CODE OF BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE

FOR

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER SENIOR SCHOOL

POLICY FORMATION

This Code of Discipline was drawn up in consultation with Staff, Board of Management and the Parents' Association (1996) and reviewed 2006, 2009, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2022 & 2024

The 2024 Review introduced new Restorative practices and a separate behaviour appendix for our ASD class(es).

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1.0 Introductory Statement

The current Code of Behaviour has been in effect for many years and the school community is largely happy with the positive changes that have been brought about in that time but feel that certain areas needed addressing. The Behaviour Management team coordinated a review of the policy during the school year 2023/24. This review took place through staff meetings. The Behaviour Support Team which consists of a member from ISM (with responsibility for behaviour), a teacher from each year group, 2 Special Education Teachers and an SNA, kept note of issues arising relevant to the policy and suggested changes through their meetings.

1.1 Rationale

The school decided to revise the Code of Behaviour because:

- It is of great importance to the children, parents and staff in our school. We believe that positive relationships and affective support for all members of the school community are a pre-requisite in enabling teaching and learning to take place.
- The existing policy required amendments to ensure consistency throughout the school and to ensure we maintain high standards of positive behaviour.
- It is a requirement under D.E.S. circular 20/90 on School Discipline.

1.2 Vision

A respectful, caring and Christian community in which each individual feels accepted, safe and cared for and where staff members, parents and children alike are aware of and carry out their responsibilities (outlined below) towards others in this regard.

1.3 Our Core Values:

- Respectfulness
- Kindness
- Honesty
- Safety
- Hardworking

1.4 Relationship to characteristic Ethos of the School

- This policy helps promote the school's ethos in that it places emphasis on:
- The holistic development of the child, in a happy environment where he/she feels valued and included and is able to live in harmony with the staff and other children.
- The development of a high level of respect and co-operation between staff, parents, pupils and the school community.

1.5 The aims of our Code of Behaviour are:

- To provide a secure, happy, supportive environment for all in St Francis Xavier Senior School.
- To make clear and explicit the behaviour expected of all children in St Francis Xavier Senior School
- To support children's behaviour so a positive, caring relationship is formed.
- To work closely with parents to resolve with any issues that may arise.
- To develop teacher's expertise in the area of behaviour management through supporting professional development in this area.

2.0 RESPECT

Respect is fundamental to our school ethos and one of our core values.

1. Children are expected to be courteous and respectful to each other and to all members of the school community.
2. Children are expected to be kind and show a willingness to help others.
3. Children are expected to show respect for school property, equipment and materials.
4. Children are expected to show respect for their own property and the property of other children.
5. Children are expected to be honest and forthcoming with the truth.
6. Children are expected to show a willingness to use respectful ways to resolve conflict.
7. Name calling and taunting is not tolerated.
8. Pupils in the St. Francis Xavier School uniform should not engage in behaviour that brings the school into disrepute going to/ from school and/or while representing the school on school related events.

2.1 Guidelines for Good Behaviour in St. Francis Xavier Senior School.

As mentioned above, we in St. Francis Xavier Senior School, believe in a whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour. We encourage the use of positive strategies that promote respect, fairness, empathy and good humour. We strive to show children that we care. This is demonstrated in the small, day-to-day, activities of the classroom and the school and is evident in the way we speak to and listen to each other. Examples of how we show children we care and model good behaviour include:

1. Greeting them when they come to school
2. Calling them by name
3. Empathising with their feelings
4. Showing an interest in their lives
5. Sharing some of our own lives with them and sending positive messages home

We endeavour to show children we believe in them; to show them we place trust in them. We always separate the behaviour from the child. We show children that we care about them even if we disapprove of their behaviour. We have clear boundaries and we stay firm but fair. **We are consistent as a whole staff.**

3.0 Class Rules

Children are involved in drawing up class rules. The views of children are always sought, both in class and through the Student Council. Discussions are also held at Junior and Senior assemblies. Children are given responsibilities within the school. School reports will comment on behaviour and attitudes as well as academic achievement.

Each teacher will have their own classroom rules which will be consistent with the school's Code of Behaviour. These rules will be kept to a minimum and be written in clear, simple language, stated positively, telling children what to do, as well as what not to do. They will be based on a clear rationale that is explained, understood and agreed and developed in the classroom. They will be communicated and referred to regularly

Using the S.P.H.E. curriculum we will teach the children the skills to enable them to live up to school expectations. The Stay Safe programme is taught to promote good self-esteem. The School Core Values are taught and referred to consistently.

3.1 Parents can promote good behaviour in the following ways:

- Trying to nurture a positive attitude towards school
- Model good behaviour in their relationship with teachers and staff.
- Support the work being done in school by familiarising themselves with the Code of Behaviour.
- Co-operating with the school by helping the children keep the school rules.

3.2 In St. Francis Xavier Senior School, we expect children to:

- Obey the school, classroom and yard rules.
- Treat all staff, visitors and other children with respect and courtesy.
- Use polite, positive and respectful language in school and in the playground.
- Be considerate and kind to other children.
- Be honest and to take responsibility for their actions.
- Be accountable and apologise when they are wrong.
- Take any necessary action to make amends to restore relationships.
- Treat school property and other children's property with respect and care.
- Listen carefully in class and do their best at schoolwork and homework.
- Behave well in all school areas e.g. yard, P.E. hall, corridors.
- Behave well when engaging in school related activities e.g. sports events, library, museum, school outings
- Be punctual and present in school daily to maximise their learning.
- Take pride in their appearance by wearing a neat and clean uniform.
- Familiarise themselves with the mobile phone policy and acceptable use.

3.3 Pupil Presentation

Children may only wear a limited amount of jewellery as:

- It can cause distraction in class.
- At P.E. and in yard it can prove to be a health and safety hazard.
- Children can be tempted to imitate the jewellery of others, sometimes causing the 'Fashion Parade' effect.

