St. Joseph’s N.S.,
Leitrim Village

Roll No: 01125B

Information Booklet
May 2013
School Details
Name: St. Joseph’s N.S.
Address: Leitrim Village,
Co. Leitrim.
Roll No: 01125B
Telephone No: 071 9621205
E-mail: leitrimns@gmail.com
Website: www.leitrimns.scoilnet.ie

Contact Times
You can phone the school secretary between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday to Friday

Opening Hours
Junior Infants/Senior Infants: .......................... 9.20 a.m. – 2.00 p.m.
All other classes: ........................................... 9.20 a.m. – 3.00 p.m.
Lunch: .......................................................... 1.00 p.m. – 1.30 p.m.

School Calendar
School Calendar is issued to all parents/guardians in September

School Ethos
St. Joseph’s is a Catholic primary school. The Alive O Programme is taught in the school, as directed by the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise

School Mission Statement
Children are the messengers we send forward to a future we may not see

School Motto
Tús maith, leath na h-oibre. [A good start is half the work]

School Theme
The school theme changes from year to year. The school theme is printed on the top of our school letter paper.

School Vision
St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village is a co-educational, Catholic, primary school which strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupil are identified and addressed.

While recognising all other religions and none St. Joseph’s is a Catholic School with a Catholic ethos.

St. Joseph’s will strive to promote, both individually and collectively the personal and professional development of all staff through staff development programmes.
St. Joseph’s will encourage the involvement of Parents through home/school contacts and through their involvement in the Parent’s Association.

St. Joseph’s will endeavour to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community, to imbue in the pupils respect for people and property and to encourage in them the idea of being responsible.

St. Joseph’s will promote gender equity amongst the teachers and pupils.

Deanfaimid iarracht an Ghaeilge a labhairt.

**School Staff** (as of March 2013)

- **Principal:** Richella Kelly
- **Deputy Principal:** Siobhán McElgunn
- **Mainstream Class Teacher:**
  - Denise Ryan
  - Mick Blake
  - Angela McGuire
  - Marie Keaveney
  - Sinéad Quinn
  - Grainne Gannon
- **Special Education Teacher:** Catherine McGowan
- **Learning Support Teachers:** Clare Tully & Shona O’Neill
- **Special Needs Assistant:** (full time) Marie McNabola
- **Special Needs Assistant:** (part time) Catríona Gardiner
- **Secretary:** Maria Moran
- **Caretaker:** Des Murphy
- **Cleaner:** Margaret Cassidy
- **French Teacher:** Patricia Duignan
- **Football Coach:** Pat McWeeny
- **Hurling Coach:** Steve Feeney
- **Piano Teacher:** Martina Kynn
- **Violin Suzuki Teacher:** Lorna Baker Kenny

**School Enrolment (as on 30th September 2012):** 200

**Access to Class Teacher and Principal**

Parent teacher meetings are organised in October each year. You will be notified of the date and times of these meetings in advance. Parent Teacher meetings are intended to be brief and if you wish to speak with your child’s teacher at any other time please make an appointment with the school secretary. Likewise if a teacher wishes to speak with you he/she will make an appointment to do so. This will ensure that all teachers will not be interrupted during pupil contact time.

It is very important that you make an appointment to speak with the principal, Ms. Kelly. Any concern you have in relation to your child should first be brought to the attention of your child’s teacher before addressing the matter with the principal.
Uniform
Boys
Wine jumpers
Grey slacks
White shirt/polo shirts.
Footwear
P.E. Wear

Girls
Wine jumpers/cardigans
Grey pinafore/skirt/slacks
White shirt/polo shirt
Black Shoes/boots
Grey tracksuit bottoms to be purchased in “The Magnet” or “Gerard Anthony’s”.

Subjects Taught
All subjects in the Revised Primary School Curriculum are taught: -
Languages:       English
                Gaeilge
                French (5th and 6th Class)
Maths
S.E.S.E.        History
                Geography
                Science
Arts:
                Visual Art
                Music
                Drama

P.E.
S.P.H.E.

A variety of methodologies and teaching approaches are used in teaching the above subjects.

Booklists
Booklists are distributed to new enrolments at Induction Day in May. Children already enrolled in the school receive a booklist for the following September with their summer report at the end of June each year. Local bookshops will also have a copy of the school booklists.

Attendance Guidelines
All school absences must be explained. On returning to school after an absence you child will receive an absence sheet. This sheet must be completed, explaining the reason for the absence, and returned to the school. All absence sheets are kept on file in the school.

If a child is absent for 20 or more school days (20 days = 4 weeks or 1 month of school) his/her name will be sent to the National Educational Welfare Board (N.E.W.B.). An officer from the N.E.W.B will then be in contact with the child’s parents/guardians. Parents who fail to send their children to school may be brought to court and may face imprisonment and/or a fine.

Healthy Lunch Policy
We encourage eating a healthy lunch in St. Joseph’s. As a child in the school has anaphylaxis to peanuts, a very severe allergy which could result in death if the child was to come into contact with peanuts, children are not allowed bring peanuts or anything containing peanuts to school.
Nuts (including peanuts), crisps and fizzy drinks and chewing gum are not allowed. We recommend that children bring sandwiches, fruit and a non-carbonated drink to school. Please read the school Healthy Eating Policy contained in this booklet.

Sport and Physical Education
All classes participate in Physical Education Classes. Each class follows the Revised P.E. Curriculum as defined by D.E.S.

This year Mr Pat McWeeney, G.A.A. Coach, instructed the students in G.A.A. skills. The school team takes part in Cumann na mBunscoil and are also part of the local Leitrim Gaels where our class teacher Mr Blake assists in coaching the young footballers. During the school year 2012 – 2013 the boys team won the Leitrim County Final, for the first time.

Mrs McElgunn trains the basketball teams and organises tournaments. These tournaments usually take place in the last school term.

The Parents Association help organise a Sports For All Day during the last term of each school year.

Sacramental Life
Leitrim N.S. is a Catholic School under the patronage of St. Joseph

Alive-O is the religious instruction programme followed and the children are prepared for First Confession, First Communion and Confirmation. These include Enrolment Services in the local church.

The “Do this in memory of me” programme is also followed. This year Ms McGuire very graciously facilitated the Parents by guiding them through the preparation for the liturgy.

The other students support the sacramental classes by lending their voices to the choir and their musical talents also. Participation in the local church of St. Joseph’s Liturgy is encouraged and helped where the children from 5th and 6th class serve as Altar Servers and Readers of Bidding Prayers – whilst children from 3rd, 4th and 5th present the Gifts at Sunday Masses. Special times of participation occur at Christmas and Holy Week and Easter.

Other Activities
Music
Suzuki classes in violin are taught every Thursday by Lorna Baker Kenny and Tin Whistle is taught from 2nd class upwards.
Martina Rynn gives Piano and voice lessons in the school every Wednesday.

Computers
Every classroom is equipped with a teaching computer and over head projector. One classroom has an Interactive Whiteboard. There is also a laptop trolley with 15 new laptops which can be moved from classroom to classroom. In addition to this there are five visualisers, two digital cameras, two graphics tablets and an e-pen in the school.
We have access to Broadband and with the help of a donation from the Parents Association all computers have Microsoft Office, Student – Teacher Edition.

**English**

Mr. Gerry Boland, author of ‘*Marco Moves In*’, has been a ‘Writer in Residence’ with us for several years. The first year Mr. Boland worked with 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th class. He now works all classes from Junior Infants to Sixth class. Mr Boland compiled a resume of the programme he taught to each of the classes. Mr Boland is an accomplished writer and his brief is to identify and encourage the creative minds of our young people. His work endorses the various strands of English in the revised curriculum.

**School Tours**

School tours are organised for the last term each year. You will be given all details in advance of these outings and we appreciate prompt payment for all such events. From time to time other trips will be organised and you will be informed in advance. Please ensure that you have signed the relevant section of your child’ enrolment form.

**Supervision**

Children are not supervised on the school grounds before 9:20 a. m. or after 3 p.m. (2 p.m. for Infant classes). Children who are on the school grounds before 9:20 and/ or after 3 p.m. are the responsibility of their parents/ guardians. This applies even if your child travels to school by bus and the bus arrives to the school prior to 9:20 a.m., or after 3 p.m.

**Board of Management (B.O.M.) of St. Joseph’s**

The Board of Management of St. Joseph’s N.S. was elected in November 2011. This board will remain until 30th November 2015. The members of the Board of Management are as follows: -

- **Chairperson:** Fr. Michael McGrath
- **Patrons Nominee:** Mrs Margaret Molloy – Dunne
- **Parents Representatives:** Aisling O’Boyle  
  James Keane
- **Community Representatives:** Shane Moreton  
  Colleen Regan
- **Teacher Representatives:** Richella Kelly (Principal)  
  Catherine McGowan

**Parents’ Association**

The present Parents’ Association was inaugurated in 2001. The Parents have worked very hard since their formation, and have funded a laser printer, a Burco boiler, safety mats for the Junior Play area, a new computer, and assisted in the funding for a new printer, various outings for the children and catering for events in school especially First Communion parties and refreshments Achievements Days. Also the Parents Association have funded a complete set of Encyclopaedias including World Science Encyclopaedia. To cater for this increased facility the Board of Management have bought library shelving to ensure the care and good use of this wonderful resource.

The Parents Association have also organised for the Mobile Cinema to visit the school on a number of occasions and have held several successful Sponsored Walks.
For the past two years the Parents Association have organised very successful Fashion Shows. And money raised from this event has extended the school yard and purchased a variety of materials including library books, maths equipment, visualisers and an e-pen. Many parents have participated in the ‘Maths For Fun Programme’.

The principal meets with the secretary and the chairperson of the Association about 3 – 4 times a year to discuss plans. Parents are informed of meetings of the Parents Association via the weekly communications letter.

**Parents Association Committee Members 2012 - 2013**

Chairperson: Kitty McDaid  
Vice Chairperson: Emma Haupt  
Secretary: Fiona Stenson  
Treasurer: Madge Gavin  

Other committee members include: - Patricia O’Brien, Carmel Curley, Paul Drury, Helen McLoughlin, Anne Guckian, Patricia Coggins, Marie Connolly, and Catherine Martin.

I strongly advise all parents to attend at least one meeting per school year.

**Assembly/Communication**

When the Halla is available the Principal addresses the school once a month in Assembly. Due to large numbers there are two assemblies, one for the junior pupils and one for the senior pupils. This has helped greatly in informing everyone – students and staff – of all forthcoming events and responsibilities of everyone in order to keep our school safe, happy, orderly and an example of a good learning and teaching centre for all.

Every Thursday the oldest child in each family is given their Communication Pocket. They present this pocket to their parents. Contained in this pocket is any relevant information that parents may need to know re events in school.

**Friendship week/ Anti- Bullying**

In October 2011 the school held the first Friendship Week. The aim of this week was to highlight the importance of friendship and as a result prevent bullying. Classes participated in many different activities including writing stories and poems based on the theme of friendship, played games, made friendship bracelets, produced art and participated in discussion and circle time activities. The school Anti-bullying Policy was also reviewed at the end of 2011 and is contained in this booklet. We aim to hold two “Friendship Weeks” every year.

As part of the S.P.H.E. Curriculum each class organises Circle Time. This programme is based on improving self-esteem among the students and encouraging peer mediation, thereby eliminating or significantly reducing any bullying behaviour. The resources used for this activity are Walk Tall and Quality Circle Time by Jenny Mosley.
Annual Pupil Reports
Parent - teacher meetings are held in October each year. Your child will also receive a written report, by post, in late June each year.

Achievements Day/ Graduation Day
At the end of May or beginning of June the school celebrates the Achievements of all our students.

- Certificates awarded throughout the school year are presented.
- Medals awarded for various G.A.A., /soccer /chess etc are presented.
- Graduation Certificates are presented to 6th class students.
- Acknowledgements of good behaviour are presented.
- Prizes are presented by a guest of honour chosen from among our own prestigious past pupils.

In 2006 we inaugurate the Prize Giving Ceremony of Best Overall Student of the Year from among 6th class students. This Prize has been kindly sponsored by Willie Donnellan, a past pupil and Leitrim Guardian Person of the Year. This year we decided to change the award to a photographic competition.

