

Code of Behaviour

Introduction

St. Mark's B.N.S. is dedicated to providing a safe nurturing educational environment that will enhance the development of the whole child. This will foster a life long process of learning and development resulting in a happy responsible citizen.

The Staff of this school want to create a climate of physical, emotional, social and intellectual safety for the students, teachers and parents so that teaching and learning can occur within relationships of mutual valuing and respect.

High standards of behaviour are encouraged by a clear code of behaviour, backed by a balanced combination of rewards and sanctions, which are enforced fairly within a positive school atmosphere.

The long term aim is:

- *The creation of a positive environment in which each child can learn at his own pace in a secure and happy school setting.*
- *The creation of a suitable climate where each teacher can teach to the best of his/her ability in an environment free from disruption and conducive to learning.*

Role of Parents and Guardians

The Code of Behaviour requires the support and co-operation of parents / guardians and its success depends on teachers and parents / guardians working together. The school will keep parents / guardians informed of problems before they escalate. Also, it is important that parents notify class teacher / principal if they become aware of a problem.

The Homework Journal is an important means of 2-way communication between parents / guardians and teacher. Parents / guardians should keep in contact with the school regarding all aspects of their child's progress. It is essential that parents / guardians regularly discuss the Code of Behaviour with children.

Aims

The aims of the Code of Behaviour are:

1. To facilitate the development and education of all the children.
2. To promote good behaviour and self discipline among the children.
3. To promote the safety and happiness of all children and staff in the school.
4. To promote equality and fairness among all.
5. To enhance the learning environment of the school by promoting a sense of mutual respect among all members of the school community.
6. To increase the co-operation between home and school.
7. To allow for the smooth and harmonious running of the school.
8. To ensure consistency in the application of rules and sanctions.
9. To outline the structure of fair and agreed sanctions that will be available to teachers in response to negative behaviour.

Policy Statement

This policy covers:

- a. General behaviour.
- b. Behaviour in the school yard
- c. Behaviour in the classroom
- d. Positive re-enforcement of good behaviour
- e. Sanctioning misbehaviour.

A. General Behaviour:

Parents and teachers can help children develop good behaviour:

- By making themselves aware of School Rules and being consistent in following them.
- By teaching children to respect all people.
- By teaching good manners.
- By encouraging children towards shared responsibility and self responsibility.
- By teaching children right from wrong
- By encouraging children to behave politely and be nice towards each other.
- By respecting other people's property.
- By encouraging a sense of co-operation.
- By encouraging children to speak respectfully.
- By helping children to feel positive about themselves.

Developing good behaviour is a shared responsibility. Parents and teachers should support each other in this regard.

Each child has a right to an education free from fear and intimidation. Bullying interferes with this right and breaks the rule of mutual respect and therefore is not acceptable (see Bullying Policy).

B. Behaviour in School Yard:

- Pupils are requested to enter and leave the school building in an orderly fashion.
- Children must stay in designated areas at break times.
- Children who need to enter the school building during break time must get permission from the teacher on the yard.
- Rough play is not permitted.
- At the end of the break pupils must respond immediately to the bell and stand quietly in line.
- Instructions of teachers on yard duty must be obeyed.
- When weather does not permit outdoor activities children will remain in their class.

C. Behaviour in the classroom:

The management of classroom behaviour is primarily a matter for the Class Teacher who will draw up rules for his/her class appropriate to the age levels of the children. However, the following apply in all classrooms:

- Each child is entitled to a proper working environment and therefore interferences from other children will not be tolerated.
- Children should work quietly.
- All instructions from teachers are to be followed straight away.
- If a teacher has to leave the class for any reason, pupils must work silently and remain seated.
- Pupils are expected to complete to the best of their ability the work/homework assigned.
- A note from parent / guardian is expected when work is not completed.
- Classrooms should be kept tidy and everything should be put in its proper place.
- Litter must be put in the bins provided.
- Pupils are not allowed to have mobile phones on school premises.

D. Positive Reinforcement of Good Behaviour:

Encouragement is vital to success and achievement in pupils lives. The school aims to promote and encourage good behaviour.