These items are not permitted:

1. Nail Varnish
2. Tattoos or Body Art
3. Makeup
4. Bracelets, Chokers or Necklaces (Necklaces worn for religious reasons may be worn under their clothing)
5. Body Rings or Body Studs
6. Smart watches
7. Hair Colouring

The following items of jewellery are the only items allowed:

1. One finger ring only. Rings worn during sport and P.E. can be dangerous.
2. A wrist watch/Fitbit (No Smart watches)
3. One pair of stud earrings only (No sleepers, hoops or any other dangling earrings)

3.4 Parental support is vital for the promotion of positive behaviour and the maintenance of high standards of behaviour. The school therefore, requests that parents:

- Read this policy and share the contents with their children.
- Give supportive co-operation to school staff in the interest and benefit of their children.
- Co-operate with the school's system of rewards and sanctions.
- Ensure children are punctual and are collected on time.
- Ensure children's attendance is regular. (The school is legally obliged to notify the Education Welfare Services in TUSLA when a child is absent for more than 20 school days annually.)
- Give an explanation prior to a pre-arranged absence or following a child's absence. Explanation may also be given by phoning the school office.
- Discuss any issues, other than minor matters, at mutually agreed pre-arranged meetings
- Attend parent/guardian teacher meetings as necessary.
- Communicate any issue, which troubles you or your child at an early stage.
- Help children with homework, ensuring that it is completed.
- Ensure children have the necessary books and materials for school.
- Ensure children have an adequate lunch in accordance with the school's healthy lunch policy.
- Ensure children wear their school uniform

3.5 In St. Francis Xavier Senior School, we expect teachers to:

- Consistently follow the Code of Behaviour
- Treat children, parents and other staff members with respect, courtesy and polite language.
- Create a positive, happy and encouraging atmosphere in the classroom.
- Show empathy with children
- Be punctual for school each day and at end of breaks
- Be prepared for class so that the curriculum is covered comprehensively.
- Be aware of the various needs and ability levels of all children in their class and adapt their teaching accordingly
- Co-operate with each other and work as part of a team.
- Be fair and consistent.
- Inform parents promptly on any health and safety or behavioural issues involving their child.

The overall responsibility for behaviour within the school rests with the principal teacher. Each teacher has responsibility for behaviour within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises. To maintain good standards of behaviour the school must rely on the support and cooperation of parents who are invited to keep in contact with the school in regard to all aspects of the child's progress.

3.6 Learning Environment

Every class should have a visible reminder of the following:

- School Yard rules - laminated and displayed in each class
- School Behaviour Steps and Procedures displayed in each classroom.
- Our School Core Values Posters

4.0 Rewards and Sanctions

There are a number of rewards which teachers use in their classes, both for work well done and for good behaviour in class, in the yard or hall and while away from the school on trips. These include:

- Praise in homework journal or copybook
- Praise by teacher sometimes resulting in a visit to the principal's office for work well done.
- A note to parents acknowledging improvement.
- Individual or group rewards given in classes using Star and Tick Systems e.g. "golden time "or activities time reward **(This will be on the Wednesday of each month). Any child with 3 ticks in a month will lose this privilege. All children with stars will enjoy the privilege.**
- Stars and Merit stickers
- Certificates of merit for good behaviour, showing our Core Values, being a role model to others.
- Dojo points or class reward system. All class reward systems should be given under the headings of the behaviour policy. (Respectful, Safe, Kind, Honest, Hardworking) Points given for good behaviour should never be taken away)

4.1 Recognition, rewards and sanctions

We recognise and reward learners who go "above and beyond" the expected behaviour standards. Although there are awards, our staff understands that a quiet word of personal praise can be as effective as a larger, more public reward. Class promises (classroom rules drawn up by the class at the beginning of the year.) Rules that are personalised to the class and agreed upon together.

The principal presents (on the last Friday of the month) the Scoláire na Míosa / Student of the month awards to a girl and/or boy in each class selected by their teacher as being outstanding in terms of improvement, effort, cooperation or overall achievement over a particular month. These children will be invited to a 'Hot Chocolate Breakfast' at the end of every mid-term. These children go above and beyond in terms of behaviour and being 'Role models' to our Core Values.

5.0 Children with Additional Needs

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with additional needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning support/ resource teacher, and or Principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Teachers will have a certain degree of discretion in dealing with behaviour issues in ASC classes and with children with particular behaviour issues. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals. (Please see Sonas ASD/ASC Class Policy)- Appendix A.

6.0 Our School Rules

St. Francis Xavier Senior School has five core values which apply throughout the school and in each class. All school rules are constantly taught and reinforced under the core value headings and these are visually displayed around the school.

Values	In School and on the yard	In the classroom
We are RESPECTFUL	• We play nicely and safely. • We speak nicely to and about others. • We have good manners. • We wait our turn. • Our uniforms are neat and tidy. • We are on time for school. • We take care of our school and school property.	• We wait our turn. • We raise our hands to speak - when required. • We listen to our teacher and each other. • We respect others' right to learn. • We are careful with property we do not waste things
We are **KIND**	• We only say kind things to others. • We only use appropriate language. • We show good sportsmanship and play fairly. • We help and encourage others	• We care about each other's feelings. • We include everyone. • We share and help others.
We are HONEST	• We always tell the truth. • We say sorry when we are wrong or hurt others.	• We tell the truth, we don't cover things up.
We are SAFE	• We follow the classroom and yard rules. • We line up properly in class and on the yard. • On the yard we stay within our boundary lines and do not disturb other classes at work. • We don't go into the school or other classrooms without a teacher's permission.	• We stay in our seats when required. • We do not swing in our chairs. • We do not throw anything across the classroom. • We tell our teacher if we feel sick.
We are HARDWORKING	• We work hard to keep our school clean and tidy. • We Recycle, reuse and reduce our waste.	• We do our work carefully, on time and as Teacher expects. • We do our homework • We give our best effort to our work.

In order to ensure consistency of approach across the school it is important that:

- All behaviour is addressed through our 5 Core Values in class, in Yard and in the school as a whole.
- Each class on the last Friday of each month decide a Privileges:
- Examples include: Movie afternoon/ popcorn party / sit beside your close friend afternoon/ student suggestions / baking / astro time/ games afternoon/ iPad time.
- Same systems are employed across school.
- Same language (core values) is used when discussing behaviour and on classroom displays.
- Same follow ups – misbehaviour sanctions are implemented as outlined in this policy.

While our aim is to be as positive as possible, occasionally children do misbehave. This misbehaviour is categorized under three headings.

