



## **St Francis Xavier JNS Code of Behaviour**

### **Introductory Statement**

St Francis Xavier JNS aims to provide a happy, secure, friendly, learning environment, where children, parents, teachers, special needs assistants, ancillary staff and Board of Management work in partnership. Each individual is valued, encouraged and respected for their uniqueness and facilitated to reach their full potential in a positive atmosphere. This policy was prepared in accordance with Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board in May 2009. This policy was reviewed and updated in 2011, 2013, 2016 and 2021 and 2024.

### **Rationale**

Under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) schools are obliged to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in Section 23(2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:

- The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
- The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
- The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
- The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student;
- Procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school

In St Francis Xavier JNS we acknowledge it necessary to review and update our Code of Behaviour to ensure compliance with the following legislation and guidelines:

- Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2013
- Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary Schools (June 2024)
- Children First National Guidance 2015
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017
- Data Protection 1998 -2018 and EU General Data Personal Regulation 2018 (GDPR)
- Guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child we are cognisant of children's specific survival, development, protection and participation rights.

### **Foreword**

In order to function efficiently and to serve the needs of its pupils, every school requires rules and regulations, which are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly. We have a positive approach to behaviour, which takes account of the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences in so far as possible while enhancing children's independence, self-esteem and self-confidence. This, we hope, will enable the children to appraise their behaviour rationally in terms of what is right and wrong or appropriate and inappropriate.

The strong sense of community within the school is generating a high standard of behaviour and relies on continuing co-operation among staff and also between teachers and parents. However, sometimes it is necessary to impose sanctions in order to ensure the smooth and safe operation of the school. Each child has the right to an education in a relatively disruption free environment but responsibilities come with this right. There is a Behaviour Team which will meet regularly to review and update the Codes of Behaviour. The members of this Team are: Olivia Barrett, Orla Brid Cobbe, Aisling Mulready, Eimear O'Hara, Sharon McHugh and Sorcha O Connor.

### **Aims of the code**

This Code of Behaviour reflects the values of kindness, respect and honesty which are nurtured in our school. The aim is to create a safe, positive and orderly environment where pupils can develop self-discipline in a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.

## **Our School Rules**

### **Caring for others and myself**

I should always show respect for my classmates by:

- Listen in class. Do my work to the best of my ability. Tell the teacher if I do not understand.
- Allow other children to learn. It is important not to interrupt other children or the teacher when we are learning together.
- Taking care of my belongings: schoolbag, books, copies and coat. I will put my name on all my belongings. Being careful of anything that belongs to someone else.
- Eat my lunch and tidy up.
- Use the bathroom one at a time, flush the toilet after use and always wash my hands.
- Be mannerly and polite to everyone, children, staff and all visitors to the school.
- Take turns and share.
- Show respect for the school property and grounds.
- Always tell the truth.
- Use the magic words; 'Excuse me', 'Please' and 'Thank you'.

**Safety in the school building:** For my own safety and the safety of others, I should always enter and leave the school in an orderly fashion and while at school:

- Walk in the school building at all times.
- Use coat hooks.
- Keep my school bag under my table.
- Sit with my two feet and the four legs of my chair on the ground.
- Remain seated especially while eating my lunch and during playtime on wet days, unless otherwise instructed by supervising teachers or SNA (special needs assistant).

**Safety in the School Yard:** During playtime I should always:

- Walk when instructed e.g. on 'walking' days.
- Leave food and drink indoors.
- Ask the teacher if I need to go inside to use the bathroom.
- Freeze when teacher rings the first bell. Walk to my line on the second bell.
- Line up properly (without skipping places or pushing).
- Remain inside the yellow lines.
- Talk to the supervising teacher if I have any problems during playtime.

- Treat other children kindly, remembering ‘Kind Hands, Kind Feet, Kind Words, That’s Sweet’.
- Never leave the school or yard without permission.

### **Whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour – roles and responsibilities**

Staff members, supported by the Board of Management, adopt a positive approach to behaviour within the school. The elements of a whole school approach to behaviour include:

- An ethos, policies and practices that are in harmony.
- A teamwork approach to behaviour.
- A whole-school approach to curriculum and classroom management.
- An inclusive and involved school community.
- A systematic process for planning and reviewing behaviour policy.
- At the beginning of each school year all teachers will discuss the Code of Behaviour and devise a set of positive class rules with their class.
- Good behaviour is praised at all times. A positive and consistent approach will be adopted by all staff to rewards and sanctions. See <http://incredibleyears.com/>
- The school’s Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum and Grow in Love (R.E) are used to support the Code of Behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship.
- The staff will ensure they communicate to parents/guardians any concerns in relation to their child’s behaviour and well-being.
- Behavioural concerns may be brought to the attention of the pupils in class situations by the principal, behaviour committee or class teacher. Similar information may be conveyed to parents in person, by phone, letter or note home.
- At times, specific Behaviour Plans will be developed. These are bespoke documents created collaboratively with school staff and parents which are tailored to children’s specific needs. This work happens in the context of the school’s Continuum of Support.

### **Procedures:**

The degree of misbehaviour i.e. minor or serious, will be judged by the teachers and/or Deputy Principal or Principal based on a common-sense approach with regard to the gravity and frequency of such misbehaviours as follows:

### **Some examples of minor misbehaviours:**

- Interrupting class work.
- Running in the school building.
- Leaving seat without permission at lunch time.
- Leaving litter around school.
- Being discourteous/unmannerly.

