



# St. Attracta's National School

Charlestown, Co. Mayo, F12 T440, Ireland

*Mol an óige agus tíoofaídh sí*

## Code of Behaviour

### **Introduction and Rationale:**

The Board of Management of St. Attracta's NS is required by legislation to prepare and make available a Code of Behaviour for its students. The Education Welfare Act, 2000, stipulates that the school Code of Behaviour must be prepared in accordance with the guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB).

### **Mission Statement & the Code of Behaviour:**

In line with our Mission Statement every individual is valued, encouraged and respected for their uniqueness and facilitated to reach their full potential in a positive and supportive atmosphere. We, as a staff, believe our Code of Behaviour has an important role to play in fulfilling these aims and objectives.

St. Attracta's NS aims to treat every child, irrespective of ability, creed, race or gender, with dignity, fairness and respect.

Implementation of this Code of Behaviour is central to the provision of effective teaching and learning in St. Attracta's. It is a reflection of our school ethos and central to our Mission Statement.

### **St. Attracta's Mission Statement:**

Our mission is to create and sustain a learning environment for the children of Charlestown so that each child is enabled

- To live a full life as a child
- To realise his/her full potential
- To develop as a social being with strong Christian values
- To access further education and lifelong learning

We will strive to provide an appropriate education for every child in our school.

The school motto is: "Ní neart go cur le chéile". ("Unity is our strength")



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## Where and When the Code of Behaviour will apply:

This Code of Behaviour will apply to all school activities, regardless of timing and location. This will encompass the normal school day, activities that may extend beyond normal opening and closing times and all extra-curricular activities such as school tours, class walks, outings & excursions, performances and sporting pursuits i.e. anywhere the children are representing St. Attracta's.

## Aims of the Code of Behaviour:

St. Attracta's Code of Behaviour aims:

- to create a safe, secure and positive environment where teaching and learning can occur
- to promote a friendly, happy atmosphere which will help every child to reach their full potential
- to foster an atmosphere of acceptance, respect and consideration for all
- to promote positive behaviour and self-discipline where the children take ownership of their own behaviour
- to help our children to realise that they have choices about the behaviours they exhibit
- to help our children to mature into responsible and full participants in a learning community
- to assist Parents / Guardians in understanding the expectations and procedures that underpin the Code of Behaviour
- to ensure that all procedures of reward or sanction are implemented in a fair manner throughout the school

## Responsibilities in Relation to Behaviour:

The teachers and adults encountered by the children in St. Attracta's have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other. Our example has an important influence on the children.

As Teachers and Adults we aim to:

- create a positive climate with realistic expectations
- promote, through example, honesty and courtesy
- model the good behaviour we expect from the children
- provide a caring and effective teaching and learning environment
- encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others



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- ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, religion, ability or disability
- show appreciation for the efforts and contributions of all

The children in St. Attracta's can help enormously to make our school a positive, happy and effective learning environment by adhering to the school expectations.

The Parents and Guardians of the children in St. Attracta's have the responsibility to ensure that their children abide by the expectations outlined in this Code of Discipline.

All Parents and Guardians should aim to:

- familiarise themselves with St. Attracta's Code of Behaviour and discuss same with their child
- read St. Attracta's Code of behaviour on the St. Attracta's website
- encourage their child to abide by the school expectations
- encourage punctuality every day
- encourage full attendance
- use the 'drop and go' system appropriately if dropping their child to school by car and to refrain from parking in the area designated for arrivals
- label their child's belongings for easy identification
- support their child with their homework and sign their Homework Journal from 1st Class to 6th Class
- inform their child's class teacher about illnesses / school absences in writing and/or on Aladdin
- ensure their child is wearing their full school uniform and tracksuit on their designated day
- ensure their child is eating a healthy lunch in accordance with our Healthy Eating Policy
- encourage good behaviour and respect for others at all times
- communicate with their child's teacher about factors likely to affect their child's behaviour in school
- make an appointment to meet with a teacher / the Principal with the Secretary / through school email or teachers' own email



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## Guidelines for Positive School Behaviour:

The following standards of behaviour are expected of all members of the St. Attracta's community.