A Minor Unacceptable Behaviour

B Serious Unacceptable Behaviour

C Very Serious Unacceptable Behaviour

6.1 Categories of Misbehaviour

(The following lists are not exhaustive)

Minor Unacceptable Behaviour in the class and yard (refer to yard rules displayed in every classroom) Minor breaches School Values	**Consequence** If a child gets 3 ticks in a month, they lose end of month Privilege. They will go to a SET teacher's room to have a restorative conversation during this time, and reflect on their behaviour and how they can make positive changes.
Respectful • Disrespecting classroom/Yard rules and routines. • Interrupting teacher and others. • Speaking rudely to a staff member or class member. • Talking out of turn. • Not waiting their turn. • Shouting out answers without raising their hand. • Not taking care of/disrespecting school property. • Throwing litter on the floor.	**Classroom steps:** **Step 1**: A child will get a tick after ONE verbal warning if they repeat a misbehaviour from Minor Unacceptable Behaviour. Once they receive a tick in class they have a restorative conversation with the class teacher. **Step 2**: If a child receives a second tick in a month they get time in the classroom to complete a reflection sheet. **Step 3:** If a child receives a third tick in a given month a 'NOTE OF CONCERN' will be sent on Aladdin to inform parents of the inappropriate behaviour and any actions taken. **(This will be a loss of a privilege from list in Sanctions and Rewards above)** **Step 4: Yellow Card Offences** If a child receives 3 notes of concern in any half term a yellow card is issued. A meeting with parents is arranged, incorporating a restorative circle to develop an improvement plan.

Kind • Saying unkind words to another child. • Using inappropriate language. • In sports and class activities- saying rude of discouraging words or actions. **Honesty** • Not telling the truth • Not saying sorry when they are wrong **Safety** • Leaving their seat without permission • Leaving the classroom without permission • Swinging on their chair • Throwing objects across the room. **Hardworking** • We do our work carefully, on time and as the teacher expects • Not completing all their homework without a note from a parent • Not putting 100% effort into their assignments/ tasks • Work is untidy /careless.	A yellow card can be given to a child directly if they commit an offence from category B. **Step 5: Red Card Offences** A meeting is arranged with Principal, Class Teacher and parents. An Individual behaviour plan is made with a review date. Consequences will be based on severity of behaviour. **Yard Steps:** **Each step is recorded in the Yard Behaviour Book and reported to the class teacher.** **Step 1:** A child will get a tick if after ONE verbal warning they repeat a misbehaviour from Minor Unacceptable Yard Behaviour. Once they receive a tick in the yard they get 5 minutes in the yard Sinbin. The child will be asked to reflect on yard safety. (These are separate from the Class behaviour Record) **Step 2:** If a child receives a second tick in a month they get time out in Sinbin for 10 minutes. **Step 3:** If a child receives a third tick in a given month a 'NOTE OF CONCERN' will be sent on Aladdin by their class teacher to inform parents of the inappropriate behaviour and any actions taken. **(This will be a loss of a privilege from the list in Sanctions and Rewards above)** **Step 4: <u>Yellow Card Offences</u>** If a child receives 3 notes of concern from the yard in any half-term a yellow card is issued. A meeting with parents is arranged, incorporating a restorative circle to develop an improvement plan. A yellow card can be given to a child directly if they commit an offence from serious unacceptable behaviours. **Step 5: Red Card offences** A meeting is arranged with Principal, Class Teacher and parents. An Individual behaviour plan is made with a review date. Consequences will be based on severity of behaviour.

Serious Unacceptable Behaviour in the class and yard (refer to yard rules displayed in every classroom) Serious breaches School Values	**Consequences**
Any persistence of Minor Unacceptable Behaviour and offence moves to 'Serious' category • Bullying in any form (see our Anti-Bullying Policy) Serious and recurring hurtful behaviour (including lying, name-calling, harassment, discrimination, victimisation. • Serious and recurring interference with teaching and learning. • Use of name-calling and inappropriate language. • Defiance of a teacher or any member of staff. • Threats of physical hurt to another person. • Serious damage to school property or the property of others. • Leaving school grounds without permission. • Use of phones and/or recording devices within school grounds (please refer to our ICT Acceptable Use Policy and Mobile Phone Policy).	**<u>Yellow card</u>:** A **'NOTE OF CONCERN'** will be sent on Aladdin by their class teacher to inform parents of the inappropriate behaviour and any actions taken. **(This will be a loss of a privilege from the list in Sanctions and Rewards above)**

Very Serious Unacceptable Behaviour	**Consequences**
• Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a staff member or pupil. • Repeated incidents of bullying behaviour, discrimination, harassment or victimisation. • Theft or vandalism • Possession of prohibited dangerous items • Serious safety violations that endanger self or others • Repeated serious offences despite previous interventions	**<u>Red Card Offences</u>** A meeting is arranged with the Principal, Class Teacher and parents. An Individual behaviour plan is made with a review date. Consequences will be based on the severity of the behaviour.

7.0 SUSPENSION

The suspension procedures of St. Francis Xavier Senior School are based on the NEWB Guidelines for developing a Code of Behaviour for schools.

7.1 SUSPENSION PROCEDURE

- Suspension occurs if a child receives a red card (automatic) or for safety reasons (immediate)
- Suspension is defined as: *requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days*
- During the period of a suspension, the student retains their place in the school
- Parents will be informed if their child is to be suspended and given an opportunity to respond. In the case of immediate suspension for safety issues, parental response may have to be deferred to a later date
- The period of suspension is at the discretion of the Principal and the Board of Management
- The child is obliged to come to school each day to receive work for that particular day
- When the period of suspension ends, the Principal or member of the Disciplinary Committee will re-admit the pupil formally to the class
- A child's first suspension (depending on previous and/or seriousness of offence) will not go on school record if the child's behaviour for the rest of the year greatly improves
- In the case of a serious breach of discipline, members of this Committee may be called upon to help deal with the matter

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION PROCEDURES

Suspension and Expulsion Procedures, in accordance with Section 24 of The Education Welfare Act 2000, is available from the Principal's office and on the school website.

7.1.1 Authority to suspend

The Board of Management of a recognised school has the authority to suspend a student. Where this authority is delegated to the Principal, the delegation should be done formally and in writing. Refer to Page Number 14 for Letter of Authority to Principal from Board of Management.

7.1.2 The grounds for suspension

Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern.

Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

7.1.3 Determining the appropriateness of suspending a student

Where the purpose of a proposed suspension is clearly identified, and that purpose cannot be achieved in any other way, suspension can have value.

Suspensions can provide a respite for staff and the student, give the student time to reflect on the link between their action and its consequences and give staff time to plan ways of helping the student to change unacceptable behaviour. However, suspension can be counter-productive if used without a clear rationale or without measuring its impact and value. School management should consider the risk of any unwanted

outcomes from suspension, such as an increased sense of alienation from school that could lead to a cycle of behavioural and academic problems.

7.2 ELEVEN Factors to Consider before Suspending a Student

The Nature and Seriousness of the Behaviour

- What is the precise description of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been?
- Has the problem behaviour escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

The Context of the Behaviour

- What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. in class, in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in a group)?
- What factors may have triggered incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)?
- What is the age, stage of development and cognitive ability of the student?
- Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (e.g. particular home circumstances, special education needs)?

The Impact of the Behaviour

- How are the other students and staff affected by the student's behaviour?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?
- Does the behaviour have a particular or greater impact on some students or teachers?
- Does the student understand the impact of their behaviour on others?

The Interventions Tried to Date

- What interventions have been tried? Over what period?
- How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?
- What has been the result of those interventions?
- Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?
- Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought, where appropriate?
- Are there any other interventions such as peer mediation, restorative justice approached or family conferencing available?
- Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?
- Has any other agency been asked for assistance (e.g. Child Guidance Clinic, Child and Adolescent services)?

Whether Suspension is an Proportionate Response

- Does the student's behaviour warrant suspension?
- Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student?

The possible Impact of Suspension

- Will suspension allow additional or alternative interventions to be made?
- Will suspension help the student to change the inappropriate behaviour?
- How will suspension help teachers or other students affected by the behaviour?
- Will suspension exacerbate any education vulnerability of the student?

Suspension as part of a Behaviour Management Plan

Suspension should be part of an agreed plan to address the student's behaviour. The suspension should:

- Enable the school to set behavioural goals with the student and their parents
- Give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions
- Impress on a student and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour.

7.3 Forms of Suspension

Immediate suspension

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of the students or staff of the school, or any other person. Fair procedures must still be applied.

'Automatic' suspension

A Board of Management may decide, as part of the school's policy on sanctions, and following the consultation process with the Principal, parents, teachers and students, that particular named behaviours incur suspension as a sanction. However, a general decision to impose suspension for named behaviours does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures in each case. (Please see **Red Card offences** on page 4 of Code of Behaviour and Discipline.

7.4 Inappropriate Use of Suspension

Students should not usually be suspended for:

- Poor academic performance
- Poor attendance or lateness
- Minor breaches of the code of behaviour.

However, any behaviour that is persistently disruptive to learning or potentially dangerous can be a serious matter. Behaviour must be examined in context to understand both the behaviour itself and the response or sanction that is most appropriate.

Rolling Suspension

A student should not be suspended again shortly after they return to school unless:

- They engage in serious misbehaviour that warrants suspension and
- Fair procedures are observed in full and
- The standard applied to judging the behaviour is the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student.

Informal or Unacknowledged Suspension

Exclusion of a student for part of the school day, as a sanction, or asking parents to keep a child from school, as a sanction, is a suspension. Any exclusion imposed by the school is a suspension, and should follow the Guidelines relating to the suspension.

Open-ended Suspension

Students should not be suspended for an indefinite period. Any such suspension would be regarded as a de-facto expulsion and would be treated as such under Section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*.

7.5 Procedures in Respect of Suspension

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend a student (see **10.3** and **10.4** for more detail). Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school should observe the following procedures:

- Inform the student and their parents about the complaint.
- Give parents and student an opportunity to respond.

Inform the Student and Parents

Let the student and their parents know about the complaint, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in a suspension.

Parents may be informed by phone or in writing, depending on the seriousness of the matter. Informing parents in writing has the benefit of ensuring that there is a formal and permanent record of having let parents know. It also ensures that parents are clear about what their son or daughter is alleged to have done. It serves the important function of underlining to parents the seriousness with which the school views the alleged misbehaviour.

Give an Opportunity to Respond

Parents and students should be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed. A meeting with the student and their parents provides an opportunity for them to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of a serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts. It may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour. If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal should write advising 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. The school should record the invitations made to parents and their response.

Procedures in relation to immediate suspension

Where immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others, a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. The formal investigation should immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. All of the conditions for suspension apply to immediate suspension. No suspension, including an immediate suspension, should be open-ended.

In the case of an immediate suspension, parents must be notified, and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected. The school must have regard to its duty of care for the student. In no circumstances should a student be sent home from school without first notifying parents.

7.6 The Period of Suspension

A student should not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed in order to achieve a particular objective. Each Board of Management should provide guidance to the Principal concerning the kinds of circumstances under which suspensions of longer than three days might be approved.

If a suspension longer than three days is being proposed by the Principal, the matter should be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes.

However, a Board of Management may wish to authorise the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance concerning such suspensions.

The Board of Management should normally place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it.

The Board should formally review any proposal to suspend a student, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more. Any such suspension is a subject to appeal under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998* (see **11.7** Appeals). These provisions enable school authorities to give the student a reasonable time to reflect on their behaviour while avoiding undue loss of teaching time and loss of contact with the positive influences of school. They recognise the serious nature of the sanction of suspension and ensure that this seriousness is reflected in school procedures. The provisions mean that the Board of Management takes ultimate responsibility for sanctions of significant length, especially where such suspension might reach twenty days in one school year and there might lead to an appeal.

7.7 Appeals

The Board of Management should offer an opportunity to appeal to a Principal's decision to suspend a student. In the case of decisions to suspend made by the Board of Management (see **11.6**), an appeals process may be provided by the Patron.

Section 29 Appeal
Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current year reaches twenty days, the parents may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*, as amended by the *Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007.*

At the time when parents are being formally notified of such a suspension, they and the student should be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998,* and should be given information about how to appeal.

7.8 Implementing the Suspension

Written notification
The Principal should notify the parents in writing or by phone of the decision to suspend. The letter/phone call should confirm:

- The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- The reasons for the suspension.
- Any study programme to be followed.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents (for example, parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (*Education Act 1998,* section 29).