Achievements Day has a Special Guest of Honour. Over the past few years the following have been guest of honour: -
2003 Mary McGarry
2004 Pat Farrell
2005 Willie Donnellan
2006 Michael O’Brien
2007 Brendan Kiernan
2008 Joe Earley
2009 Seamus Gibbons
2010 Micheal Guckian

These programmes are intended to promote good citizenship and encourage the young students towards further education and training for suitable acceptable and sustainable careers/employment.

The first Graduation Day for 6th class pupils was held in June 2011. This replaced the Achievements and was a day for 6th class pupils to celebrate the completion of eight years of primary school education.

History
St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village, is situated on the banks of the Shannon-Erne waterway. In 1835 the first National School in Ireland was opened in Leitrim. History shows that there were two teachers in the school; the second teacher was called a monitor.

The first post-primary school in Leitrim was built in 1851 by the local landlords, the La Touche family, who saw a need in the area for agricultural education for the poverty stricken population. It was called the Model School.
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The National School of 1835 was replaced and relocated behind the old school in 1972. The site was donated by the Meehan family. Master Meehan lived in the old Model School and taught in the National School. The school was designed at that time for four teachers. The two plus two was made up of the amalgamation of Kiltoghert N.S. and Leitrim N.S.

The School Today
At present the school has nine full time teachers: - a principal, seven classroom teachers and a fulltime Special Education Teacher. The school also has two Learning Support Teachers, one fulltime and one part time Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) and a part-time secretary.

The school started refurbishment in 2002, and the addition of a link-corridor has facilitated great freedom of movement for all in the school, and safety for the children. A clear out of the school hall at the end of 2007 has also increased the amount of space in the school. In February 2010 an additional prefab classroom was completed to accommodate the sixth mainstream teacher. In early 2011 a new classroom and staffroom was added to accommodate the 7th mainstream and expanding staff.

The school population is 202 at the moment. The present figure has boosted with the development in Carrick-on-Shannon of the credit card company M.B.N.A., which employs almost 1500 people. All the local schools are benefiting from this development.

Immigration to our country of various nationalities is giving a multicultural aspect to school life. We have four /five nationalities in our school population at present. We continue to expand our knowledge of other cultures by involving ourselves with the Intercultural Programme devised by the D.E.S.
1. **Introductory Statement**
This policy was drawn up with the collaboration between teachers, parents, Board of Management and pupils as considered appropriate. Consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

2. **Rational**
It was necessary to review the existing Code of Behaviour for the following reasons:-
- The existing policy is due for review and amendment.
- To ensure an orderly climate for learning in the school.
- It is a requirement under DES Circular 20/90 on School Discipline.
- It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1).
- The publication of N.E.W.B. Guidelines on Codes of Behaviour.
- Audit checklist taken from N.E.W.B. Website highlighted areas needing review and inclusion.

3. **Relationship to Catholic Ethos/Characteristic Spirit of the School**
In St. Joseph’s N.S., we aim to nurture each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are valued. This can only be achieved when there is a high level of respect and co-operation between staff, parents and pupils.

4. **Aims/ Objectives**
1. To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement.
2. To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.
3. To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
4. To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
5. To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community.
6. To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.
7. To ensure that the systems of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.
8. To enable teachers to teach without disruption.

5. **Content**
In St. Joseph’s N.S. we believe that positive acknowledgement is a very effective way of influencing and promoting good learning behaviour.

5.1 **General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour**
Pupils must treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable.
Pupils must show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
Pupils must take pride in their appearance, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.
Pupils must obey a teacher’s instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be contacted in relation to the absence. An absence sheet must be completed for each absence stating the reason for the absence.

5.2 Affirming Positive Behaviour
Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions. The school places greater emphasis on rewards that on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the long run, give best results.

5.3 Strategies/Incentives for Promoting Positive Behaviour
- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment on a child’s exercise book.
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group.
- Individual class merit awards, points awards or award stamps.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege, such as sent on a message/Homework Pass at Assembly.
- Written or verbal communication with parent.
- Positive feedback given at Parent Teacher Meetings.
- A treat: - sticker, star, sweet, pencil, extra time at an enjoyed activity computer time.

5.4 The following behaviour will be expected of pupils in St. Joseph’s N.S.
5.4.1 In the Classroom
Each September the teacher together with the pupils will devise a set of classroom rules. Children will be reminded of these rules as the need arises. Each teacher will use a variety of classroom management techniques and a variety of activities and teaching methodologies to sustain pupil interest.

Children will arrive to class on time with all they need for school – pencils copies, books and lunch etc.
Children will hand up notes at the beginning of each day.
Children will at all times show respect for others, teachers, adults and other children.
Children will show respect for all school property (it will not be marked or damaged).
Children will not throw litter but use the bins provided. (See school rules for more information.)

5.4.2 In the Toilet/Cloakroom Area
Children must behave in an appropriate manner at all times.
Children must enter their classroom and then when instructed hand up coats.
Children must ask to use toilet. 
Children will be encouraged to use the toilet prior to going to the yard – and again after yard time – with permission of class teacher. 
Children must show respect for school property and the property of others. 
Toilets and cloakroom will remain tidy. 
Children will be encouraged to hand up any items seen to have fallen from a cloak hanger. 
Children will be reminded that items of clothing are not toys. 
Children in each classroom will be elected to monitor the hand towel. 
Children will collect coats from cloakroom and go promptly to the yard at break time.

5.4.3 On the Yard

Children must ask the teacher on the yard for permission before entering the other yard (Junior/Senior) or before entering the school building. 
Children must behave in an appropriate and safe manner at all times. 
Children must not participate in any form of rough play. 
Children must not lift, carry, push or pull another child/children. 
Children will be encouraged to participate in an appropriate game. 
Fair play awards will be given to children who play fairly, include others and make good choices, at break time. 
Children must obey rules in relation to playing on the grass. 
Children must obey the bell promptly ending all games and lining up in a neat and orderly line. 
Children must enter the school quietly in single file. 
Children will be allowed to bring a ball to the senior yard (1 per class, 2 for Mr. Blake’s class). 
Children must not bring a mobile phone, I pod, MP3 player or any other type of electronic game to school. 
Children must not climb at any time on any object in the school grounds. 
Children must keep away from areas which are out of bounds. 
Children must show respect for all trees and foliage on the school grounds. 
Monitors must show up for duty on the junior yard.

The teachers on duty will administer basic first aid such as cleaning and putting a plaster on a minor cut, in line with our Accidents and Administration of Medicines Policy.

5.4.4 On Wet Days

Children must remain seated in classroom with the classroom door open. Children may be moved to another classroom if the teacher on duty feels it necessary for the safety of the child and others in the room.

On days where children from yard come in early due to rain: - each teacher, shall return to his/her classroom to help organise the class. Likewise if the weather improves at lunch time each teacher shall return to his/her class and assist the teacher on duty to see all children exit the school in an orderly manner.
5.5 School Rules
Children must obey the school rules at all times. These rules include:-

1. All pupils in class at 9.20am.
2. All notes from parents should be handed up at the beginning of each day.
3. A notification informing school of reason for leaving during school hours is required when: - (a) a pupil wishes to leave during school hours. (b) Form to be signed by Parents when a child is absent from school.
4. Full, correct uniform must be worn at all times in school and on all school related outings and activities, unless otherwise instructed in writing. A written note must be provided if a child cannot wear the correct uniform. Children’s names must be clearly marked on uniform jumpers/ cardigans. Shoes should be properly and securely tied.
5. In the interest of Health and Safety children with long hair will be asked to keep it tied back.
6. Pupils are required to be neat and tidy in appearance.
7. In the interest of health and safety the wearing of jewellery is discouraged.
8. Healthy lunches are advised. Junk food is discouraged. Chewing gum is banned.
9. Classrooms, toilets and schoolyard must be kept tidy.
10. Pupils must not throw litter about. Bins are provided.
11. Recycling is practised in our school and bins are provided for same.
12. School property must not be marked or damaged.
13. All children should respect the property of others.
14. No running is permitted within school building.
15. Under no circumstances should a child leave the school grounds without permission.
16. Permission is required before pupils may enter rooms other than their own.
17. Children in infants are to be collected at 2.00p.m and children in other classes at 3.00pm.
18. The bell is to be obeyed promptly at all times.

5.6 Unacceptable Behaviour
In keeping with the Education (Welfare Act 2000, Section 23), the following strategies will be used for dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

- Reasoning with the pupil.
- Reprimand (including advice on how to improve), maybe at break time.
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others, may be sent to another classroom, sent to junior yard.
- Loss of privileges, including detention at break time (to a maximum of half of break time)
- Write an account/essay of what happened and get is signed.
- Note in homework journal to inform parents.
- Referral to Principal Teacher.
- Communication with parents.
- Suspension

In the belief that the most effective schools tend to be those with the best relationships with Parents, every effort will be made by the principal and staff to ensure that parents
are kept well informed, that the school provides a welcoming atmosphere towards Parents and that Parents are not only told when their children are in trouble but when they have behaved particularly well.

5.7 Examples of Misbehaviour, Serious Misbehaviour and Gross Misbehaviour

5.7.1 Inappropriate behaviour/ Misbehaviour

The following are examples of behaviour considered inappropriate and therefore regarded as misbehaviours. This list is not exclusive. These offences will be dealt with by reasoning with the child, warning the child including advice on how to improve, separation from peers, loss of privileges, writing an account of what happened, note home, referral to principal, communication with parents etc as outlined in section 5.6 above. If no improvement in behaviour is observed then suspension may be considered.

Misbehaviours

To refuse to obey an instruction by a teacher
To make gestures to or behind a teacher signalling defiance
To make rude noises or obscene gestures when teachers pass
To use bad language at a teacher
To turn away when spoken to by a teacher
To give cheeky replies to a teacher
To interrupt a class through constantly talking
To disrupt class by making rude noises
To disrupt class by throwing objects across the room
To refuse to co-operate with teacher or other children in the general organisation of class work
To play in areas of school grounds in which it is forbidden to do so.

5.7.2. Serious Misbehaviour

The following are examples of behaviour considered serious misbehaviour. Again this list is not exclusive. These offences will be dealt with by reasoning with the child, warning the child including advice on how to improve, separation from peers, loss of privileges, writing an account of what happened, note home, referral to principal, communication with parents etc as outlined in section 5.6 above. If no improvement in behaviour is observed then suspension may be considered.

Serious Misbehaviours

To repeated any misbehaviours as outlined above
To use bas language/ indecent words towards other children (with malice)
To spit at other children
To bully, through threats or otherwise, another child
To make obscene drawings in notebooks
To cover notebooks, desks, bus, walls or grounds of school with graffiti
To deface school property in any way
To “scheme” from school
To deface other children’s property
To behave aggressively, threateningly or violently towards a pupil or teacher
To fire missiles form elastic bands or catapults of any description.
To make, do, or say anything with the object of disrupting the efficient running of the school.
To interfere with school equipment, [computers, video, P.E., equipment etc.] without permission

5.7.3 Gross Misbehaviour

The following are examples of behaviour considered **gross misbehaviour**. The Board of Management shall authorise the Chairperson or Principal of the school to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the child’s parents.

**Gross Misbehaviour**
To bring any dangerous articles [knife etc.] into school
To bring any dangerous or obnoxious substance, [alcohol, drugs etc] into school
To behave aggressively, threateningly or violently towards a pupil or teacher

Teachers shall keep a written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour as well as a record of improvements in the behaviour of disruptive pupils. Before resorting to serious sanctions e.g., suspension, the normal channels of communication between school and Parents will be utilised. Parents will be involved at an early stage rather than a last resort.

Communication with Parents will be verbal or by letter, depending on circumstances. The Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss the child’s case. For gross misbehaviour or **repeated** instances of serious misbehaviour suspension will be considered. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour, depending on circumstances.

In the case of gross misbehaviour the Board shall authorise the Chairperson of Principal to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the Parents.

5.8 Bullying
Bullying is repeated verbal, psychological or physical aggression by an individual or group against others. The most common forms of bullying are aggressive physical contact, name-calling, intimidation, extortion, isolation and taunting. Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to cooperate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy.

5.9 Suspension
Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.
For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child’s case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information.

Section 11 of the N.E.W.B publication, Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, pages 70 – 78 will be consulted and followed.

5.10 Expulsion
Section 12 of the N.E.W.B publication, Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, pages 80 – 87 will be consulted and followed.

Under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, “A student shall not be expelled from a school before the passing of twenty school days following the receipt of a notification under this section by an educational welfare officer” (Section 24(4))” It is the right of the Board of Management to take “....such other reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school concerned and that the safety of students is secured (Section 24(5))”.

