- ☐ Moderate
- ☐ Serious

Antecedents / Context (if known):

[CONTEXT]

Impact of Behaviour:

- ☐ Disruption to learning
- ☐ Impact on pupil wellbeing
- ☐ Impact on others
- ☐ Health and safety concern

Intervention Applied:

[INTERVENTION DETAILS]

Sanction (if any):

[DETAILS]

Parent / Guardian Contacted:

☐ Yes ☐ No

Method: ☐ Phone ☐ Meeting ☐ Written

Date: [DATE]

Follow-Up Actions / Supports:

[FOLLOW-UP]

Review Date:

[REVIEW DATE]

Signature (Staff): _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Parent / Guardian Acknowledgement and Agreement

Code of Behaviour

School Name: St. Joseph's Fermoy

Pupil Name: _____

Class / Group: _____

I/We acknowledge that:

I/We have received a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour

I/We understand the standards of behaviour expected of pupils

I/We understand the procedures and possible sanctions outlined

I/We agree to support the school in promoting positive behaviour

I/We recognise that the Code of Behaviour operates in conjunction with other school policies, including Child Safeguarding, Anti-Bullying, SEN and Wellbeing policies.

Parent / Guardian Name (Print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

School Representative: _____

Date: _____

Appendix D: Suspension Procedures

(Operational detail — to be read together with the “Suspension and Expulsion” section above)

Authority to Suspend

The Board of Management has formally delegated authority to the Principal to impose an Immediate Suspension or an Automatic Suspension, as set out below, and to impose any other suspension of up to three school days, subject to the grounds and procedures set out in this Appendix and with each such suspension reported to the Board at its next meeting. In exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days. The Board retains authority to suspend a pupil in all other circumstances.

Grounds for Suspension

Suspension may be considered where:

- the pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils;
- the pupil's continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to the safety of pupils, staff or others;
- the pupil is responsible for serious damage to property; or
- a single incident of serious misconduct has occurred.
- In deciding whether suspension is warranted and, if so, for what duration, the school will have regard to: the seriousness of the behaviour; whether it is a single incident or a pattern of persistent behaviour; the context in which it occurred; its impact on other pupils and staff; the pupil's age and stage of development; any SEN or additional needs; the interventions already attempted under the Ladder of Intervention at Appendix A.

Examples of Serious Misconduct

Serious misconduct may include serious or persistent verbal abuse; threatening or intimidating behaviour; discriminatory, sexualised or identity-based abuse; serious harassment; credible threats of violence; physical aggression; possession of a weapon or dangerous item; serious damage to property; and behaviour that creates a significant risk to the safety or wellbeing of others. Identifying a behaviour as an example of serious misconduct does not mean that every instance automatically results in suspension: the factors set out above will still be considered in each case. Where the Board wishes a specific named behaviour to attract automatic suspension in every case, that behaviour is named precisely under Automatic Suspension below.

Immediate Suspension

An Immediate Suspension may be imposed where, following a preliminary assessment, the Principal determines that the continued presence of the pupil in the school represents a serious and immediate threat to the safety and wellbeing of pupils or staff. An Immediate Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days. In exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, this period may be extended, but will not exceed five school days.

Automatic Suspension

An Automatic Suspension is a suspension imposed for named behaviours which the Board of Management, having considered its duty of care under Health and Safety legislation, has determined will incur suspension as a sanction. These named behaviours include:

Physical assault or violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff

Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days. In exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, this period may be extended, but will not exceed five school days.

Notification of Suspension

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate Suspension, or an Automatic Suspension imposed on safety grounds equivalent to an Immediate Suspension, by telephone in the first instance, and arrangements made for the pupil to be collected. A pupil will not be sent home before their parent(s)/guardian(s) have been notified. Formal written notification will issue no later than two school days after the suspension is imposed, and will set out the duration and dates of the suspension, the reasons for it, any study programme to be followed, the arrangements for the pupil's return to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and parent(s)/guardian(s).

Fair Procedures and Investigation

A formal investigation will be completed no later than two school days after the incident. The Board will invite the pupil and their parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss the circumstances of the suspension and the steps needed to prevent a recurrence.