The letter should be clear and easy to understand. Particular care should be taken in communicating with parents who may have reading difficulties, or whose first language is not the language of the school.

Engaging with student and parents
Where a decision to suspend has been made, it can maximise the impact and value of suspension if the Principal or another staff member delegated by the Principal meets with the parents to emphasise their responsibility in helping the student to behave well when the student returns to school and to offer help and guidance in this.

Where parents do not agree to meet the Principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.

7.9 Grounds for Removing a Suspension

A suspension may be removed if the Board of Management decides to remove the suspension for any reason or if the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science directs that it be removed following an appeal under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*.

7.10 After the suspension ends

A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents about the suspension.

Re-integrating the student
Successful re-integration goes beyond academic work. A suspended student may feel angry or resentful about their suspension, and these feeling can trigger problems with re-integration which in turn, may lead to further problem behaviour. Where possible, the school should arrange for a member of staff to provide support to the student during the re-integration process.

Clean slate
When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a student should be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed the school should expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

7.11 Records and Reports

Records of investigation and decision-making
Formal written records should be kept of:

- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- The decision-making process
- The decision and the rationale for the decision
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

Report to the Board of Management
The Principal should report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

Report to NEWB
The Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines (*Education (Welfare) Act, 2000,* section 21(4)(a).

7.12 Review of Use of Suspension

The Board of Management should review the use of suspension in the school at regular intervals 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 use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

7.13 LETTER OF AUTHORITY TO PRINCIPAL

LETTER OF AUTHORITY TO PRINCIPAL

RE: SUSPENSION

The Board of Management of St. Francis Xavier Senior School, delegates to our Principal, the authority to suspend pupils **"Immediately"** (for safety reasons) or **"Automatically"** (following a Red Card) with the following stipulations attached:-

- Suspensions should normally be 3 days or less.
- The Principal must report suspensions to The Board of Management and the National Education Welfare Board (N.E.W.B.).
- Parents must be informed and given an appropriate response period **unless** the suspension is automatic.

Signed: John Mitchell Date: 25/9/24

John Mitchell
Chairperson
Board of Management

8.0 EXPULSION PROCEDURE

As part of our Code of Behaviour and Discipline, we have based the Expulsion Guidelines of St. Francis Xavier Senior School on the NEWB Guidelines as set out in "Developing a Code of Behaviour for Schools", Chapters 10 and 12.

EXPULSION

A student 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*. As part of the Code of Behaviour, the Board of Management should ensure that the school has a policy on, and procedures for, expulsion which are in line with these Guidelines and with any additional requirements set down by the Patron.

8.1 Authority to Expel

The Board of Management of a recognised school has the authority to expel a student. As a matter of best practice, that authority should be reserved to the Board of Management and should not be delegated.

Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour.

8.2 The grounds for expulsion

Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour. Expulsion of a student is a very serious step and one that should only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school should have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:

- Meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour
- Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist
- Ensuring that all other possible options have been tried
- Seeking the assistance of support agencies (e.g. National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education).

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- The student 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, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

'Automatic' Expulsion

A Board of Management may decide, as part of the school's policy on sanctions and following the consultation with the Principal, parents, teachers and students, that particular named behaviours incur expulsion as a

sanction. However, a general decision to impose expulsion for named behaviours does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures.

Expulsion for a first offence

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student 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 include:

- Supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
- Sexual assault

8.3 Determining the appropriateness of expelling a student

Given the seriousness of expulsion as a sanction the Board of Management should undertake a very detailed review of a range of factors in deciding whether to expel a student.

Factors to Consider Before Proposing to Expel a Student

The nature and seriousness of the behaviour

- What is the precise description of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been and over what period of time?
- Has the problem behaviour escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

The context of the behaviour

- What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. in class, in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in a group)?
- What factors may have triggered or provoked incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)?
- Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (e.g., particular home circumstances or special educational needs)?

The impact of the behaviour

- How are the other students and staff affected by the student's behaviours?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?

The interventions tried to date

What interventions have been tried? Over what period?

How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?

What has been the result of these interventions?

Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?

Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought?

Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support

service been asked for help in solving this problem?

Has any other agency been asked for assistance (e.g. Child Guidance Clinic, Child and

Adolescent Mental Health services)?

Is the Board satisfied that no other intervention can be tried or is likely to help the student to change their behaviour?

Whether expulsion is a proportionate response

- Is the student's behaviour sufficiently serious to warrant expulsion?
- Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student?

The possible impact of expulsion

- To what extent may expulsion exacerbate any social or educational vulnerability of the student?
- Will the student be able to take part in, and benefit from, education with their peers?
- In the case of a student who is in care, what might be the implications of expulsion for the care arrangements?

Inappropriate use of expulsion

Expulsion should not be proposed for:

- Poor academic performance
- Poor attendance or lateness
- Minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour

However, any behaviour that is persistently disruptive to learning or dangerous can be a serious matter. Behaviour must be examined in context to understand both the behaviour itself and the response of sanction that is most appropriate.

8.4 Procedures in respect of expulsion

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000,* when proposing to expel a student (see **10.3** and **10.4** for information about fair procedures). 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.
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 each 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 meeting and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for a Board hearing.

Step 1: A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
In investigating an allegation, in line with fair procedures, the Principal should:

- Inform the student and their parents about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion
- Give parents and the student every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.

Parents should be informed in writing of the alleged misbehaviour and the proposed investigation in order to have a permanent record of letting them know. This also ensures that parents are very clear about what their son or daughter is alleged to have done. It serves the important function of underlining to parents the seriousness with which the school views the alleged misbehaviour.

Parents and the student must have every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made about the veracity of the allegation, and before a sanction is imposed. Where expulsion may result from an investigation, a meeting with the student and their parents is essential. It provides the opportunity for them to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the factors. It may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour. If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal should write advising 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 inappropriate behaviour. The school should record the invitation issued to parents and their response.

Step 2: A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal
Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The Principal should:

- Inform the parents and the student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- Ensure that parents have records of: the allegations against the student; the investigation, and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- Provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parents
- Notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing
- Advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- Ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

Step 3: Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing
It is the responsibility of the Board to review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. The Board should undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It should ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations (for example, a member of the Board who may have made an allegation about the student).