- Respect for self and others. Respect works both ways for everyone. When we show respect we are also shown respect in return.
- Respect for school property and buildings
- Respect for other children's property
- Follow instructions from staff immediately
- Walk quietly in the school buildings
- Do their best in all activities
- Listen to those who are speaking, including visitors to their classroom
- Be kind and show a willingness to help others
- Show courtesy and good manners at all times

## Classroom Behaviour:

Each teacher will have a set of expected classroom behaviours for his/her class level. Some teachers, for example in the senior classes, may draft a list of class expectations with the help of the children in their class.

Class expectations should emphasise positive behaviour e.g. 'walk' and not 'don't run'. The following general behaviours apply to all classes.

- Co-operate fully with your Teachers / SNAs / Substitute Teachers / GAA coaches / visiting instructors to St. Attracta's etc
- Complete your work to the best of your ability
- Present your work neatly in books and copies
- Get on with your work and let others get on with theirs
- Aim to be on time for school and enter by the correct gate and door (between 9.10am and 9.20am)
- Always walk around the school with deference to the safety of others
- Enter and leave your classroom quietly
- Ask permission before leaving your classroom
- Complete all Homework to the best of your ability
- Help to tidy up your classroom at home time every day
- Wear your full school uniform / tracksuit when appropriate
- Bring a healthy lunch to school every day



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## Behaviour on the Yard at Break-Times:

Children have the opportunity to play and socialise with each other at morning and lunch break-times. The following points will help to keep the children safe while playing in the yard.

- Children are encouraged to treat others as they would like to be treated themselves
- All age groups have a designated play area and should remain in that yard
- Children should never leave the school grounds
- In good weather when the grass / pitch can be used the children are prohibited from swinging on the crossbar of the goal posts
- Children eat their lunch in their classroom before / after yard times
- Children must ask permission from a supervising teacher / SNA to leave the yard e.g. going to the toilet.
- Children with injuries will be treated in the Library. Minor cuts / grazes will be dealt with by the supervising teacher / SNA on the yard with their 1st Aid kit
- Serious injuries (e.g. bangs to head, cuts, bruising) will be recorded in the Incident logs (this is kept in the principal's office) and the class teacher will be informed of such injuries at the end of break. The parents/guardians of any child who sustains a head bump/head injury will be informed immediately by phone.
- Teachers may write a note in the child's Homework Journal to inform Parents/Guardians, if the secretary has not already contacted the parents by phone, if their child was hurt on the yard.
- It is the responsibility of the SNA/First Aider, to communicate all incidents she has dealt with, to the class teachers at the end of break times every day
- At the end of breaks the children will stop moving after the 1st bell and walk to their line after the 2nd bell.
- When the class teachers collect their lines, the children should walk in single file to their classroom
- Children are encouraged to be fair and inclusive when setting up their games
- Rough play and bad language are not allowed at any time

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## Behaviour for Indoor Play:

On wet days the children will remain in their classrooms during break-times. The following points will help to keep the children safe on these occasions.

- Children will stay in their classrooms at all times & remain seated.
- Children can play with games / activities provided by their teacher
- Teachers will be on corridor duty on wet days
- SNAs will help supervising the classes of the children they work with on wet days
- 11 SNAs continue their work in the five ASD classes

## Promoting Positive Behaviour:

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Part of the vision of St. Attracta's is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further Education, life and work.

We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and that similarly children use a variety of approaches to solving problems. All children deserve encouragement to attain their personal best. Our reward systems seek to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by all adults in St. Attracta's. Praise for good behaviour should be as high as for good work.

The following are examples of how praise will be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in child's copy / Homework Journal
- A visit to another teacher / Principal for commendation
- Words of praise in front of class / bualadh bos
- Words of praise at assembly once a week
- Student of the week awarded by the Principal
- Words of praise after yard in front of whole school
- Delegating some special responsibility of privilege
- A mention to Parents/Guardians, written/verbal communication



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## Rewards and Incentives for Positive Behaviour:

Greater emphasis is placed on rewards than on sanctions. This is not an exhaustive list. Rewards may include the following.

- Stamps / stickers / points / dojos
- Balla Bronntanais
- Homework passes
- Golden time
- Class / group of the week / points systems
- Assembly / student of the week
- Certificates / prizes / rewards

## Special Educational Needs (SEN):

St. Attracta's currently has 5 ASD Classes

All children are required to comply with the spirit of the Code of Behaviour. St. Attracta's recognises that some children with SEN may need extra time and help in understanding some expectations. Specialised Behaviour Plans may be necessary at times. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Behaviour Plans will be put in place in consultation with the class teacher, Parent/Guardian, SET teacher and Principal. All will work together to make sure the children receive all the support they need. Any professional advice from our NEPS Psychologist will be taken into consideration.

