

# The St Michael Steiner School

## Code of Conduct & Behaviour Policy

Our Code of Conduct is based on the principle that there should be as few rules as possible and that those we have exist for good reasons and must be respected by everyone.

Too many rules and too much adult intervention can encourage children to rely on them and can inhibit the development of independent judgement; Children need to be given the opportunity to develop the ability to regulate their own behaviour. This is a process that takes many years; it is clear that young children cannot be expected to take responsibility for, or to understand the consequences of, their actions in the same way as teenagers or adults can. However, habits develop before judgment, and before they can understand *why* they should treat each other with kindness and respect, young children need strong boundaries and good examples that guide them towards good habits in the way they behave. These examples and boundaries need to be set and held by the adults around them and, generally, as the children get older, become first wider and then looser as they are given more responsibility for their own conduct.

With these principles in mind, we have devised a Code of Conduct that outlines our expectations and gives guidance to teachers and parents, as well as the pupils themselves, about what is ideal, what is expected, what is acceptable and what is not.

1. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect, so:
  - Be considerate towards other people
  - Use language that is appropriate for a school environment
  - Do not deliberately hurt other people; either physically or emotionally
  - Respect other people's right to personal space
  - Do not interfere with, take or use other people's belongings without their permission
  - Try to be honest and truthful at all times
2. School is a place where young people come to work and learn, so:
  - Come to school on time, every day
  - Come to school ready to work and properly equipped for your lessons
  - Do not disrupt lessons or prevent others from working in your own or other classes
  - Do not bring anything to school that might distract you or others during lessons

### **Discipline and Behaviour**

Discipline is discussed regularly in the Faculty and College meetings, so that a general standard of acceptable behaviour, based on the Code of Conduct, can be commonly applied throughout the school in lessons and at break times. This helps the children to feel secure and helps teachers to know where the boundaries lie.

Every effort should be made to ensure that parents also respect school rules; all children are strongly influenced by the actions and attitudes of their parents and look to them for guidance. Teachers need to be aware when issues arise between parents and the school,

or when parents are clearly disregarding any aspect of the Code of Conduct, and take steps to resolve the situation so that the children are not unsettled. Parents should not be on the premises during school time without a legitimate reason.

Discipline is also part of classroom management and should arise out of the relationship between the children, their teachers and each other, and out of good organisation and planning on the part of teachers. Within this, provided that teachers have made every reasonable effort to plan and organise their lessons well, and with our Code of Conduct, health & Safety and Safeguarding policies as a basis, teachers are free to impose whatever disciplinary measures they feel are appropriate in each case. However, they should also be aware that their actions stand within the overall context of the school and that any actions they take will affect the freedom of others. Teachers should consult each other whenever imposing any but the most routine sanctions and be careful not to use measures that their colleagues may not be able to support.

## **Sanctions**

Generally, sanctions should be related to the behaviour that makes them necessary; i.e. they should be the natural consequences of the behaviour, rather than arbitrary punishments. Corporal punishment of any kind is against the law.

If children are bullying or hurting others or frequently disrupting lessons, it is the teachers' first responsibility to ensure that the other children's wellbeing is not compromised. (See our Anti-bullying policy) The primary purpose of sanctions is to improve the behaviour in the longer term and protect the interests of the other children in the short term.

Examples of sanctions and strategies that have proved effective:

- Moving a disruptive child to the front of the class, close to the teacher's desk, so that they can be kept on task quietly and are not distracted by people in front of them.
- Work divided into a series of shorter tasks may be effective for children who are easily distracted and disrupt because they struggle to focus.
- For a child who continues to be frequently disruptive in lessons, excluding them from the lesson for a period of time and giving them some extra work to do under supervision.
- A younger child who hurts other children or uses bad language or otherwise breaks school rules can be made to sit on the bench at break time with the duty teacher instead of being allowed to play.
- In the case of a young child who has been frequently disruptive, disrespectful to teachers etc., over a long period of time (say, a term) sending them home as soon as the behaviour begins again, rather than giving them more chances. This strategy needs to be explained to parents beforehand so that you have their support.
- In certain cases, contacting the child's parents when there has been an incident or, in the case of ongoing bad behaviour, keeping in regular contact.
- For older children, detention.
- Pupils who break or damage things because of careless behaviour should be expected to repair or replace them, with help if necessary.
- Beyond preventing them from hurting anyone in the moment, children who often lose their temper are best dealt with the day after an incident, when they have calmed down.

- In all cases, teachers need to be conscious of how much time and attention is given to disruptive children and ensure that the other children's wellbeing is not compromised.

## **Detention**

We rarely use detention as a sanction. It should not be used before Class 5, only for repeated transgressions and the child concerned should have been warned and given the opportunity to redeem themselves. If a detention is given, it should be because you believe it will help the child to improve their work habits or behaviour where other measures have failed.

Parents should be informed at least 24 hours in advance of the reason, date, time and duration of the detention. Children must be properly supervised during detentions. A single detention should not exceed one hour. If it is impossible for a child to stay after school on a particular day, teachers should be willing to arrange an alternative.

### Related policies:

Holding and Physical Restraint Policy and Procedure

EY Use of Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy & Procedure

Exclusion and Suspension of Pupils

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