Where a Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it must hold a hearing. The Board meeting for the purpose of the hearing should be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures. At the hearing, the Principal and the parents, or a student aged 18 years or over, put their case to the Board in each other's presence. Each party should be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. The meeting may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction. In the conduct of the hearing, the Board must take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be, impartial as between the Principal and the student. Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board should

facilitate this, in line with good practice and Board procedures. After both sides have been heard, the Board should ensure that the Principal and parents are not present for the Board's deliberations.

Step 4: Board of Management deliberations an actions following the hearing
Having heard from all the parties, it is the responsibility of the Board to decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.
Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion. *(Education (Welfare) Act 2000,* s24 (1). The Board of Management should refer to National Educational Welfare Board reporting procedures for proposed expulsions. The student cannot be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification (*Education (Welfare) Act 2000,* s24(1).

An appeal against an expulsion under Section 29 of the *Education Act 1998* will automatically succeed if it is shown that the Education Welfare Officer was not notified in accordance with section 24(1) or that twenty days did not elapse from the time of notification to the Educations Welfare Officer to the implementation of the expulsion *(Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007,* s4A).

Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer
Within twenty days of receipt of a notification from a Board of Management of its opinion that a student should be expelled, the Education Welfare Officer must:

- Make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents and the student, and anyone else who may be of assistance
- Convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend *(Education (Welfare) Act 2000,* section 24).

The purpose of the consultations and the meeting is to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education. These consultations may result in an agreement about an alternative intervention that would avoid expulsion. However, where the possibility of continuing in the school is not an option, at least in the short term, the consultation should focus on alternative educational possibilities.
In the interests of the educational welfare of the student, those concerned should come together with the Educational Welfare Officer to plan for the student's future education.

Pending these consultations about the student's continued education, a Board of Management may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of students is secured *(Education (Welfare) Act 2000,*s24(5)). A Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time.

Suspension should only be considered where there is a likelihood that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others or represent a threat to the safety of other students or staff.

Step 6: Confirmation of the decision to expel
Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management should formally confirm the decision to expel (this task might be delegated to the Chairperson and the Principal). Parents should be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents and the student should be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record should be made of the decision to expel the student.

8.5 Appeals

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

The Appeals Process

The appeals process under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998* begins with the provision of mediation by a mediator nominated by the Appeals Committee (Department of Education and Science). For further details about the Appeals process, including requirements for documentation, and the steps in the process, refer to current DES guidelines.

8.6 Review of Use of Expulsion

The Board of Management should review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals 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.

Key Requirements: Expulsion

Applying the Guidelines means:

- Having a policy on and procedures for, expulsion that are approved by the Board of Management, and in line with these Guidelines, and with any additional requirements set down by the Patron
- Ensuring the policy is widely communicated
- Developing and documenting good practice in the use of expulsion
- Having fair procedures for investigation and decision-making
- Having procedures for informing parents and students about their right to appeal
- Having a system for regular review by the Board of Management of the use of expulsion in the school.

9.0 Suspensions and Expulsions: Legal and Procedural Requirements

Access to education shapes the life chances of children and young people in a fundamental way. For this reason a proposal to exclude a student, through suspension or expulsion, is a serious step, warranted only by very serious misbehaviour.

9.1 The legal context

The entitlement to education is protected in a range of constitutional and legal provisions and in human rights Conventions. These legal protections for the individual student's right to education mean that decisions to suspend or expel a student are open to appeal and may be subject to judicial review by the High Court.
Schools are required, under section 23(2) of the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000,* to include their procedures for suspension and expulsion in their code of behaviour.

9.2 The Responsibility of the Board of Management

The Board of Management should:

- Ensure that the school has a policy on, and procedures for, the use of suspension and expulsion that are in line with these Guidelines and with any additional requirements set down by the Patron
- Ensure that all students and parents are advised about, and aware of, the school's policy for suspension and expulsion

- Ensure that fair procedures are used for suspension and expulsion and that all staff are aware of these procedures
- Take special care to ensure that the fair procedures are accessible to people with disabilities or those from different language or cultural backgrounds
- Ensure that the Board of Management and the Principal are equipped for their roles in relation to the use of suspension and expulsion.

Time and timeliness
The Board of Management and Principal have a duty to ensure that there are no undue delays in an investigation and in making decisions about the imposition of suspension or expulsion.

Confidentiality
Great care should be taken to ensure that all matters to do with an investigation of alleged misbehaviour are dealt with in confidence.

9.3 Fair Procedures based on the Principles of Natural Justice

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend or expel a student. The requirement for fair procedures derives from the Constitution of Ireland, international Conventions and case law.

Fair procedures have two essential parts:
- **The right to be heard**
- **The right to impartiality**

The **right to be heard** means:
- The right to know that the alleged misbehaviour is being investigated.
- The right to know the details of the allegations being made and any other information that will be taken into account.
- The right to know how the issue will be decided.
- The right to respond to the allegations.
- Where the possible sanction is of a serious nature, the right to be heard by the decision-making body.
- Where the possible sanction is of a serious nature, the right to ask questions of the other party or witnesses where there is a dispute about the facts.

The **right to impartiality** means:
- The right to an absence of bias in the decision-maker
- The right to impartiality in the investigation and the decision-making.

Freedom from bias entails ensuring that a person with an interest in the matter is not involved in the investigation or decision-making. If a person has pre-conceived opinions, a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter, they should not attempt to settle that matter.

An impartial process is one that allows a decision to be made based on an unbiased evaluation of information and evidence. Generally, impartiality requires that the investigation is separated from the process of making a decision so that the decision-maker comes to the task with an open mind.

9.4 Applying Fair Procedures in School

In our school, fair procedures apply to:

- The **investigation** of alleged misbehaviour that may lead to suspension or expulsion and
- The process of **decision-making** as to (a) whether the student did engage in misbehaviour and (b) what sanction to impose.

The way in which fair procedures are applied will take account of the seriousness of the alleged misbehaviour and will have regard to what is reasonable in the context of a particular school.

The **principles** of fair procedures will always apply, but the degree of formality required in implementing fair procedures will depend on the gravity of the alleged misbehaviour and on the seriousness of the possible sanction. The level of formality required, for example for a suspension of fewer than three days, would be less than that required in the case of a longer suspension or in circumstances that might lead to an expulsion. Even informal processes, however, must be fair and be seen to be fair. The principles of ensuring *the right to be heard* and *the right to impartiality* apply in all cases.