### **Steps to take for minor misbehaviours**

1. Encouragement / Reminder of the desired behaviour / Proximal Praise.
2. Reasoning followed by warning issued by class teacher.
3. Temporary separation from peers to the ‘Thinking Chair’ and/or ‘Cooldown Zone’/ ‘Quiet Table’.

4. Loss of privilege (Golden Time/Activities/Toys) or verbal communication with parents.
5. Teachers will keep a written record of recurrent behaviour that is a cause for concern.

#### **Examples of serious misbehaviours:**

- Constantly disruptive in class.
- Deliberately injuring a fellow pupil/ staff member.
- Using unacceptable language.
- Bullying. *“Bullying can be defined as repeated aggressive behaviour of a verbal, physical or emotional nature. It may be carried out by groups or by an individual and can take place anywhere. It can be hurtful, painful, harmful, distressing and frightening” (Stay Safe, 2021).*
- Damaging school or other pupils’ property.
- Stealing.
- Leaving school premises during school day without permission.
- Telling lies.
- Racist/Homophobic language.

It should be noted that these lists consist of examples only. They are not meant to be a totally comprehensive list of misbehaviours.

#### **Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with serious misbehaviours:**

1. Class teacher refers child to the behaviour team and parents will receive a behaviour chat slip which must be signed and returned to behaviour team.
2. A child who is a risk to his/her own safety or the safety of others will be removed from the room to the care of the Behaviour Team/Deputy Principal or Principal.
3. Send to Principal/Deputy Principal.
4. Principal makes contact with or meets with one/both parents/guardians.
5. Chairperson of Board of Management informed and parents requested to meet with Chairperson and Principal.
6. Referral by the Chairperson to the Board of Management as appropriate.
7. In the event of persistent, serious incidences and despite all intervention, the Board of Management reserves the right to follow:  
Suspension in accordance with the terms of Rule 130 (5) of the Rules for National Schools.  
Expulsion, this will only be considered in an extreme case in accordance with Rule 130 (6).  
These procedures are in line with the statutory requirements of the 1998 Education Act. This policy is subject to regular review.

*Please see Behaviours of Concern Policy ratified in June 2024 by the Board of Management, St Francis Xavier JNS*

#### **The School Yard**

As a junior school, much of the children’s learning takes place through free play in the school yard during break-time. As a staff, we acknowledge the role we have in helping children to develop their friendship forming skills. Generally, with young children, boisterous behaviour can lead to upset, so the teams of teachers and SNAs are well versed in smoothing over such difficulties. Sometimes, however, during yard time children may present with behaviour which poses a danger to themselves and others and the following steps are followed:

#### **Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with serious misbehaviours**

- At both break times, teachers are on duty in the playground, assisted by Specials Needs Assistants (SNAs).

- While the SNAs assist with yard supervision the teacher on duty is responsible for disciplinary matters and SNAs will refer children to the teacher.
- In the event of misbehaviour during yard time, the teacher on duty will address the issue. Time out stations are located in the yard and may be used at the discretion of the supervising teacher.
- Classroom teachers will be informed of serious misbehaviour by supervising teacher.
- The principal will be informed of serious incidents of misbehaviour. Parents will be notified if deemed necessary.
- All pupils must adhere to the playground rules:
  - Move around allocated area with due care
  - Play safely at all times
  - Do not engage in rough play (Kind hand, kind feet...)
  - Follow staff instructions

### **Children with Additional Needs**

We aspire to be an inclusive school and all children are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However, we do recognise that children with additional needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning/resource support teacher, and or principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given.

### **How we communicate the Code of Behaviour to our school community:**

The Code of Behaviour is given to each family upon enrolment via Aladdin and confirmation to adhere to code is sought. The school rules are explained to the pupils from the early days of Junior Infants in the contexts of care and safety. Between September and Halloween in any given school year, Junior Infants are gradually introduced to the school rules and to the reasons for their existence. The Code of Behaviour is also available on the school website. The Board of Management provides a supportive role to the principal and the teaching staff in the positive implementation of the school Code of Behaviour. The Board of Management actively promotes proactive staff involvement in behavioural concerns and to this end will fund where appropriate, opportunities for staff development in the area of understanding behaviour and its management.

**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. Parents should communicate reason for absence via Aladdin app. (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).
- As supervision for insurance purposes does not commence until 8.50am, children should not be in the school grounds before that time unless supervised by a parent or guardian.
- Utilise Aladdin as a platform to communicate minor issues and reasons for absence to the class teacher or pre-arranged meetings for other issues
- Communicate any issue, which troubles you or your child at an early stage.
- Support children with homework, ensuring that it is completed and the child has all necessary materials.

- Answer telephone call from school/call school back promptly and have arrangements in place for prompt collection of their child should it be required. Up to date contact information is essential.
- Adult interactions whether among staff members or among parents should be respectful at all times. Aggressive or abusive language should never be used. All adults should be mindful that we are at all times modelling respect for the dignity of others, to the children in our school community.

**This policy was reviewed in September 2024 by the staff of St Francis Xavier JNS and ratified by the Board of Management on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024.**

**The policy will be reviewed during the 2026//2027 school year.**

Signed: *Rachael O'Leary*  
Chairperson

Date: 22/10/24

Signed: *Olivia Bassett*  
Principal

Date: 22/10/24