The children in a particular class may be taught strategies to assist a child with SEN adhere to rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the differences in all individuals. The class teacher will monitor peer support regularly.



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## **Unacceptable Behaviour:**

Three levels of Misbehaviour are recognised: minor, serious and gross. All everyday instances of minor misbehaviours will be dealt with by the class teacher or the supervising teacher at break-times.

### ***Minor Misbehaviours***

Examples of Minor Misbehaviours include:

- Interrupting work in the classroom
- Lateness in the morning
- Being discourteous / unmannerly
- Running in the corridors
- Rough play on the yard
- Leaving the classroom without checking with the class teacher
- Leaving the yard to go indoors at break times without checking with the supervising teacher / SNA
- Not wearing full school uniform
- Wearing make-up and / or false nails
- Not adhering to Healthy Lunch Policy
- Unfinished Homework

Class teachers will keep a running record of minor misbehaviours. If a pattern of minor misbehaviours appear, the class teacher may need to inform Parents/Guardians if there is no improvement over time.

### ***Serious Misbehaviours***

Single instances of serious misbehaviour will be dealt with by the class teacher in conjunction with the Deputy Principal / Principal. Any single incident may be brought to the Parent/Guardian's attention at the discretion of the Deputy Principal / Principal.

Class teachers will keep a running record of serious misbehaviours on the school system Aladdin.

In cases of repeated serious misbehaviours Parents/Guardians will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the class teacher and Deputy Principal / Principal to discuss their child's behaviour.





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Examples of Serious Misbehaviours include:

- Behaviour that is hurtful including threats, bullying, harassment, discrimination, and victimisation
- Using violent and/or aggressive behaviour towards others
- Verbally abusing a teacher / adult
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning on a daily basis
- Damage to school property
- Theft
- Having a mobile phone (without the express permission of the principal) or any device that can be used to record (audio or video), take photographs or make and receive calls and messages is not allowed in St. Attracta's.

## **Gross Misbehaviours**

Parents / Guardians will be informed immediately by the Principal if there is one incident of gross misbehaviour.

Examples of Gross Misbehaviours include:

- Physical abuse of a teacher / adult / other child
- Serious aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher / adult / other child
- Bringing dangerous implements to school
- Leaving St. Attracta's without permission
- Serious damage to property e.g. structural damage to school building, broken window
- Bullying over a prolonged period of time after earlier interventions
- Carrying drugs / alcohol / cigarettes / dangerous substances
- Non-attendance at school unknown to Parents/Guardians
- Using a mobile phone at school / making or receiving calls or messages / engaging with a social media platform and taking pictures or recording (audio and video) on the school premises / taking photographs in a classroom and/or on yard of other children/ adults



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## Sanctions for Unacceptable Behaviour:

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by helping children to:

- learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- see that their behaviour affects others
- understand that they have choices about their behaviour
- understand that their choices have consequence
- learn to take responsibility for their choices / behaviours
- discuss and devise strategies to prevent the behaviour occurring again

## Sanctions should:

- reinforce the Code of Behaviour
- signal to other children that their wellbeing is being protected
- prevent serious disruption of Teaching and Learning
- be clear so that the child understands why the sanction is being applied
- make it clear that changes in behaviour are needed to avoid further sanctions
- make a clear distinction between minor, serious and major offences
- relate to an individual and not a group
- focus on the child's behaviour not on the child himself/herself

The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. Individual teachers may put alternative measures in place depending on the circumstances involved and the age of the child. This list is not exhaustive.