The **right to be heard** means that a student and their parents are fully informed about an allegation and the processes that will be used to investigate and decide the matter; and they must be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation **before** a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed.

Absence of bias in the decision-maker would mean, for example that if the child of the Principal was accused of misconduct that might warrant suspension or expulsion, the Principal would not be involved in the decision. Similarly, if the child of a member of the Board of Management was accused of misconduct, that parent would absent themselves from the Board for any consideration of the matter by the Board.

The principle **of impartiality in decision-making** means it is preferable that, where possible, the Principal arranges for another member or members of staff to conduct the investigation and to present a full report on the facts of the case and any other relevant information to the Principal. The Principal is then free to take a view about whether the student did engage in the behaviour and about the sanction based on the report of the investigation.

Where circumstance require the Principal to conduct the investigation as well as making a finding and proposing the sanction, he or she must not only act fairly but be seen to act fairly. It is incumbent upon the Principal to review the investigation to ensure that it has been fully and fairly conducted. It should be evident to the student, parents, staff and other students that the Principal, as decision-maker, is basing their decision, in an objective way, on the findings of the investigation.

The person alleging the misbehaviour, or who is a victim, or a witness should not usually conduct the investigation.

Thoughtful application of professional judgement and knowledge of the requirements of fair procedures will generally guide decision-making about suspension and expulsion. However, in circumstances of particular complexity, school authorities may need to seek legal advice to support their decision-making.

9.5 Not applicable (relative to students 18 or over)

9.6 Involving the Gardaí

Where allegations of criminal behaviour are made about a student, these will usually be referred to the Gardaí who have responsibility for investigating criminal matters. The Juvenile Liaison Officer can be a significant source of support and advice for the school and the student.

10.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- The Principal will co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of this policy.
- While each class teacher will be responsible for their class, all teachers and ancillary staff are responsible for the implementation of the Code of Behaviour during school hours and on all school property.
- The Behaviour Support team will work with children and staff in the management of very serious behavioural issues.
- All Support Teachers and Ancillary Staff will take an active role.
- Pupils will be responsible for their own discipline.
- Parents will actively co-operate with the school in the implementation of this policy.

10.1 Implementation Date

This policy will be implemented during the school year **2024-25**

10.2 Timetable for Review

This policy will be reviewed during the **2026/27** school year.

10.3 Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management reviewed this policy on 25th September 2024, following extensive work carried out by the schools Behaviour Committee.

The Policy was then disseminated to all Teaching Staff, Special Needs Assistants and Parents Association Committee. The policy is made available to all parents through Aladdin and is be available on our website.

Signed: _____ Date: 25/9/24

Chairperson

Signed: Sean McKeown Date: 25/09/2024

Principal

Appendix A:

ASC Class (SONAS)

Behaviour Policy

ASD Class Teacher:

- Being the main point of contact for the child's parents/guardians.
- Developing a suitable, effective classroom environment.
- Coordinating and implementing education plans (IEP) and Individual behavioural plans (IBP).
- Communicating plans and strategies to SNAs and other relevant staff.
- Fulfilling planning and paperwork requirements.
- Co-ordinating the supporting work of the SNAs on an ongoing basis.
- Working with mainstream teachers to identify opportunities for meaningful integration and necessary accommodations.

Special Needs Assistants:

- Assisting with the care/safety/supervision needs of the children – in the classrooms and around the school, on the playground and on school trips.
- Assisting with behavioural management programmes.
- Guiding the child through tasks and activities designed by the special-class teachers or the mainstream class teachers.
- Data collection/reporting on progress as determined by the special-class teachers or Principal.
- Preparing materials/resources for the children, under the guidance of the special class teachers.
- Providing input during the review stages of the IEPs and attending IEP review meetings.

Strategies for promoting Positive Behaviour

At SFX SNS, we believe that school and home should work co- operatively to identify triggers, to share strategies and promote positive behaviour. By working as, a team we can help the child better understand their behaviour, manage it and ultimately engage in their learning and succeed at school.
Consistent and positive parental input is essential in ensuring the children are supported and encouraged to respect and abide by our school *core values* and rules.

The following are some examples of the strategies we use to promote positive behaviour:

- Developing language and communication skills – including the use of language devices/ programmes, Lámh etc.
- Clear and simple classroom rules and instructions
- Regular communication with parents – daily journal/Aladdin
- Teaching of social skills
- Use of social stories

- The use of timers to plan for transitions
- Visual schedules
- Reward systems
- Choice boards
- Consistent approaches to behaviour by staff members
- Restorative circles (where possible)
- Talk and discussion of behaviour with the child (if capable)
- Clear, consistent consequences for misbehaviour or negative behaviours.

Our School Rules

St. Francis Xavier Senior School has five core values which apply throughout the school and in each class. All school rules are constantly taught and reinforced under the core value headings and these are visually displayed around the school. **Challenging Behaviour**

Values	In School and on the yard	In the classroom
We are RESPECTFUL	• We play nicely and safely. • We speak nicely to and about others. • We have good manners. • We wait our turn. • Our uniforms are neat and tidy. • We are on time for school. • We take care of our school and school property.	• We wait our turn. • We raise our hands to speak - when required. • We listen to our teacher and each other. • We respect others' right to learn. • We are careful with property we do not waste things
We are KIND	• We only say kind things to others. • We only use appropriate language. • We show good sportsmanship and play fairly. • We help and encourage others	• We care about each other's feelings. • We include everyone. • We share and help others.
We are HONEST	• We always tell the truth. • We say sorry when we are wrong or hurt others.	• We tell the truth, we don't cover things up.
We are SAFE	• We follow the classroom & yard rules. • We line up properly in class and on the yard. • On yard we stay within our boundary lines and do not disturb other classes at work. • We don't go into the school or other classrooms without a teacher's permission.	• We stay in our seats when required. • We do not swing in our chairs. • We do not throw anything across the classroom. • We tell our teacher if we feel sick.
We are HARDWORKING	• We work hard to keep our school clean and tidy. • We Recycle, reuse and reduce our waste.	• We do our work carefully, on time and as Teacher expects. • We do our homework • We give our best effort to our work.