5.11 Appeals
Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science against some decisions of the Board of Management, including (1) permanent exclusion from a school and (2) suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year. Accordingly, schools should advise parents of this right of appeal and associated timeframe if it has been decided to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student (see Circular 22/02).

5.12 Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school
The Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (2) (e) states that the code of behaviour must specify, “the procedures to be followed in relation to a child’s absence from school”. Section 18 stipulates that parents must notify the school of a student’s absence and the reason for this absence. We ask parents to inform the school on the first day of the absence and to complete and return an ‘Absence Sheet’, on the pupil’s return to school.
6. **Reference to other Policies**

Many other school plans are policies have a bearing on the code of behaviour including:

- SPHE Plan
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Accidents and Administration of Medicines Policy
- Equality Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Others

7. **Success Criteria**

Observation of positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment. Practices and procedures listed in this policy will be consistently implemented by teachers. Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils will also help to assess the effectiveness of this policy.

8. **Roles and Responsibilities**

8.1 **Board of Management’s Responsibilities**

Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
Ratify the Code.

8.2 **Principal’s Responsibilities**

Promote a positive climate in the school.
Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
Arrange for review of the Code, as required.

8.3 **Teacher’s Responsibilities**

Support and implement the school’s code of behaviour.
Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
Recognise and affirm good work.
Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
Be courteous, consistent and fair.
Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
Provide support for colleagues.
Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

8.4 **Pupil’s Responsibilities**

Attend school regularly and punctually.
Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
Show respect for all members of the school community.
Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
Avoid misbehaving in any way which would endanger others.
Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name calling.
Include other pupils in games and activities.
Bring correct materials/books to school.
Follow school and class rules.

8.5 Parents/Guardians’ Responsibilities
Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
Be interested in, support and encourage their children’s school work.
Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation.
Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child’s behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child’s progress/behaviour.

9 Implementation and Review
Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Rules will be kept to a minimum, emphasise positive behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

A copy of this Code of Behaviour will be given to the parents/guardians of every child enrolled in the school. All prospective pupils will be given a copy of the Code of Behaviour in the Information Pack, prior to enrolment. The code of Behaviour will be discussed with all new parents on Induction Day. Parents of children already enrolled in the school will receive a copy of the policy in the Communication packet on the Thursday after ratification by the BOM.

This policy will be implemented as from the start of the next year, September 2009.

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis at staff meetings and will be amended as the need arises.

10 Ratification and Communication
The school Code of Behaviour was ratified by the Board of Management on Thursday February 12th 2009

11 Reference Section
- Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 Section 23(1-5), 24 (1-5)
- Education Act, 1998 Section 15 (2(d))
- Circular 20/90 on Discipline (DES web site www.irlgov.ie/educ). Also in CPSMA Handbook
St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village
Roll No 01125B
Information Booklet

- Circular 22/02 Appeals Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998. (DES website). Deals with appeals under the following headings:
  1. Permanent exclusion from a school
  2. Suspension
  3. Refusal to enrol
- Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes

Appendix A
Code of Behaviour: - Expulsion

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with Rule 130(6).

Every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed child referred for psychological assessment without delay. Help will be sought, also, from support services within the wider community, e.g. Community Care services provided by Health Boards.

In the belief that the most effective schools tend to be those with the best relationships with Parents, every effort will be made by the principal and staff to ensure that Parents are kept well informed, that the school provides a welcoming atmosphere towards Parents and that Parents are not only told when their children are in trouble but when they have behaved particularly well.

Rules 130(5) and 130(6) of the rules for National Schools read:-

Where the Board of Management deems it necessary to make provision in the code of discipline to deal with continuously disruptive pupils or with a serious breach of discipline, by authorising the Chairperson or Principal to exclude a pupil or pupils from school, the maximum initial period of such exclusion shall be three school-days. A special decision of the Board of Management is necessary to authorise a further period of exclusion up to a maximum of 10 school-days to allow for consultation with the pupil’s parents or guardians. In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Management may authorise a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed.

No pupil shall be struck off the rolls for breaches of discipline without the prior consent of the Patron and unless alternative arrangements are made for the enrolment of the pupil at another suitable school.
1. Introduction

The enrolment policy of St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village is set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act (1998). The Board of Management trusts that by so doing parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. The Chairperson of the Board of Management, Fr. Michael McGrath and the School Principal, Richella Kelly will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from this policy.

St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village is a Catholic National School for boys and girls under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnois, Colm O’Reilly. The school has a catholic ethos and models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The school aims to promote the full and harmonious development of all pupils; cognitive, intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and other people and promotes a Christian philosophy of life.

There are nine teachers in the school including:— the principal, seven mainstream class teachers and a learning support teacher/resource teacher. In addition to this there are two shared learning support/resource teachers based in Kilnagross. The school caters for pupils from approximately ages 4 years to 12 years in mixed classes from Junior Infants to Sixth class.

The school depends on grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Science and operates within the rules and regulations laid down from time to time by the Department of Education and Science. This enrolment policy will have regard to available funding and resources.

The school is subject to The Education Act (1998), the Education Welfare Act (2000), the Equal Status Act (2000), The Education for persons with Special Education Needs (EPSEN) Act (2004) and all relevant equality legislation. St. Joseph’s N.S. follows the curricular programmes laid down by the Department of Education and Science which may be amended from time to time in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998).

Within the context and parameters of Department of Education and Science regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act (1998) and the funding and resources available, the enrolment policy of St. Joseph’s N.S. supports the principles of:-

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special education need;
• Equality of access and participation in the school;
• Parental choice in relation to enrolment and
• Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society

Therefore, no child will be refused access to St. Joseph’s N.S. for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, accent, language, traveller status, asylum seeker, refugee status, religious or political beliefs or values, family or social circumstances.

2. Rationale
This policy aims to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school:
• To make decisions on all applications in an open and transparent manner consistent with the Ethos, the Mission Statement of the school and legislative requirements.
• To make an accurate and appropriate assessment of the capacity of the school to cater for the needs of applicants in the light of the resources available to it.

3. Application Procedure
The Board of Management has determined a formal process for the enrolment of pupils in the school. This process is outlined as follows:

- For Junior Infants and pupils wishing to enrol on 1st September/ 1st working day in September
Every January the process will commence with an advertisement being placed in the local Newspaper and Parish Newsletter. This advertisement will notify parents that Enrolment Forms are available for collection from the school. Information will also be included in the weekly Communications Letter sent to the parents of pupils enrolled in the school every Thursday. The closing dates for applicants will be 1st March.

Newly resident pupils wishing to enrol after this date (1st March).
Parents are asked to contact the school.

3.1 Enrolment Form/ Provision of Key Information by Parents
Applications will only be accepted on the basis of a fully completed School Enrolment Form. This form must be accompanied by a copy of the child’s Birth Certificate. Evidence of residency/address may also be requested in the form of a household utility bill and personal bill etc. School reports and medical reports may also be required. In addition to the above a non-refundable deposit of €40 is charged per pupil. This will be offset against book rental costs. Deposits will be refunded to unsuccessful applicants.

Completing an Enrolment Form does not guarantee a place in the school

The Enrolment Form will seek the following information:-
• Name
• Address
**St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village**

**Roll No 01125B**

**Information Booklet**

- Date of Birth
- Religion
- Country of Birth
- Nationality
- Father’s Name
- Mother’s Name
- Contact telephone numbers in the event of emergency (Home, mobile and work)
- Details of medical conditions of which school should be aware of
- Name and address of last school attended and reasons for transfer (if applicable)
- Any further information of importance to the school.

This Enrolment Form will be reviewed and updated regularly, according to D.E.S. expectations.

Please note the following points:-
- Failure to fully complete forms may result in refusal to admit a student.
- Further relevant information may be sought at a later stage.

### 3.2 Decision Making

The Board of Management (BOM) makes decisions relating to enrolment in accordance with school policy. The BOM, keeping in mind DES guidelines in relation to Pupil Teacher Ratio, deem that there will be 28 places available for Junior Infants in September 2013.

The BOM will strive to ensure DES guidelines in relation to Pupil Teacher Ratio are kept in mind in all remaining classes. This may take time to achieve.

In the event that applications exceed the number of spaces available the Board of Management has determined that priority in the allocation of places will be given according to the following criteria, in the following order of importance:

1. Children (Junior Infants), from the parish living within close proximity to the school, to include the catchment area serviced by Bus Eireann to the school.
2. Brothers and sisters of children already enrolled in the school.
3. Children of current staff members (including ancillary staff). (Junior infants).

If the number of applicants for Junior Infants exceeds the number of places available (28) a “cut-off birth date” will apply.

Applicants for Senior Infants to Sixth class will be taken on a “first come first served” basis as vacancies arise in individual classrooms keeping in mind DES guidelines regarding pupil teacher ratio.

Intake numbers in Junior Infants will depend on whole school enrolment and subsequently may fluctuate from year to year. The BOM will make a decision on the number of places available on a year by year basis.
Pupils newly resident in the area may be enrolled on the first day of term/ half term subject to class size, available space, the needs of the child and the needs of the children already enrolled in the school.

Parents of new Junior Infants are notified of the decision of the Board of Management within 21 days of the closing date (1st March) or receipt of Enrolment Form.

The Board of Management is bound by the Department of Education and Science’s Rules for National Schools which provides that pupils may only be enrolled from the ages of 4 years of age upwards although compulsory attendance does not apply until the age of 6 years (N.E.W.B guidelines).

While recognising the right of Parents to enrol their child in their school of choice, the Board of Management of St. Joseph’s N.S. is also responsible for respecting the rights of the existing school community and especially for the children already enrolled.

3.3 Admission of Junior Infants
Admission of Junior Infants officially takes place on September 1st or the first day of the new school academic year. If a child is not four years of age by September 1st, then he/ she cannot be admitted until after his/ her fourth birthday.

3.4 Exceptional Circumstances
The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any pupil in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could arise where either:

The pupil has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Science, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education.

Or

In the opinion of the Board of Management, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to other pupils, to school staff or to school property.

3.5 Appeals Procedure
Parents, who are dissatisfied with an enrolment decision, may appeal to the Board of Management. This appeal must be addressed, in writing, to the Chairperson of the Board, stating the grounds for the appeal, and lodged within ten days of date of the letter refusing to enrol. Parents if unhappy with the result of this appeal, may appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act (1998) [as amended by Section 4 of the Education (Miscellaneous Provision) Act (2007), on the official form provided by the Department of Education and Skills. This appeal must be lodged within 42 days of date of the letter refusing to enrol.

The board will make parents aware of their right to appeal the Board decision in the letter refusing to enrol a pupil. If a parent is dissatisfied with the Board response on appeal they will be provided with a copy of the DES Appeals Application Form and will be asked to supply a completed copy to the school in addition to forwarding a copy to the DES. The parents will be responsible for forwarding the Appeals...
3.6 Enrolment of pupils with Special Needs
In relation to applications for the enrolment of children with special needs the Board of Management will request a copy of any relevant medical or psychological reports as are available. If such a report is not available it is open to the Board to request that the child be assessed prior to enrolment. The purpose of the assessment is to establish the educational needs of the child relevant to his/her disability/special needs and to profile the support services required.

Following receipt of such a report the Board of Management shall assess how St. Joseph’s N.S. can meet the needs specified in the report. If further resources are required the Board of Management will, prior to enrolment, request the Department of Education and Science to provide the required resources. These may include any combination of the following: - visiting teacher service, resource teacher for special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport or other services.

The school principal will meet the parents/guardians of the child to discuss the child’s needs and the suitability and capacity of St. Joseph’s N.S. to meet those needs. If necessary, a full case conference may be called which may include parents, principal, class teacher, learning support teacher, special class teacher/resource teacher, psychologist and medical personnel.

3.7 Induction Day for Junior Infants
Parents who have returned a completed Enrolment Form, and have been successful in securing a place in the school will be invited to attend an Induction Day, with their child/children in the month of May. Children who will be enrolled in Junior Infants the following September will be invited to participate in activities in the Junior Infant classroom while parents will be informed about school rules and policies by the school principal. A ‘School Information Booklet’ together will book lists and other relevant material, will be distributed to parents. There will be an opportunity for questions and answers relating to the school.

Attendance at the Induction Day is most important. Parents must confirm their attendance. A valid explanation for not attending must be provided to the school as failure to attend the Induction may result in a pupil not being enrolled in the school.