## The Class Teacher will:

- ask the child to stop the behaviour
- discuss the behaviour and try reasoning with child
- advise the child how they can improve the behaviour
- ask the child to move away from his/her group to consider and reflect upon the behaviour
- loss of privileges for repeated behaviours e.g. golden time / free play / activities / representing the school / attendance on a school trip / tours
- ask the child to write down or recount their account of behaviour
- the class teacher can keep a record of the child's account of their behaviour
- inform the Principal / Deputy Principal about on-going behaviour
- communicate with Parents/Guardians in Journal / Email/ Phone
- make an appointment with Parents/Guardians
- make an appointment with the Principal and Parents/Guardians



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## Sanctions on the yard:

- the supervising teacher or SNA will ask the child to stop the behaviour
- depending on the nature of the incident and / or the reaction of the child, the teacher or SNA may ask the child to 'take time out' away from other children and reflect on their behaviour
- if after the 'time out' strategy, the child misbehaves further, then the supervising teacher or SNA will ask the child to leave the yard and sit in the reflective space, where they will have time to consider their actions and choices going forward. The class teacher will then give the child an opportunity to recount their behaviour, learn from and outline their intentions to make better choices in the future.
- if there is persistent misbehaviour on the yard the Principal /Deputy Principal will be informed and the child's parents will be notified
- if the misbehaviours persist after the parents have been informed, then the child will continue to remain in the reflective space for a stated number of breaks / days and the parents will be informed
- an appointment will be made to meet the parents if the misbehaviours persist after being kept off the yard

When all of the above has been exhausted then the matter will be referred to the Board of Management where;

- BOM will consider Suspension
- BOM will consider Expulsion

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## Suspension:

Suspension is defined as 'requiring a student to absent himself / herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days' (NEWB Guidelines)

Exclusion for part of a school day or asking Parents/Guardians to keep a child from school, as a sanction, counts as suspension. Suspension will be considered as part of a range of sanctions where a child has engaged in a serious or gross misbehaviour. While suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern, a single instance of serious misbehaviour may be grounds for suspension. The decision to suspend will be based on the following grounds:

- The seriously detrimental effect on the Education of the other children of the child's behaviour to date
- Whether the child's continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to Health and safety
- The child is responsible for serious damage to property

The purpose of the suspension is to give the child / Parent / Guardian / Staff time to consider the child's actions and to consider the implications for the other children in the class group. It will also provide the school with time to devise ways to help the child improve the child's behaviour in the future.

The Principal can suspend a child for periods of up to three days. If a longer suspension is proposed, the Principal should refer to the Board of Management for consideration and approval. Reports to the Board and to the relevant authorities should be made in line with NEWB Guidelines.

## Expulsion:

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a child. This authority will be exercised in line with the procedures outlined in the Development of a Code of Behaviour Guidelines for Schools NEWB.

## Appeals:

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, Parents / Guardians are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills against some decisions of the BOM, including suspension and expulsion.



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## Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement):

Following or during a period of suspension, the Parents / Guardians may apply to have their child reinstated to St. Attracta's. The Principal must be satisfied that the child's reinstatement will hold no safety risks to other children or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of an Individual Behaviour Plan for the child in conjunction with the Class Teacher and SET Teacher if required. The Principal will formally re-admit the child to his/her class.

## Bullying:

Please refer to St. Attracta's Anti-Bullying Policy.

## Communicating with Parents and Guardians:

Communicating with Parents/Guardians is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy which can be implemented at home and at school. A high level of co-operation and open communication is an important factor which encourages positive behaviour in the school.

St. Attracta's encourages Parents to talk in confidence to teachers and/or Principal about any significant development in their child's life which may affect their child's behaviour.

The following methods of Communication are used:

- Informal / formal Parent / Teacher Meetings
- Notes in Homework Journals (not Junior and Senior Infants)
- Letters / notes to and from St. Attracta's
- Aladdin
- St. Attracta's website
- Aladdin App
- Email / text messaging
- Seesaw

The Parents and Guardians of any new children starting in St. Attracta's will be asked to read our Code of Behaviour. All St. Attracta's Policies are on our website [www.stattractasns.ie](http://www.stattractasns.ie).

## Record Keeping:

It is very important that all incidents of inappropriate behaviour are recorded and kept up to date. Patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be spotted early and interventions (e.g. an Individual Behaviour Plan ) can be put in place as soon as possible. Any serious incidents regarding behaviour will be recorded on Aladdin.



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## Reference to Other Relevant Policies in St. Attracta's:

- Child Safeguarding Statement
- SPHE
- Stay Safe
- Enrolment/ Admissions
- Safety Statement
- Special Educational Needs
- Healthy Eating
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Mobile Phones

Review and Approval of the Code of Behaviour for St. Attracta's by the Board of Management

Signed:

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(Chairperson Board of Management)

Date: 16/01/23

Next Review Scheduled for: June 2024