Children are encouraged and guided to develop respect for themselves, other children and all adults with whom they come in contact with. The following behaviours where excessive and infringing on the rights of others are not acceptable:

- Aggressive behaviour: pinching, biting, scratching, punching, slapping, pushing, pulling, kicking, head butting, pulling hair, using objects against people and themselves.
- Non-compliance: lying down, non-cooperation, resistance to teaching, refusing to do things.
- Disruptive, nuisance or threatening behaviour: shouting, screaming, swearing, repetitive vocalisation, verbal abuse, remarks/discrimination, curses,
- gestures or threats to harm, teasing, arguing, interrupting, obstructing, taking food or drink from others, setting off the fire alarm, invading personal space.
- Absconding: wandering outside the classroom without permission, running away or trying to run away.
- Attention seeking: constantly misbehaving in order to seek attention.
- Sexually inappropriate behaviour: inappropriate sexual language or sexual gestures including inappropriate comments about the sexuality of others.
- Destruction of property: damage to property belonging to self, other children or adults or damage to school property.
- ·Socially inappropriate behaviour: spitting, interrupting others, provoking others, making inappropriate comments.
- Temper tantrums: outbursts of bad temper.
- Self-injurious behaviour: head banging, scratching, biting and poking.
- Passive challenging behaviour: glaring, refusing to respond, averting gaze, withdrawal.

Challenging behaviour in a school context has a detrimental impact on many aspects of day-to-day school life that parents, pupils and staff assume and expect.
Challenging behaviour is a barrier to learning and prevents pupils from participating in social and curricular activities.
Our pupils are assisted, guided and encouraged by staff (with the support of their parents) to understand their behaviours, meet their needs and use the strategies taught to them to effectively engage with their learning.

De-escalating Challenging Behaviour

Our first priority will be to try and de-escalate challenging behaviour. Please find below an example of strategies we use to do this:

- Try to Identify the triggers
- Staff redirect the child's attention to what they are meant to be doing.
- Staff give a verbal warning 'no/ not a good choice'' and / or use visuals to show no.
- If the behaviour is repeated Staff will then support with/ differentiate the task.
- If the behaviour persists, calmly suggest 'taking a calm/ sensory/ movement break' and guide the child to a quieter space.
- Set the times in that space for that break.
- When the timer is up, the child will be spoken to about how they are feeling (where appropriate)
- The child will be reminded of the class/ work expectations.
- The child's behaviour will be discussed and any restorative conversations/ rectify what happened will be done (e.g., Saying sorry, tidying up a mess etc)
- Next the child will be asked their motivator and redirected back to the task. (Any adjustments necessary will be made.)
- The staff member will document the behaviour and inform relevant staff members/ parents (where appropriate).

Behaviour Management and Individual Behaviour Plans

Staff use a variety of techniques and strategies in managing behaviour. These include, but are not limited to, positive reinforcement (verbal and tangible), redirecting, flexible scheduling, social stories, one-to-one monitoring, reward and token systems.
In managing behaviours, the health and safety of the children and staff is always a central concern. Detailed records are consistently maintained and data collected using ABC forms. Where necessary teachers may contact parents and/or outside agencies to report, and gain advice/
information regarding behaviours.

Individual Behaviour Plans (IBPs)
Where a pupil's behaviour is deemed a potential risk to himself/herself, and/or staff, and/or others, an Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) may be necessary.
IBPs may form part of a child's IEP. In cases where they are not a part of an IEP, an IBP will be drafted following similar protocol to that of an IEP.

	IBP
Step 1	Where a pupil's behaviour is deemed a potential risk to himself/herself, and/or staff, and/or others, an Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) may be necessary. Detailed records regarding such behaviours are kept. Once an IBP is deemed necessary (through consultation with school staff, parents and clinical staff), the principal, or another appointed person e.g. IBP coordinator, initiates the IBP Process.
Step 2	An IBP planning meeting is scheduled by the IBP coordinator. Individuals involved may include: the school special education teacher, the special class teacher, the mainstream class teacher, other key workers involved with the child, and any of a range of professionals including psychologist, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist, physiotherapist, and social worker. Parents are also invited to attend. The plan may include strategies for intervening, if appropriate, plus a strategy for the development of replacement behaviours and coping skills. Each person has a role to play and is informed of his/her responsibilities in relation to the implementation of the IBP. A date for the review of the IBP is also set.
Step 3	Copies of the completed IBP are sent to all involved in the IBP Process.
Step 4	The implementation of the IBP is a collaborative exercise involving a whole-school, home, and clinical approach. A behaviour log is kept. Throughout the implementation of the IBP, the health and safety of the child and of those working with the child, is always a central concern.
Step 5	The IBP coordinator may initiate regular reviews of the IBP. The purpose of the review is to establish if the prescribed interventions have resulted in a decrease in targeted behaviour. It may also highlight potentially improved coping skills, self-control, and management of situations that have previously been identified as triggers. Data and records may be presented and discussed. As a result of review, the IBP may be amended to ensure its continued relevance in the management of current behaviours and the amended plan circulated to all involved in the process. Another result of review may be agreement that the process has been successful and that the IBP interventions are no longer necessary.

Sanctions:

Minor challenging behaviour:

- Will be discussed with the child.
- Will be dealt with at class level and privileges will be withdrawn as appropriate.
- Will be written up in each child's ABC chart.
- Focus initially on positive behaviour demonstrated by other students.

Minor challenging behaviours which are ongoing:

- Will be discussed with the child.
- Will be written in child's ABC chart / journal.
- Will be reported to parents/ guardians. The parents will be asked to come to the school to discuss their child's behaviour.
- Will be dealt with appropriately.

Damage to property:

- Child will be spoken to by staff directly involved.
- Will be reported to class teacher and written up in child's ABC chart.
- Will be reported to parents/guardians and the parents will be asked to come to the school to discuss their child's behaviour.

Major challenging behaviour:

- Will be discussed with the child.
- A written report will be kept of the incident and will be written in child's ABC chart.
- Will be reported to parents/guardians.
- The parents will be asked to come to the school to discuss the child's behaviour.
- Outside agencies will be contacted, where appropriate to offer support.
- If the pupil presents as a danger to themselves or others, a parent/ guardian will be called to remove the child from the class. This is to ensure the safety of the pupils and staff.