Children with Special Educational Needs may visit on an alternative day, arranged in advance with the principal and class teacher

3.8 Code of Behaviour
Children enrolled in St. Joseph’s N.S. are required to co-operate with the school’s Code of Behaviour and other policies on curriculum, organisation and management. Parents/guardians must sign the school Code of Behaviour and are responsible for ensuring that their children co-operate with these policies in an age appropriate way.

3.9 Uniform
Boys
Girls
Wine jumper
Grey slacks
White shirt/ polo shirt
Black shoes
P.E. Grey tracksuit bottoms and runners

Wine jumper/ cardigan
grey pinafore/ skirt/ slacks
White shirt/ polo shirt
Black shoes/ boots
Grey tracksuit bottoms and runners
(Velcro runners are recommended until children are able to fasten laces)

4. Communication
This policy will be included in the ‘School Information Booklet’ given to all parents/guardians who are successful in enrolling their child/children in this school. Copies of this policy will be issued to all parents of pupils already enrolled in the school in the weekly communication letter, once it has been approved and ratified by the Board of Management.

5. Review
This policy will be reviewed by the Board of management on an annual basis and changed where deemed necessary.

6. Approval and Ratification
This policy was last approved and ratified by the Board of management of St. Joseph’s N.S. in January 2013 and has immediate effect.

7. References/ Resources
- Guidelines from CPSMA/Church of Ireland Board of Education and INTO
- Circulars 07/07, 38/2007, 02/05 and 22/2002 – available on Dept of Education & Science website, [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)
- Management Board Member’s Handbook, CPSMA, Appendix 25 Special Education
- Education Act, 1998, Sections 9, 15 (2), 29, 30
- Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, Sections 19, 20, 23, 24, 28
- Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act, 2004
- Data Protection Act, 1988, 2003
- Equal Status Act 2000, Section 7
- Questions and Answers on The Education Act 1998 and The Education Welfare Act 2000, INTO.
- An introduction to The Equal Status Act 2000. The Equality Authority – Educational Establishments

Websites

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The Complaints Procedure

How to respond

All incidents of bullying will be treated seriously. A calm, fair, non-aggressive manner should be maintained by the teacher to deal effectively with the situation. In this way children gain confidence to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying.

It is best to deal with all incidents outside the classroom situation to avoid public humiliation of either the victim/s or bully/ies. Witnesses to the incidents may provide useful information/evidence which may be helpful to clarify situations/incidents. In all circumstances the teacher must treat the pupils with sensitivity and due regard to the rights of all concerned.

Procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour (Children)

1. On the first reporting/warning, the teacher will listen to both sides separately, accept what is said and try to settle the problem. If a group is involved, each member should be spoken to separately first and then as a group.
2. The pupil/s will report back to the teacher if the bullying persists.
3. The teacher will keep a written record of incidents reported and observed (See Incident Report Form).
4. Where the bullying is persistent, the Parents of both sides will be informed (A standard official letter will be used).
5. The Parents of the aggressor/s will be asked to meet with the Principal and the teacher to agree on a procedure (e.g. the parent/guardian may be requested to supervise/withdraw their child from the playground during breaks).
6. If the situation remains unresolved at school level, it is then referred to the Board of Management for their consideration.
7. If it is not resolved at Board of Management level, it should be referred to the local Gardai.

St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village

Mobile Phones Policy

Preamble/Introduction

After much discussion with staff and parents and study of other primary school situations faced with similar dilemma re use/having mobile phones the school of St. Joseph’s has decided that no student may have/use a mobile phone whilst in school or on any school related activities e.g. tour or visits to theatre/places of interest/nature walks etc.

Purpose: - The purpose of such policy is to secure the safety of:
   (a) the students (b) the staff.
Arrangements: - On such outings/tours etc, the accompanying staff will be in possession of:-
(a) a mobile phone
(b) a list of all children with contact numbers of all.

Note: - It is to be noted that a condition of going on tour is:-
(a) to have parental permission to go on such tour
(b) to obey and accept conditions of tour
(c) to obey and respect the accompanying staff whilst on tour.

We hope the foregoing will ensure the well being of all staff and children in our care at all times.

Thank you for your Co-operation.

Anti-Bullying Policy (2011)
St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village, Roll No: 01125B

1. Introduction
St. Joseph’s N.S. strives to provide a stable, secure, learning environment for all our pupils and a stable, secure working environment for all our staff.

We encourage respect for self, others, property and the environment. Bullying is not tolerated in any form and is immediately reported.

This policy was developed as a result of a review of the existing policy. All staff, pupils, parents and members of the board of management were involved in the process. This anti-bullying policy operates in conjunction with the Code of Behaviour, which is used to address isolated instances of anti-social behaviour.

The school has a central role in the children’s’ social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. In school, we work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. The individuality of each child needs to be accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of every child to education in a disruption free environment.

The school acknowledges that there are three parties involved in bullying – those who bully, those who are bullied and those who witness the bullying. Staff and teachers bear this in mind when dealing with bullying incidences and try to support and work with all parties involved.

2. School Ethos
St. Joseph’s N.S. strives to cater for the full and harmonious development of every child in an atmosphere of mutual and self-respect. St. Josephs N.S. encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying.
In St. Joseph’s N.S. we believe that each child in our school has the right: -

- To play safely and to feel safe at all times
- To be safe from ridicule
- To develop friendships.

We believe that each adult in our school has the right:-

- To be treated with professional respect and dignity.

A commitment to a positive proactive approach against bullying has been facilitated by the development and implementation of a set of Golden Rules and simple Class Rules and the implementation of the Stay Safe Programme by the teachers in this school. Children are encouraged to help shy children and/or newcomers to feel welcome and accepted.

3. Rationale
The existing policy was reviewed in order to: -

- Address the concerns of a minority of parents
- To re-emphasise within the school community, of the unacceptability of bullying.
- To contribute to the creation of a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying.
- To devise measures to prevent bullying and to deal with incidents of bullying if they occur.

4. Aims
This policy aims: -

- To foster a school ethos of mutual and self-respect
- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour
- To outline, promote and raise awareness of preventative approaches that can be used in response to reported incidences of bullying
- To encourage children to take responsibility for their own behaviour and safety.
- To ensure that pupils, parents/guardians, teachers, school management and ancillary school staff all know that bullying is unacceptable behaviour.
- To ensure comprehensive supervision so that all areas of the school environment are kept under observation to eliminate bullying.
- To create a school atmosphere which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying.
- To make sure that incidents of bullying behaviour are noted and reported.
- To develop procedures for noting, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To implement a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
- To work with appropriate agencies in countering all forms of bullying and anti-bullying behaviour.
- To ensure that teachers and parents/guardians work in partnership to help children develop healthy self-confidence and assurance. In this way
children are less likely to act in a bullying manner or to become victims of bullying.

5. Policy
This policy is addressed under the following headings

1. Definition of bullying
2. Indications of bullying
3. Strategies for prevention of bullying
4. Procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying
5. Dealing with incidents of bullying
6. Reference to other policies

5.1 Definition of Bullying
For the purposes of this policy the following definition of bullying is understood:

_Bullying is a wilful, persistent, unwanted, often subtle physical and or mental hurt by an individual or group directed against another individual or group, making them unhappy, lonely or fearful._

This can apply to the treatment of children by staff, to the treatment of staff by children, to the way children treat other children and to the way parents and teachers treat each other.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while they can indicate a problem that needs to be sorted, do not constitute bullying. However, where there is an imbalance and abuse of power and the behaviour is systematic and ongoing, it is bullying.

Types of bullying
1. _Gesture_ Children and adults can be hurt by threatening or mocking signs and by different or unfavourable treatment.
2. _Physical_ Children and adults can be hurt by someone using their body to hurt them or their property.
3. _Extortion_ Children and adults can be hurt by being forced to do things that they don’t want to do.
4. _Exclusion_ Children and adults can be hurt by being ignored and not being involved in activities and by being isolated.
5. _Verbal_ Children and adults can be hurt by having nasty things said, written or drawn about them or their families.

Bullying may also occur via phone calls, text messages or through the use of social networking sites such as ‘facebook’. For the protection of all pupils and staff in the school pupils are not allowed bring mobile phones to school. Please re-read the school policy on mobile phones.

5.2 Indications of Bullying
All staff and parents should be vigilant for signs of bullying. The following may indicate that a pupil is experiencing bullying:

- Anxiety about attending school
St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village  
Roll No 01125B  
Information Booklet

- Deterioration in educational performance
- Pattern of physical illness including imaginary illness
- Unexplained changes in mood or behaviour
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress
- Problems or disruption to sleep pattern
- Changes in eating habits
- Possessions missing
- Increased requests for money
- Unexplained bruising
- Reluctance to say what is troubling him/her

These are all signs of a variety of problems as well as bullying.

5.3 Strategies for Prevention of Bullying
There is a strong sense of community and cooperation between Board of Management, staff, pupils and parents, and each has a clear role in the prevention of bullying: -

- Through a programme of positive action, the school promotes an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance.
- The school will hold a ‘Friendship Week’ at regular intervals during the school year to highlight the importance of friendship.
- The SPHE curriculum, including the Walk Tall and Stay Safe programmes, is used throughout the school to support the anti bullying policy. Circle time and role play will be employed.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences/achievements, by acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- Pupils are helped to develop empathy by discussing feelings and by trying to put themselves in the place of others.
- Teachers respond sensitively to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying.
- The school’s anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with the pupil, both in class and at assembly.
- The staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- All members of staff have a duty to report incidents of bullying.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated.
- Members of the BOM are familiar with the school’s policy on bullying and actively promote it on a repeated basis among staff, parents and pupils.
- Parents contribute to and support the school’s policy on bullying by encouraging positive behaviour both at home and at school, by being vigilant for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying others, by communicating concerns to the school.

School awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour
Awareness of bullying is essential to the elimination of bullying.
By employing the following strategies the school will emphasise that bullying is unacceptable:

- Facilitate a common understanding among staff, pupils and parents on what bullying behaviour is.
- Use assemblies to remind pupils of the school’s anti bullying policy
- Use of both the formal and informal curriculum to emphasise that bullying is unacceptable... visual arts activities, posters, drama, role play, SPHE (including the Walk Tall and Stay Safe Programmes), cooperative games...
- Special events such as a Friendship Week or Friendship Day

Adequate supervision practices as a strategy for prevention of bullying behaviour e.g.

- All sections of the playground are supervised at break times. All doors to the yard are locked once all children are outside. A maximum of three children are allowed back into the school at break time to go to the toilet (at any one time). This is carefully monitored by the supervising adult.
- Corridors, cloakrooms, toilets are monitored.
- On wet days children remain in their classrooms, seated. Two/ three monitors (sixth class pupils) will remain in the classroom for the duration of the break. The classroom door will remain open and the teachers on duty will circulate between classrooms.

5.4 Procedures for noting and reporting incidents:

a. If parents have concerns about their child being bullied they should inform the class teacher
b. Reports of bullying either from parents, children or staff members will be recorded.
c. It will be made clear that children reporting incidents of bullying are acting responsibly.
d. A record will be kept of how the matter was handled and the outcome. When the class moves on, the succeeding teacher will be informed of any problems that existed

Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the appropriate class teacher.

5.5 Dealing with Bullying

In St. Joseph’s N.S., there will be a staged approach to dealing with bullying (See Figure 1.)

Stage one: Class Teacher

The class teacher will investigate the incidents of bullying in an unbiased efficient manner. All reports of bullying, no matter how trivial will be recorded, investigated and dealt with by teachers. In that way pupils will gain confidence in ‘telling’. This confidence factor is of vital importance.

The procedure for investigating incidents of bullying is as follows:-
The teacher investigating the allegation of bullying will find out the “what, where, when, who and why” of the incident in a calm, unemotional problem solving way, within one week of notification.

The teacher will keep a factual, written record of their discussions with those involved on the appropriate school record form. (Under fair procedures, the parents/guardians of the pupils involved may have access to these written accounts (names deleted)).

The teacher will sign and date the school form.

The teacher will investigate matters outside the classroom situation and may do so at break time.

The teacher will speak separately to the children involved.

Members of a gang will be met separately and as a group.

Parents will be informed when it has been determined that bullying has occurred, within two weeks of the recording of the incident.