Where a suspension is being considered other than as an Immediate Suspension (including an Automatic Suspension, except where it is imposed on safety grounds equivalent to an Immediate Suspension), the school will issue written notice of the alleged misbehaviour, the investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in suspension, and will invite parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting, to be held no later than five school days from the date of the letter, before any decision is made or sanction imposed.

No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in organising or carrying out the investigation.

Grounds for Removing a Suspension

A suspension may be lifted or reduced by the Board of Management where any of the following apply:

new information comes to light that materially changes the basis on which the suspension was imposed;

the pupil and their parent(s)/guardian(s) have engaged constructively with the school and given an undertaking, considered satisfactory by the Board, regarding future behaviour;

the Board, following review, is satisfied that the purpose of the suspension has been achieved and that the pupil's return does not present a risk to the safety or wellbeing of others; or

an appeal against the suspension is upheld.

Any decision to lift or reduce a suspension will be communicated in writing to the pupil's parent(s)/guardian(s) and recorded in the pupil's file.

Re-Entry Following Suspension

Before a pupil returns to school following a suspension, the Principal will meet with the pupil and their parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss the pupil's return, agree any commitments regarding future behaviour, and identify any additional supports required. The pupil's class teacher and, where relevant, SEN staff will be informed of the pupil's return and any agreed supports.

Appeals

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which a pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, and will be given information on how to submit such an appeal.

Appendix E: Expulsion Procedures

Authority to Expel

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved to the Board of Management. Where a preliminary assessment confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the following staged procedure applies.

1. Investigation

A detailed investigation is carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a nominee of the Board). Parent(s)/guardian(s) receive written notice of the alleged misbehaviour, the investigation process, and confirmation that the allegation could result in expulsion, together with an invitation to a meeting no later than five school days from the date of the letter.

2. Principal's Recommendation

Where the Principal (or nominee) forms the view that expulsion may be warranted, they make a recommendation to the Board of Management. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are informed that the Board is being asked to consider expulsion, and are given the same records provided to the Board — the allegations, the investigation, and the grounds on which expulsion is being considered.

3. Board Hearing

Where the Board decides to consider expulsion, a hearing is scheduled. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified in writing of the date, location and time of the hearing, their right to make a written and oral submission, and their right to be accompanied. At the hearing, the Principal (or nominee) and the parent(s)/guardian(s) present their case in each other's presence, each party may question the other's evidence, and the parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction.

4. Board Deliberation

Where, having considered all the facts, the Board is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled, the Board will notify Tusla Education Support Service in writing, by registered post, of its opinion and the reasons for it, and will not expel the pupil before twenty school days have passed from the date that notification is received. The Board will inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of its decision and that Tusla is being notified, and will attend the consultation arranged by Tusla. The Board may suspend the pupil during this period if their continued presence would seriously disrupt the learning of others or represent a threat to safety.

5. Confirmation of Expulsion

Once the twenty-school-day period has elapsed and the Board remains of the view that the pupil should be expelled, the Board will formally confirm the decision. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing and informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Impartiality

No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in organising or carrying out the investigation, or in the Board's decision-making. Any person involved in the investigation will, having presented a full report of the facts, absent themselves from the Board's deliberations.

Appendix F: Notification of a Pupil's Absence from School

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should notify the school of a pupil's absence as follows:

A signed and dated explanation of the absence, including its duration and reason, should be provided.

Absences due to illness lasting longer than ten school days should be medically certified

In accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the school will notify Tusla Education Support Service in writing where:

- a pupil is suspended for six consecutive school days;
 - a pupil is suspended for a cumulative total of twenty school days in a school year;
 - the Board of Management forms the opinion that a pupil should be expelled (notice of proposed expulsion), and, separately, when the Board confirms a decision to expel;
 - a pupil has missed twenty or more school days in a school year;
 - a pupil's attendance is otherwise irregular; or
 - a pupil is removed from the school register.
-

Appendix G: Record of Policy Formulation and Consultation

In developing and reviewing this Code of Behaviour, the Board of Management follows this consultation process:

Parents and staff are informed that a draft Code of Behaviour is available and are invited to make submissions within a specified timeframe.

Class teachers discuss the topic of school rules with their classes and submit pupils' suggestions to the Principal.

The draft Code is reviewed and amended, where appropriate, in light of the feedback received.

The finalised draft is formally ratified by the Board of Management