Good behaviour is learned through positive reinforcement and therefore it is essential that good behaviour is affirmed. This may be done in the following ways:

- Catch children being good – reinforce desired behaviours.
- Affirmation of good behaviour – in written or verbal form and specific to the particular behaviour.
- Friendly gestures of acknowledgement – handshake, smile or round of applause.
- Pupil of the week / regularly selected on basis of behaviour – acknowledge in assembly.
- Certificates of good behaviour.
- Extra privileges – granted to those who behave well, e.g. extra time on computers, team captain, class leader, special activity or task.
- Competitions / whole class reward system organised to promote good behaviour.
- Awarding of stars, stickers and other prizes as appropriate.

E. Sanctioning misbehaviour:

Distinctions will be made between minor and serious misbehaviour and the aim of the sanctions is to nip problems in the bud. It is important that children know in advance what the sanctions are and that it is behaviour (actions) not children that is the focus of correction. As far as possible sanctions will be related to the misbehaviour and that they will be immediate, reasonable and certain to occur when a pupil chooses to misbehave. Where disciplinary problems arise parents will be involved at an early stage rather than a last resort.

The following sanctions may be used:

- The pupil is made aware that his behaviour is unacceptable and advised on how to improve.
- Children may receive a verbal warning from the teacher.
- Loss of minor privileges.
- Teacher may detain pupil to discuss his misbehaviour.
- Seating arrangements in class may be changed.
- A pupil may be temporarily separated from his class group for a set time.
- Student behaviour reflection form may be given to be filled in and signed by parent / guardian
- Incomplete work may have to be completed.
- Badly presented work may have to be redone.
- A note or comment may be written in child's journal to be signed.
- A written assignment may be given re: inappropriate behaviour, to be signed by parents / guardians.
- If pupil's behaviour is a source of danger/disruption to himself or others, he may be removed from activities such as P.E., Art and Play.
- A pupil may be referred to the Principal.
- A pupil may be recorded in Discipline Folder.
- Parent / Guardian may be asked to meet with class teacher and/or principal.
- Parent / Guardian and /or pupil may be asked to sign a Contract of Behaviour.
- Suspension.
- Expulsion.