Once the bullying of the child has ceased, the teacher will check with the child on a regular basis that no further difficulties have arisen.

The teacher will respect the need to support the esteem of each party involved in an incident.

When a teacher becomes aware that a child is regularly involved in incidents he/ she will start a record of such incidents.

If any allegation turns out to be false it will be recorded as such. The name of the pupil wrongly accused of bullying will be removed from the record.

If the matter is not resolved at this stage it will move to stage two.

If the teacher decides the incident is ‘of a very serious nature’ he/ she may decide to proceed to stage two directly. This decision will be signed off and dated by the teacher on the school form.

**Stage Two: The School Principal**

The Principal will arrange to meet with the parents of the child who is seen to be bullying and separately with the parents of the victim of bullying, within one week of the incident being brought to her attention. The children themselves may be required to attend part or all of these meetings.

The child who is bullying will be placed on report. This means that the child’s behaviour in all areas is monitored during the day. The child has three meetings with his/her teacher and together they decide on what is to be written for that part of the day. All positive behaviour, progress on work etc will be noted. At the end of the day, the teacher writes his/ her own comment. The purpose of this report is to focus, as much as possible, on the positive qualities and efforts of the child, and to motivate the child to move away from negative behaviour. The child should be able to see that parents and school are working together in his/ her interest, so the co-operation of the parents is essential. Initially a review of the reports will be carried out on a weekly basis, in a meeting with the Principal, teacher, parents and child. If progress is being made, longer intervals between meetings may be decided upon.

The child who is the victim of bullying will also meet with the Principal and his/ her parents. The aim of such a meeting(s) will be to address emotional needs and devise
strategies for the child to deal with the bullying. This may involve reinforcing the programme being covered in class, or other strategies.

If matters are not resolved at stage two they will move to stage three after one month. The matter will then be discussed at the next Board of Management meeting following a one month period at stage two.

Stage 3: Board of Management
It is the duty of the B.O.M. to provide a safe environment for all the children. Should the above interventions fail and the bullying continue, a programme of appropriate sanctions may be implemented by the Principal in consultation with the parents and the Board of Management. Sanctions implemented will aim to encourage positive behaviour and support the esteem of the child. These sanctions may include a period of suspension during which there will be ongoing consultation with the parents to decide on appropriate action(s) to be taken in the best interests of the child. Suspension for any period of time will be reported in writing by the Principal to the Chair of the Board of Management.

- If there is no improvement in the pupil’s behaviour and if bullying should continue the board may decide to suspend the pupil, in line with the N.E.W.B. Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools.

- On return to school after suspension and there is still no improvement in the pupil’s behaviour then the Board may have to consider expulsion of the pupil, in line with N.E.W.B. guidelines

For cases of adult bullying, the procedures as outlined in Appendix A of this document will be followed. As this applies to staff only it will only be circulated to school staff.

Figure 1. Dealing with Pupils Bullying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1. Class Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the matter resolved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.6 Reference to other policies
The school Anti-Bullying policy does not stand alone but works in conjunction with other school policies including:
- SPHE Plan
- Code of Behaviour
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Record Keeping
- Health & Safety
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- Internet Acceptable Use Policy

6. Success Criteria
The success of this policy will be assessed through positive feedback from teachers, parents, pupils and visitors to the school. General observations of children in classrooms, on corridors, on the yard and at play will also provide feedback. Regular assessments of level and types of bullying noted, reported, investigated and dealt with will also be insightful.

7. Roles and Responsibilities
The B.O.M has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy. On a day to day level the school principal will have responsibility with the support and co-operation of every staff member. Each class teacher will be responsible for noting, recording and investigating all allegations of bullying relating to pupils in his/ her class. Parents are responsible for reporting any concerns they have regarding their children to the class teacher. Pupils are encouraged to talk about incidents of bullying.
and are expected to be accountable for their own behaviour and to follow school rules as outlined in the school Code of Behaviour and Mobile Phone Policy

8. Implementation
This policy will be implemented immediately after ratification by the B.O.M.

9. Review
This policy will be reviewed at two year intervals or when necessary, if sooner than two years. This policy will be amended as necessary.

10. Ratification and Communication
This policy was ratified by the B.O.M on Thursday 10th November 2011. The B.O.M has overall responsibility for ensuring that the code of behaviour and anti-bullying policy are fully implemented and reviewed when necessary. Once ratified, this policy will be issued to all parents in the weekly communications newsletter. It will be included in all future School Information Booklets. It will be available on the school website in due course. Every member of staff will have a copy of this policy.

Reference Section

- Department of Education and Science Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post Primary Schools (1993) available on DES website www.irlgov.ie/educ
- Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes
- Education Act, 1998 Section 15 (2(d))
- Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 Section 23(1 -5), 24 (1-5)

Websites
- www.into.ie
- www.education.ie
- www.antibullyingweek.org

Notes
W.S.E: Whole School Inspection
S.P.H.E: Social Personal and Health Education
B.O.M: Board of Management
I.N.T.O: Irish National teachers Organisation
N.E.W.B: National Educational Welfare Board

Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village, Roll No: 01125B
Homework Policy

1. Introduction
This policy was formulated in October 2010 following a review of our sample homework policy and a detailed parent and teacher survey on the topic of homework, including content and time allocated to homework.

2. Rational
Following concerns raised by parents and teachers in June 2010 it was decided to review our practices in relation to homework in September 2010. It was also seen as an opportunity to promote positive home/school communication and to maximise the benefit of homework to the child’s learning. The existing practices in the school were due for review.

3. Relationship to the Catholic Ethos
St. Joseph’s N.S. seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential. Homework encourages pupils to work independently and take responsibility for their assignments.

4. Aims
1. To develop skills and self discipline that will be of benefit to children in order to enhance learning.
2. To foster independence, self reliance, self esteem, co-operation and responsibility for lifelong learning.
3. To reinforce work done in class – it allows for revision and practice.
4. To develop study skills and to assist in establishing an appropriate routine for children in doing their homework.
5. To promote consistency and a similar approach to homework across all classes.
6. To encourage children to become independent learners and to revise, reinforce, finish work that has begun in school.
7. To strengthen links and communication between home and school and encourage parental involvement in their child’s education.

5. Guidelines/ Content
5.1 Assigning Homework:
Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays but not on Fridays, with certain exceptions:
- If homework has been neglected during the week.
- In senior classes some project work is undertaken at weekends.

All classes from Junior Infants to Sixth class will receive homework. In general, homework is meant to be achievable by a child working on their own to the best of their ability. It is normally prepared by the teacher in class. It can be used to practice what is done in school or can be designed to challenge children’s ability and provide opportunities for creativity. Homework assigned will be differentiated to suit the ability of all children, taking into account the special educational needs of some children and the fact that homework may be given by another teacher (Learning Support/ Resource) Occasionally, at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given a ‘Homework Pass’, a night off homework, as a treat or as acknowledgement of some special occasion.
There will be a balance between oral, reading and written work and different learning styles will be kept in mind when assigning homework. All assigned homework will be properly explained to children in advance and will be given either at the end of a
lesson or at the end of the day. Family circumstances will be taken into consideration when pupils are assigned certain tasks or activities as part of their homework.

Each teacher will use their own discretion with respect to weather conditions or other situations that could arise during the school year.

5.2 Homework Content
Usually, homework contains a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and written tasks. This balance is not always possible and can vary considerably from day to day. However, it should be noted that homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work.

Homework will regularly contain reading, spellings, tables, written work, pieces to be ‘learned by heart’, drawing/colouring, collecting information/items and finishing work started in class.

Children often feel that reading and ‘learning by heart’ is not real homework. Parents can play an important role in listening to reading and items to be learned, ensuring this work is done well.

5.3 Responsibilities of the parties involved in homework

5.3.1 Pupils should:
- Have a homework journal
- All pupils from 1st class to 6th class must enter their homework accurately into their homework journals.
- Ensure they take home relevant books and copies.
- Complete homework assignments to the best of their ability.
- Present written work neatly.
- If pupils encounter a difficulty they must attempt the homework and then communicate their problem to their parent/guardian, who will in turn write a note to the teacher in the homework journal.

5.3.2 Parents/Guardians should:
- Supply their child/children with a homework journal.
- Encourage a positive attitude towards homework in all subjects from an early age.
- Encourage children to work independently as far as possible and resist over-helping.
- Encourage children to organise themselves for homework. Have all books and materials to hand. The pupil should have their Homework Journal open to tick off work as it is completed.
- Agree a suitable time for doing homework, taking into account age, the need for playtime, relaxation and family time.
- Provide a quiet place, suitable work surface, free from distractions, interruptions and T.V.
- Encourage good presentation and neatness within a reasonable time.
- Sign the homework diary checking that all homework is complete.
- Check that the child has all necessary books, homework journal, copies, pencils, mathematical equipment, dictionary, P.E. clothes, if needed for the next school day.
• Communicate difficulties to the teacher by writing a note to the teacher in the homework journal, after encouraging the child to attempt the homework.
• Have extra items at hand if needed during homework time such as pencils, erasers, rulers, tables book, dictionary etc.
• Parents / guardians are requested to inform the teacher if for any reason a child cannot complete their homework.

5.3.3 Teachers should:
• Set homework, review assignments and provide feedback to students.
• Monitor homework to help identify pupils with special difficulties
• Ideally, teachers check homework on a daily basis. However, with large class numbers, it is not always possible to check each child’s homework journal every day. As children get older and learn to work independently, some items of homework are checked less often, e.g. every second day or once a week. Some items of homework (and class work) may be checked by children themselves, under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children as it promotes responsibility and self esteem.
• The teacher may at times consult with pupils in relation to homework assigned.
• Assist children who have difficulties with an aspect of previous homework. (It will be essential for the teacher to see the child’s attempt to understand the child’s difficulty and to assist the child).
• When homework is not done regularly the teacher contacts parents with a view to resolving the situation, via a note in the homework journal or phone call. A record will be kept for discussion with parents and brought to the attention of the principal.
• If the situation continues, then the matter is brought to the attention of the Principal who will contact the parent(s) and arrange a meeting to discuss how the matter can be resolved.
• Untidy homework is not acceptable and a teacher may request that it be redone.

5.4 Time recommended
In relation to the time allocated for the completion of homework we can only offer guideline target times as it will depend greatly on each child’s ability, interest, physical wellbeing and home environment.

We recommend the following times for the various classes: -
Junior Infants: 15 minutes
Senior Infants: 20 minutes
1st class: 20 minutes
2nd class: 30 minutes
3rd class: 40 minutes
4th class: 40 minutes
5th class: 1 hour 15 minutes
6th class: 1 hour 30 minutes
6. **Success criteria**
Satisfactory homework exercises and assignments submitted by pupils and feedback from teachers, pupils and parents will help assess the success of this policy.

7. **Roles and responsibilities**
The responsibilities of the pupils, parents and teachers are outlined in section 5.3 above. The principal will be informed of any pupils not completing homework on a regular basis and meet with the child’s parents to discuss the matter.

8. **Implementation**
This policy will come into effect from January 2011.

9. **Review**
This policy will be reviewed at regular intervals such as every two years or as issues arise. The policy will be amended if the teachers, parents, pupils or B.O.M. consider it necessary.

10. **Ratification and communication**
This policy was presented to the B.O.M on November 11\(^{th}\) 2010 and it was ratified. It will be circulated to all parents of pupils in the school via the weekly communications pack in mid November 2010 and will then be included in the school Information Booklet. Copies will be available to all staff.

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**St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village, Roll No: 01125B**

**Child Protection Policy**

The Board of Management of St. Joseph’s N.S. recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school’s policies, practices and activities. Accordingly, in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education and Skills’ *‘Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools’* (2011) and *‘Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and welfare of Children’* (2011), the Board of Management of St. Joseph’s N.S, Leitrim Village, Roll No: 01125B has agreed the following child protection policy:

1. The Board of Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department’s *‘Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools’* as part of this overall child protection policy. This document can be accessed on the department of Education and Skills website [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie). Everyone reading this policy is strongly advised to read and become familiar with two documents named above.

2. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Richella Kelly (Principal)

3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Siobhán Finnegan McElgann (Deputy Principal)
4. In its policies, practices and activities, St. Joseph’s N.S. will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will:

- recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
- fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;
- adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.

5. This child protection policy is particularly relevant to the following policies, practices and activities:

- St. Joseph’s N.S. Code of Behaviour
- St. Joseph’s N.S. Anti-bullying Policy
- St. Joseph’s N.S. Attendance Strategy,
- Procedures for the Supervision of Pupils
- Sporting Activities
- School Outings
- Coaches and visitors to the school and classroom
- Accidents and Administration of Medicines

This list is not exhaustive and may be added to at any time.

The Board has ensured that the necessary policies, protocols or practices as appropriate are in place in respect of each of the above listed items.

6. This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parents’ Association and is readily accessible to parents on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

7. This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on Thursday 10th November 2011 and will be reviewed in November 2012.

References

‘Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools’ (2011)
Appendix A

Code of Best Practice in relation to Child Protection

This Code of Best Practice was devised by the Board of Management and staff of St. Joseph’s N.S. in order to protect the pupils and staff in St. Joseph’s N.S.

When children are under the supervision of the school, teachers are considered to be ‘in loco parentis’. To that end, staff are advised to act with prudence, having due regard for their responsibilities in the area of child protection.

This is particularly important when dealing with children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). It is crucial that practices take account of their individual needs, their protection and the protection of school staff involved with meeting those needs.

All staff members are aware of the following procedures and practices and work within them. It is also important to note that while every effort will be made to adhere to agreed best practice, in the event of an emergency or unforeseen circumstances, this may not be possible or practicable. In such instances, a full record of the incident will be made and reported to the principal, parents of children involved and Board of Management, as appropriate.

The staff and Board of Management of St. Joseph’s N.S. have identified the following as areas of specific concern in relation to child protection:

- Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers
- General Conduct
- Toileting/ Intimate care
- Toileting Accidents
- Changing for Games/ PE and swimming
- One-to-one teaching
- Visitors/ Guests
- Internet Safety
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs (S.E.N.)
- Supervision

Following discussion and consultation the staff and Board of Management have agreed that the following practices be adopted in relation to the above areas.

A. Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers

The recruitment of staff and volunteers is crucial to ensuring that those working with the children in the school are safe adults insofar as this can be determined. While correct procedures will always be followed in relation to advertising, interviewing and
the selection of staff, other practices will also be considered. All applicants will be asked to supply in writing information which includes:

- appropriate personal details
- a résumé of past and current work/volunteering experience, indicating relevant qualifications or skills acquired
- at least two written references – verification of references will be sought through making verbal contact with the referees.

Garda vetting, where necessary, will always be sought, and appointment is always subject to such vetting, but it is important to note that garda vetting is not in itself a complete safeguard, as many perpetrators of abuse are not known to the authorities.

Circular 63/2010 will be fully implemented in relation to the recruitment of all staff, regardless of the duration.

No volunteer or coach will have unsupervised access to children at any time. The class teacher will remain with his/her class. If this is not possible, for any reason, another teacher will stay with the class.

B. General Conduct

In all dealings with the children in St. Joseph’s N.S., a balance is struck between the rights of the child and the need for intervention. As a general rule any physical contact between school personnel and the child will be in response to the needs of the child and not the needs of the adult. While physical contact can be used to comfort, reassure or assist a child the following will be factors in assessing its appropriateness:

- it is acceptable to the child concerned
- it is open and not secretive
- it is appropriate to the age and developmental stage of the child

School personnel will not do things of a personal nature for a child which the child can do for him/herself. Inappropriate physical contact also includes rough physical play and horseplay (tickling, wrestling etc).

All children will be treated with equal respect – favouritism is not acceptable. School personnel will never engage in or allow:

- the use of inappropriate language or behaviours, e.g. sarcasm
- physical punishment of any kind
- sexually provocative games or sexually suggestive comments about or to a child
- the use of sexually explicit or pornographic material etc.

All media products: CDs, DVDs, computer software etc. – will be checked for its appropriateness with regard to age and suitability. Where a doubt exists with regard to the suitability of material, parents, principal and/or Board of Management will be consulted as necessary.

The Board of Management and all school personnel are familiar with the DES guidelines on child protection, have a copy of the school Child Protection Policy are adhered to them, in the event of concerns or disclosures around child protection. The Designated Liaison Person will be notified promptly of any concerns with regard to
the behaviour of a staff member or any allegations of abuse made by a child or an adult.

C. Toileting/ Intimate Care
a. Children with specific toileting/ intimate care needs
Normally a child who has specific toileting needs will have a Special Needs Assistant (SNA) assigned to him/ her. Before the child is enrolled in the school, or when the SNA is appointed, a meeting is held at which all school personnel involved with the child attend along with the child’s parents/ guardians. At this meeting the needs of the child will be addressed and agreement reached as to how the school can meet those needs. Those involved with the intimate care of the child agree practices which are acceptable to the staff, the child and the parents.

Normally the child will be encouraged to be as independent as possible and will be told what to do. The SNA will only assist if the child is experiencing difficulty or struggling. The SNA will leave the toilet door open while assisting the child.

b. Toileting ‘Accidents’
Toileting accidents are not uncommon, particularly at junior level, and it is therefore prudent that St. Joseph’s N.S. address how these situations will be dealt with in the school. Parents of pupils in Junior Infants are encouraged to put a change of clothes, including underwear, in the pupil’s school bag. If a child has an accident the pupil will be sent to the toilet with the change of clothes and told what to do. If a child has soiled him/ herself the parents will be telephoned and asked to come to the school to assist the child, or bring the child home. If the parents are not in a position to come to the school immediately the child will be given clean clothes and instructed what to do. If necessary the class teacher will call out instructions from the outside toilet door (i.e. standing in the corridor.) A note will be kept of such incidents and parents will be informed.

D. Changing for Games/ PE and Swimming
For P.E. and games during the school day parents are requested to ensure that children wear suitable clothing for games/PE (i.e. grey tracksuit bottoms) and runners. Velcro runners are recommended for children in junior classes.

When children from the school are going to swimming lessons parents are requested to ensure children wear their swimming costume to school, under their clothes. When at all possible the school will request to be allocated individual changing cubicles for the children. If the communal changing room must be used the teacher will check on pupils, leaving the door ajar, encouraging the pupils to dress quickly. At least two teachers will accompany children while attending swimming lessons. Parents may volunteer to assist. (Section A will be followed).

If a pupil needs assistance the following will be taken into consideration: -
• a balance is struck between the child’s right to privacy and adequate supervision with due regard to gender issues
• where children need assistance with changing agreement should be reached between parents and staff as to how best those needs can be met
clear boundaries are set down if volunteers are involved in assisting with changing, supervision etc.  
boundaries will vary depending on age/needs of child and on the physical constraints  
parents are notified if volunteers are assisting children  
staff should avoid assisting children with anything of a personal nature that the child can do for him/herself  
a report of any incident be made to the principal, parents and Board of Management, as appropriate.

F. One-to-one teaching
One to one teaching will occur when a child has been granted Resource Teaching hours. It may also arise where children are absent from a group attending Learning Support. Every effort will be made to ensure the protection of the children and the staff member. The child’s parents will be advised that the one-to-one teaching will take place and will be informed of the measures put in place to protect both the child and the teacher. These will include the following: -

- If there is no vision panel in the classroom door the door will be left open or ajar.
- The pupils will be seated opposite the teacher, with a distance of at least one table.
- All teaching sessions will be timetables and adhered to.
- Parents/ guardians will be asked to give their consent for this teaching to take place.

G. Visitor/ Guest Speakers
Visitors/ Guest speakers to the school will never be left alone with children. The school (BOM/ principal/ class teacher, as appropriate) has a responsibility to check out the credentials of the visitor/ guest speaker and to ensure that the content/ material in use is appropriate.

H. Internet Safety
The school Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) and ICT Policy will be fully implemented at all times. Children will never have unsupervised access to the internet. Children are not allowed bring mobile phones to school. (See the school policy on Mobile Phones). Children are also discouraged from bringing handheld game devices and MP3 players to school. While these technologies are not inherently bad, their usage during school hours will be under teacher supervision.

I. Pupils with Special educational Needs
Research has shown that children with special educational needs are more vulnerable and consequently more at risk of becoming victims of abuse for reasons such as:-

- Poor communication skills
- Limited sense of danger
- Need for intimate care
- Lack of mobility and greater reliance on adults
- Need for attention, friendship or affection
- Limited assertiveness and poorer self-confidence
- Limited understanding of sexuality or sexual behaviour
- Fear of not being believed
The B.O.M. and staff of St. Joseph’s N.S. will ensure that the personal safety and education needs of all children with special educational needs are adequately met with due regard to the specific vulnerabilities of individual children. The Stay Safe pack ‘Personal Safety Skills for Children with Learning Difficulties’ (1996) was designed to supplement the Stay Safe mainstream pack to assist teachers with this work.

Consideration will also be given to how class work can be supplemented by Learning Support and Resource teachers, e.g. oral language, vocabulary development and communication work around the Stay Safe programme.

Special Needs Assistants (SNA’s) play a vital role in the everyday care of children with special educational needs. It is, therefore, crucial that awareness and training around child protection is provided for all Special Needs Assistants and other staff who have contact with children.

**J. Supervision**
Pupils in St. Joseph’s N.S. will be adequately supervised at all times as outlined in the school Supervision Policy. (The Supervision Policy is currently being developed by the staff).

**Prevention**
The Stay Safe programme is the primary resource used in this school to provide education for children on abuse prevention. The programme is taught as part of the schools’ Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum under the strand unit Safety and Protection.

On enrolment of their child parents will be informed that the Stay Safe programme is in use in the school and a copy of the ‘Stay Safe: A Parent’s Guide’ provided.

The formal lessons of the programme will be taught in their entirety every second year in accordance with the SPHE two-year cycle plan. Staff will make every effort to ensure that the messages of the programme are reinforced whenever possible.

**Other Related Policies**
This Code of Best Practice is not a standalone policy. It will be followed in conjunction with all the other school policies including:
- SPHE curriculum – Strand Unit on ‘Safety and Protection’,
- The School Code of Behaviour
- Anti – Bullying Policy
- Health and Safety Statement and Policy
- ICT Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Supervision Policy

This list is not exhaustive.

**Review and Monitoring**
This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Board of Management on an annual basis and when the need arises. The board of management will ensure that adequate training/information and support is provided for all staff, parents and board of management members.

St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village

St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village

Relationships and Sexuality Education (R.S.E.) Policy

1. Mission Statement
Children are the messengers we send forward to a future we may not see.

2. Policy Committee Members
B.O.M.: Fr. Michael McGrath
         Michael Blake

Teachers: Patricia Duignan
          Richella Kelly

Parents: Christena McDermott
         Ursula Cullen

3. School Ethos
St. Joseph’s National School is a Catholic Primary school. The ethos of our school is to promote Catholic teaching and values. Implicit in this ethos is the intention to respect the right of all children and their parents regardless of their denomination.

   The teachers in the school respect the place of the parental role, which we regard as centre stage and we facilitate the development of skills for imparting and unfolding the gift of sexuality from God, within the Catholic context and with the invaluable assistance of school and parish.

4. Definition of Relationships and Sexuality Education
The following definition was taken from the Interim Guidelines Page 7: -

   “Relationships and Sexuality Education seeks to provide children with opportunities to acquire knowledge and understanding of relationships and human sexuality, through processes which will enable them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework”.

5. Safety and Protection
As the children progress through the SPHE Programme they will encounter a wide range of issues including relationships and sexuality. The programme ensures that these issues are not explored in isolation; rather the emphasis is on building a foundation of skills, values, attitudes and understanding relevant to all these issues, with specific information provided where necessary.