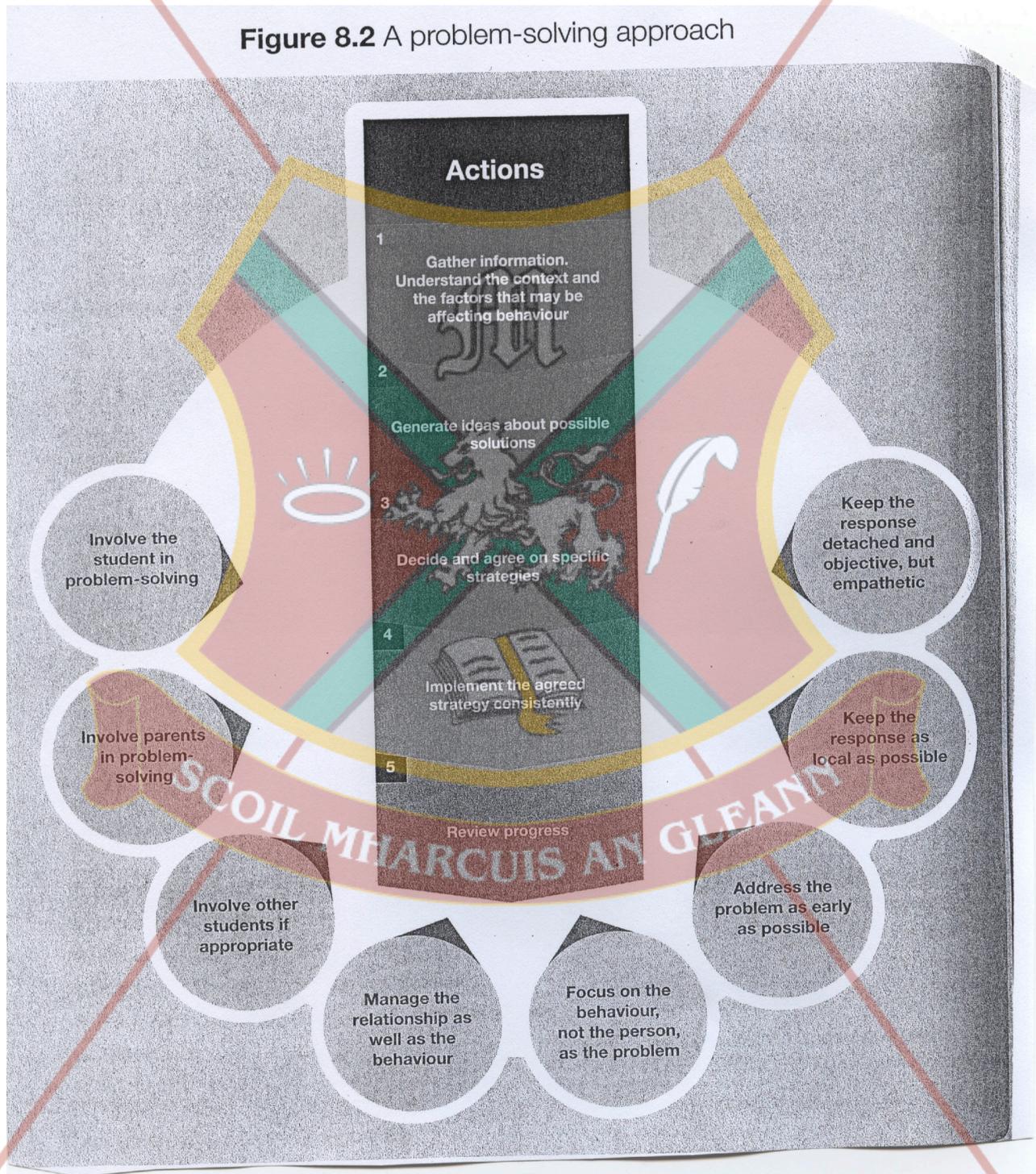
Procedures for dealing with misbehaviour:

Teacher based action:

1. The day will be structured through suitable timetabling and a good variety of activities will hold the pupils' interest.
2. Encourage good behaviour by praising and highlighting desired standards.
3. Establish expected class standards/rules.
4. Implement appropriate awards and sanctions.
5. Teach children skills to help achieve expected behavioural standards of (e.g. good manners, listening skills, expressive skills, etc).
6. Occasional, minor misbehaviour should be attended to routinely and effectively through the skill of the classroom teacher.
7. Parents will be kept informed of their son's behaviour through the normal communication channels of the school. These include:
 - Note in pupil's journal.
 - Informal meeting with parents.
 - Formal meetings with parents
 - Meeting with teacher and Principal.
 - Letter from Principal.

8. Keep a written record for repeated incidences of misbehaviour or serious misbehaviour in order to determine patterns which in turn may assist in generating solutions to deal with that behaviour or highlight the need for a referral and further intervention.
9. Where children exhibit particularly challenging behaviour, it may be necessary to draw up an I.B.P. (Individual Behaviour Plan). When drawing up this plan we will consult the following 'Problem Solving Approach'

Figure 8.2 A problem-solving approach



Procedure for dealing with serious misbehaviour

- The Principal will be informed immediately.
- The parents will be called to the school to meet with the Principal and class teacher.

In cases of repeated incidences of misbehaviour and/or an incidence of serious misbehaviour the Chairperson of the Board of Management / Principal will request a meeting with parents. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future and the behaviour does not improve the pupil may be suspended as per Department of Education guidelines. The Board of Management has authorised the school principal to sanction an immediate suspension as per Department of Education guidelines in cases of serious misbehaviour. Expulsion from school, the ultimate sanction will be considered by the Board of Management if necessary.

In certain cases, with parental consent it may be necessary to refer a pupil for medical or psychological assessment.

Conclusion:

This policy was reviewed on 18/6/09.