6. What the School Provides/ Content
All of the Relationship and Sexuality content will be taught in the context of our SPHE curriculum, particularly in the units **Taking care of the body** and **Growing and Changing**, as outlined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Junior and Senior Infants</th>
<th>Strand:</th>
<th>Strand Unit:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taking Care of My Body</td>
<td>Knowing about my Body</td>
<td>Name the parts of the male and female body, using appropriate anatomical terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing and Changing</td>
<td>New Life</td>
<td>become aware of new life and birth in the world. new growth in the springtime baby animals being born develop an awareness of human birth that the baby grows and is nurtured in the mother's womb until ready to be born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and Protection</td>
<td>Personal Safety</td>
<td>Identify situations and places that are safe. Those where personal safety might be at risk. feeling unsafe with people, being asked to keep a difficult secret (one that causes worry or makes him/her feel uncomfortable).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First and Second Class</th>
<th>Strand:</th>
<th>Strand Unit:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taking Care of my Body</td>
<td>Knowing about my body</td>
<td>Name parts of the male and female body, using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing and Changing</td>
<td>New Life</td>
<td>Begin to understand that reproduction, both life growth and death are all part of the life cycle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and Protection</td>
<td>Personal Safety</td>
<td>recognise and explore situations where children feel safe and those where safety might be at risk Being with people who make me feel unsafe Inappropriate or unsafe touches, being asked to keep a difficult secret</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Third and Fourth Class | Strand: | Strand Unit: |
Taking Care of my Body
Understand the physical changes taking place in both
the male and female body
Growing height and weight and increasing strength
Growing from a boy to a man, a girl to a woman

Growing and Changing
Birth and new life
Discuss the changes and sequence of development of
the human baby, from conception to birth
Identify the care needs to be taken while waiting for a
baby to be born
Develop an appreciation of the wonder of new born
baby

Safety and Protection
Personal Safety
Identify people, places and situations that may
threaten personal safety
Being touched inappropriately
Being asked to keep difficult secrets

Fifth and Sixth Class

Strand: Taking Care of my Body
Knowing about my body
Identify and discuss the physical and other changes
that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty
and understand that these changes take place at
different rates for everybody
Female: hormonal changes changing body shape,
development of breasts, appearance of pubic hair,
underarm hair
Male: breaking of the voice, beginning of sperm
production, onset of nocturnal emissions (wet
dreams), appearance of pubic and underarm hair,
facial hair
Understand the reproductive system of both the male
and female adults

Strand: Growing and Changing
Birth and new life
Understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth
within the context of a committed relationship such as
marriage
Discuss and explore the responsibilities involved in
being a parent and the emotional and physical
maturity required to be a parent

Strand: Safety and Protection
Personal Safety
Identify situations and places that may threaten
personal safety
Being asked to keep a difficult secret
Recognising inappropriate or unsafe touches
Being with people that make me feel unsafe

7. Sensitive Areas
The current teaching staff of the school views the following aspects of the S.P.H.E. Curriculum to be of a **sensitive** nature:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Junior/Senior Class</td>
<td>name parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First/Second Class</td>
<td>name parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third/Fourth Class</td>
<td>discuss the stage and sequence of the development of the human baby in the womb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P 41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth/Sixth Class</td>
<td>changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty. Reproductive system of male/female adults, understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship, such as marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P 56, 58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It will be left to the discretion of the principal and class teachers to modify the above content to meet the needs of pupils in multi-class situations or with special educational requirements.

**8. Aims and Objectives**

1. Be self confident and have a positive sense of self-esteem.
2. Develop a sense of personal responsibility and come to understand his/her sexuality and the process of growth, development and reproduction.
3. Create and maintain supportive relationships both now and in the future.
4. Develop an understanding of healthy living.
5. Develop a sense of safety and an ability to protect himself/ herself from danger and abuse.
6. Become aware of and discerning about the various influences on choices and decisions.
7. Develop some of the skills and abilities necessary for participating fully in groups and in society.
8. Promote the values of a just and caring society in an age appropriate manner and understanding the importance of seeking truth and peace.


1. Parents are in law and in fact the primary educators and the school has a role to play in supporting and complementing the work of the home.
2. A parent’s right to withdraw a pupil from the process will be honoured on the understanding that the parent is taking full responsibility for this aspect of education themselves. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school of this decision in writing.
3. Teacher’s right to opt out of teaching sensitive issues will be honoured.
4. If no member of staff is available to teach sensitive issues, it is left to the discretion of the principal and class teacher to arrange for the education to be made available. A
suitable guest speaker may be invited in to deliver the contents of the programme to 6th class. All information delivered will be within the S.P.H.E. Curriculum (programme as set down by the NCCA.)

5. All content objectives will be covered by the time the children leave 6th class.

6. Should a pupil require information that is not inline with the curriculum content and considered not to be age appropriate for the general body of pupils the school will acknowledge the child’s request but will direct the child to address this question at home.

7. An outline of the lessons will be made available to the parents before the commencement of the programme and the parents will be informed beforehand when these issues will be dealt with.

8. In relations to reporting child abuse the Child Protection Guidelines will be followed.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

RSE Resources will be kept up to date. Relevant information will be provided for all members of the school community.

St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village

Substance Use Policy

1. Mission Statement

Children are the messengers we send forward to a future we may not see.

2. Policy Committee Members

B.O.M.: Fr. Michael McGrath
         Mr. Michael Blake

Teacher: Patricia Duignan
         Richella Kelly

Parents: Christena McDermott
         Ursula Cullen

3. Ethos

This policy will reflect the overview catholic ethos of the school. It will be dedicated to the care of the whole school community, providing a safe and secure environment for learning while supporting those who are experiencing difficulties.

4. Definition of a Drug

In the following policy the term drug refers to any substance which when taken into the body changes the way the body works or how the person behaves or feels. This policy will refer in particular to medicines, tobacco, alcohol, solvents (solvent based markers, correction fluids and thinners, aerosols, nail varnish and removers) and illegal drugs. This list is not exhaustive.
5. **Rational**
This policy is necessary for the following reasons:-
1. The National Drugs Strategy, ‘Building on Experience’, is now Government policy and it requires schools to have a substance use policy in place.
2. The Education Act (1998) provides that schools should promote the social and personal development of students and provide health education to them.
3. The world in which we live presents young people with many challenges that affect their health and well being. Exposure to alcohol, tobacco, and drugs is part of this reality. 4. Schools need to reflect upon how they might provide for the needs of their student cohort and respond appropriately to what are sometimes sensitive and emotive issues.

6. **Scope**
This policy will apply to: -
1. All pupils, on the school premises, during school time and all school related activities.
2. All staff while in charge of and in view of pupils during school time and on all school related activities.
3. Parents/ Guardians while visiting the school premises or helping out with the supervision of pupils during school activities e.g. swimming.
4. All other visitors to the school premises.

7. **Aims and Objectives**
1. To promote positive health behaviour.
2. To promote the self esteem and self awareness of pupils
3. To raise the awareness among the whole school community re the dangers involved on substance abuse.
4. To help pupils develop healthy attitudes and skills towards the use of substances.
5. To promote a healthy environment.
6. To set out clear procedures for dealing with any incident of substance use.

8. **Content**
The content of this policy will be divided into three sections:-

1. Education concerning substance use
2. Management of alcohol, tobacco and drug related incidents
3. Provisions for training and staff development

8. 1. **Education**
Education about alcohol, tobacco and drugs will be provided in the context of the Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E). Education will be provided under the units Safety and Protection and Taking Care of My Body of the S.P.H.E. Curriculum, taught every two years using lessons taken from the Walk Tall Programme. This will include the following: -

**Junior and Senior Infants**
**Unit: Safety and Protection**
• Explore occasions when medicines, injections and pills are needed and the safety rules that apply when taking medicines.
• Realise that many substances used at home or in school are dangerous and that permission should be sought before exploring the content.

First and Second Class
Unit: Safety and Protection
• Same as the above

Third and Fourth Class
Unit: Safety and Protection
• Same as the above

Unit Taking care of my Body
• Be aware of the dangers in using tobacco or alcohol and explore reasons why people may choose to smoke or drink.
• Know and understand the meaning of the word ‘drug’ and when it is appropriate or inappropriate to take drugs.

Fifth and Sixth Class
Unit: Safety and protection
• Same as the above

Unit Taking care of my Body
• Same as third and fourth and
• Distinguish between legal and illegal substances, identify those that are most commonly used and examine and understand the effects they can have.

Resources
In recent years, many resources relevant to education on substance use have been developed. These include:
• Walk Tall Programme, a Social, Personal and Health Education Programme for the prevention of substance misuse.
• SPHE Primary School Curriculum and Teacher Guidelines.
• Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures for Primary Schools.
• Substance Misuse Prevention information booklet.
• Directory of Alcohol, Drugs and relevant services in the Republic of Ireland.

8. 2. Management of alcohol, tobacco and drug related incidents

A. Medicines
Pupils should not have or use a medicine in school unless a teacher has been informed of it in writing. As stated in the school administration of medicines policy, staff members do not administer medication. Any parent who feels that their child requires medicine in case of an emergency should contact the principal. Procedures outlined in the Administrations of Medicines Policy will be followed. All medicines on the premises will be stored safely to ensure the well being of the pupils.
Staff, parents, guardians and visitors to the school premises are asked to avoid taking medicine during school hours/ on the school premises, if possible. If a medicine must be taken on the school premises, s/he is asked to do so out of the view of the children and to keep such medication locked away and out of reach of the children.

B. Smoking
Smoking is prohibited on or in the school premises. Pupils, staff and all visitors to the school are prohibited from having tobacco based products, lighters or matches on or in the school premises.

C. Alcohol
Alcohol is prohibited on the school premises except for occasions in the absence of pupils and with the permission of the BOM. Pupils are prohibited from having alcohol based products, cans or bottles on/ in the school premises. Staff, parents and visiting personnel are prohibited from having or using alcohol on / in the school premises and during school related activities.

D. Solvents
Pupils are prohibited from having correction fluids or thinners, aerosols, solvent based markers, lighters, nail varnish or removers. If parents feel that their child needs to use a deodorant after P.E., sports or swimming they will be asked to provide their child with a stick or roll on deodorant or roll. Water based (xylene free) markers, when needed, will be provided by the school. Staff using solvent based products such as markers will take all reasonable precautions to ensure the well being of the pupils.

Storage of Solvents
All solvents on the premises will be stored safely. Markers will be placed in teachers’ table drawer before leaving the room. Varnish, paint, cleaners, toilet cleaners etc will be locked away.

E. Illegal Drugs
The use of, or possession of illegal drugs is prohibited at all times on/ in the school premises. Pupils and staff are prohibited from having or using illegal drugs on the school premises and during school related activities. Parents/ guardians and all visitors are prohibited from having or using illegal drugs on the school premises.

Procedures:
The school will respond to incidents involving alcohol, tobacco and drug use in a planned and considered way. (Confiscate, investigate, and communicate). In certain cases it may be necessary to seek legal advice. Due care will be important in deciding on the balance between pastoral and a disciplinary response.

1. Pupils found in possession of a prohibited substance
The substance will be confiscated. The incident will be investigated and communicated to the principal and the pupil’s parents. If the offence is repeated without regards for the school rules any further disciplinary action as required will be taken. This may include suspension.
2. Use or suspected use of prohibited substance
The substance will be confiscated. The incident will be investigated and communicated to the principal and the pupil’s parents. Medical assistance may be required and this will be treated as a medical emergency. Further disciplinary action will be taken if required.

3. Disclosure about a pupil and substance use
If the incident took place within the school premises, during school hours or during a school related activity, then the principal, B.O.M. and teaching staff of the school will be responsible for imposing disciplinary action on the pupil.

If the incident did not take place within school hours and during school related activities then the principal, B.O.M and teaching staff of the school will not be responsible for imposing disciplinary action on the pupil involved.

Any disclosure of illegal activity will be reported to the Gardaí immediately. Any disclosure of illegal activity may also be a cause of concern for the Health Board, under the Child Protection / Children First Guidelines.

4. Substances found on the premises e.g. cans/ cigarette butts etc
These items will be disposed of safely to ensure pupil well being. The Gardaí will be informed. An incident book, with photographs, will be kept, recording all such incidents. The Gardaí will also be informed if it is felt that the school premises is being used for substance use.

5. Any substance found which is suspected to be illegal, will be reported to the Gardaí. It will be removed, the spot where it was found marked, and the Gardaí will be asked to remove it from the school premises.

6. Persons on the premises under the influence will be asked to remove themselves from the premises. The Gardaí will be informed.

7. Care of Employee
The BOM, as employer, had a duty of care to the employee. Employees under the influence of a substance will not be allowed to come into contact with pupils and will be asked to leave the school grounds with the permission of the BOM. They will be facilitated home.

8. Any staff member in breech of this policy will be reminded of the policy, receiving a verbal warning, followed by a written warning if required. Any further disciplinary action as required will be taken by the BOM.

9. Parents under the Influence
If any staff member becomes aware of a parent, coming to collect a child, obviously under the influence of a substance, and incapable of caring for the child, then all reasonable steps will be taken to ensure the well being of the child. The Gardaí may be informed. If it is a repeated occurrence then it may also be a cause for concern for the Health Board, under the Child Protection/ Children First Guidelines.

8. 3. Training and staff development
There is a shared understanding among the staff of the contribution that SPHE can make to the prevention of substance misuse. Each staff member is aware of the contribution they can make to the prevention of substance misuse in their own class. Staff members are aware of, and sensitive to the signs and symptoms of substance misuse. Staff members are aware of the laws relating to alcohol, tobacco and drug use and how they apply to themselves, to the school and the students. Further training will be organised as the need arises.

All staff will get a copy of this policy.

Talks will be organised for parents, as the need arises.

9. Review
This policy will be reviewed every two years.

School Policy for the Division of Classes

1. Introductory Statement
The existing policy on the division of classes was due for review in the 2010 – 2011 school year and was reviewed by all staff members at a staff meeting on 19th May 2011. It was deemed necessary to review the existing policy due to concerns raised by teachers and parents that one class was split the two previous academic years and would have to be split again the following year.

2. Rationale
As there are 7 mainstream class teachers in the school and 8 classes it is essential at least one class will have to be divided. Every effort will be made to ensure the number of classes divided will be kept to a minimum. We will also try to ensure that no teacher will have to teach a very large class, or an unusual or awkward combination of classes. This policy will allow for a more even class size throughout the school.

It was felt that a policy or procedure was needed for the division of classes for the following reasons:-

- Having a documented procedure in place ensures that a fair and equal division between students is achieved should classes need to be split.
- Such a procedure (agreed by all staff) also ensures no exceptions or discrimination is possible when classes are being divided.
- The lack of such a documented policy was found to be causing difficulties as the method of criteria used to divide classes became difficult to administer.

3. Relationship to school ethos
As a Roman Catholic school that aims to promote the full and harmonious development of the child, it is felt that implementing a policy that was fair and indiscriminatory would only serve to complement the scene of equality that is promoted in the school.

4. Policy
As St. Joseph’s N.S. has seven mainstream class teachers and there are eight classes, Junior Infants to Sixth class, taught in the school it is necessary to divide certain classes between teachers as pupils move through the school. The fairest way of achieving this is to administer the split alphabetically.

Each May the projected enrolment for the following September will be examined and the number of pupils in each class will determine which classes shall be divided the following school year. Teachers will teach a maximum of two class groups.

The pupils will be listed alphabetically, by surname, and this list will be divided into equal sections when and where possible. There will be one exceptions to this grouping and that will be in the case of catering for the needs of pupils with special education needs and these pupils will be grouped together in order to maximise resources such as SNA support. These children will also be placed in the most suitable environments for their needs. Parents of these pupils will be advised of this division.

Pupils whose surnames fall in the first part of the alphabet will form Group 1. Pupils whose surnames fall in the latter part of the alphabet will form Group 2. It will be decided prior to the re-grouping of the class, which of the two teachers will take Group 1 and which will take Group 2. Group 1 will be placed with the class above one year and the class below the following year, should the need arise to divide the class a second year. Likewise with Group 2, pupils will be placed with the class below one year and above the following year, should the same class be divided two years. This rotation will ensure all children are treated equally.

To ensure that class numbers are balanced it may be necessary to split a class other than in two halves (e.g. 5, 10 or 10, 5). The number of children in each group will depend on the number of children in the class above and the class below the class being divided. We shall strive to ensure equality of class size.

If is felt that this is the optimum method to be employed when administering the re-grouping or division of pupils between two teachers.

5. Responsibility
The responsibility for the implementation of the above policy rests with the principal and the relevant teachers.

6. Review
This policy will be reviewed in 2013 by all staff members and Board of Management or before that if deemed necessary by any of the relevant parties. All aspects of the implementation will be monitored in relation to its success and should any difficulties arise, they will be addressed accordingly.

7. Ratification and Communication
This policy was presented to the Board of Management for discussion on 16th June 2011 and ratified on that date. This policy will come into effect from September 2011 with children in Group 2 placed with the class above them.
This policy will be issued to parents before the school closes for summer with the following note. This policy will be included in the next edition of the school Information Booklet.

Note
Every teacher teaches the curriculum in each subject area and not a particular textbook. The curriculum, with the exception of Maths, is divided into two year blocks. There are no perfect textbooks and teachers will use a variety of other books, resources, worksheets and ICT to deliver the curriculum in conjunction with the School Plan. Teachers’ choice of textbook will be influenced by their class/classes, the school plan, resources in the school, the book rental scheme in place in the school, the pupils abilities, teachers professional opinion of particular textbooks and the availability of new textbook samples from publishers.

St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village, Roll No: 01125B
Policy on Accidents and the Administration of Medicines
(This policy is currently under review)

Introductory Statement
This policy was initially formulated by the staff of St Joseph’s N.S. in September 2005. It was reviewed, amended and agreed upon in June 2007. In this policy, the procedures which are to be followed by all staff, in the case of minor and major accidents are outlined. This calls for a high level of co-operation between the teachers, parents, pupils and Board of Management. A draft policy will be presented to the Board of Management for ratification. After ratification a copy will be given to all parents who have children attending St. Joseph’s N.S. and this policy will be included in the enrolment pack for future enrolments.

Aims
1. To ensure that the child gets the best possible care and attention.
2. To set out unambiguous procedures to be followed.
3. To clarify the duty and responsibility of the teacher.
4. To empower the teachers to take positive action in the event of an accident.
5. To ensure the safety of all children.

Content of Policy
Administration of Medicines
- Any necessary medical information must be stated on enrolment form.
- No child should have in his/ her possession medication of any type that the teacher is unaware of.
- All medicines must be kept in a safe location, such as the drawer of the teachers table or the staffroom. This location is out of bounds to the children.
- If any child is on any type of medication which must be taken at regular intervals, such as inhalers or insulin injections, the parents of the child must inform the Board of Management of this in writing and give their written permission for the staff of the school to supervise the safe use of this medicine.
The parents of a child on medication must ensure that the school staff receive training on the correct administration of the medication, at the parents expense and out of school hours.

Please note: Members of staff will not administer medication but will supervise the safe administration of the medication.

Parents must ensure that the school has an adequate and in date, supply of any such medication.

Accidents

- Any necessary medical information must be stated on enrolment form.
- Parents/Guardians of each child must sign an accident form, to enable the teacher to take the child to a doctor in the event of parent/guardian being unavailable, or in the event of extreme emergency.
- Parents/Guardians of each child must also sign a form giving their consent for the teacher to apply first aid.
- It shall be school policy to apply a hypo allergic plaster to all small cuts and grazes.
- A member of staff is only responsible for the initial treatment of accidents that occur in school. Any follow-up treatment is the responsibility of the parent/guardian/medical profession.
- Only teachers have access to the first-aid kit. Children are not permitted to apply dressings/bandages/ointments.
- All accidents will be recorded in a first-aid notebook, kept in the first-aid kit.
- The first-aid kit will be checked against the list in our Safety Statement, at the end of each term and restocked accordingly.

Success Criteria

Good communication and co-operation between school and home is essential for the successful implementation of this policy.

Two members of staff have completed a course in First-Aid. The names of these staff members will be placed on the notice board in the staffroom. It is the intention that all staff members will undertake a First-Aid Course when it becomes available.

Role and Responsibility

It is the duty of the principal to ensure that the First-Aid kit is well stocked at all times. Each teacher on yard duty takes responsibility for attending to any accidents on that day and recording it.

Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis. If there are changes necessary we will do so in co-ordination with the Board of Management and Parent’s Association.

St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village, Roll No: 01125B

Emergency Closures Policy

1. Introduction
The school policy on emergency closures was drafted as a whole school exercise from September to November 2011. Parents, staff and Board of Management were involved in the formulation of this policy. This policy formally puts in writing existing practices regarding the closing of the school in the case of an emergency.

2. Rationale
School staff, Board of Management and parents of St. Joseph’s N.S. felt it necessary to develop this policy as the school had to be closed due to various emergencies in the past few years including the following:

- Inclement weather, such as heavy snowfalls and dangerous road conditions.
- Building programmes and alterations to the design of the school, which have necessitated unscheduled closures on Health and Safety grounds in recent years.

3. Relationship to School Ethos
St. Joseph’s N.S. strives to provide a child friendly, secure environment catering for all the needs of all students as far as is practicable and where respect is fostered in a culture which values diversity and difference. The B.O.M. of St. Joseph’s N.S., acknowledges and embraces a duty of care towards the pupils enrolled in the school and the school staff and will strive to provide both pupils and staff with a safe school.

4. Aims and Objectives
This policy aims:
- To provide for the safety and welfare of all pupils and staff while on the school premises
- To ensure a safe, child friendly school environment is available to all children
- To comply with Health and Safety legislation, DES circulars and Rules for National Schools

5. Policy Content
5.1 Definition of Emergency Closure
Emergency closures occur in the case of exceptional circumstances such as:

- Inclement weather
- Loss of services (Heating breakdown or no electricity)
- Damage to the school building
- Death of a pupil/ teacher in the school
- Critical Incident
- Death of a President/ Bishop
- Essential repairs to the school building
- Insufficient staff/ Strike
- School premises required for voting in a state or general election
- In the interest of public health
- Unforeseen circumstances

5.2 Procedures
Schools may close under Rule 60, 61, 62 of the Rules for National Schools and in accordance with circular 11/95. Most of these closures have been detailed above in 5.1
At present the Department of Education and Skills leaves the final decision regarding the need for and duration of exceptional closing of schools to each individual board of management, in line with Department Circulars and the Rules for National Schools.

The decision to close the school will never be taken lightly and the interests of all parties will be discussed including: pupils, staff and parents.

Every effort will be made to keep the school open. See point 6 below.

The following steps will be taken in the event of all emergency closure.

1. The principal will contact the Chairperson of the Board of Management. In the principal’s absence the Deputy Principal shall contact the Chairperson.
2. A decision will be made as to whether or not the school should be closed.
3. Parents, staff and bus drivers will be informed by text message that the school is closed.
4. The school will strive to give as much notice as possible however with the nature of emergencies this may not be possible.
5. When possible the reopening date of the school will be given to parents, staff and bus operators.

5.2.1 Inclement Weather (such as Heavy Snowfall, dangerous road conditions, severe flooding, storms etc)

Heavy Snowfall
In the event of a heavy snowfall, the Principal shall consult with the Chairperson of the BOM as soon as is feasible, and a decision will be made as to whether it is in the interests of all parties to close the school.

If it is decided to close the school, the principal (or Deputy Principal) will contact all parents, staff and bus operators servicing the school via text message, as soon as possible after the decision to close the school has been reached. On the first day of heavy snowfall this may be the morning of the school closure.

In the event of very short notice and children arriving to school, parents and bus operators will be contacted to collect children. Teachers will remain on the premises until all children have been collected.

If snowfall is prolonged over a number of days and road conditions become dangerous a decision will be made every evening taking into account local conditions and future weather forecasts. It may be necessary to close the school indefinitely. If this should arise, parents, staff and bus operators will be informed of re-opening dates via text message.

Storms/ severe flooding
The procedures in place for heavy snowfall are generally replicated in the event of storms/ severe flooding etc. Parents, staff and bus operators are contacted via text message and informed that the school will remain closed.

If the school has already opened and is in operation when snowfall/ storm/ severe flooding etc occur and remaining on the premises is a risk to all, the principal will contact the Chairperson of the Board of Management to discuss the matter with a
view to getting permission to close the school. Parents and bus operators will be contacted and informed that a decision has been made to close the school. Teachers will remain on the premises until all the children have been collected by parents, guardians or bus operators.

5.2.2 Disconnection or loss of Services
Where water or electricity services to the school are to be disconnected, a week’s notification is normally given to the school authorities. The principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management will discuss the matter and estimate the impact the lack of services will have on pupils and staff. If it is decided to close the school parents will be given as much advance warning as possible either by letter or text message.

5.2.3 Damage to school building
The procedures in place for heavy snowfall are generally replicated in the event of severe damage to the school building such as burst pipes, collapsed ceilings, fire damage, etc. Parents are contacted via text message and informed that the school will remain closed. If the school has already opened and is in operation when damage occurs and remaining on the premises is a risk to all teachers will remain on the premises until all the children have been collected by either parents/guardians.

5.2.4 Critical Incident/ Death
After consultation with the Chairperson of the Board of Management it may be decided to close the school for pupils in the event of a critical incident or death of a pupil, staff member or BOM member. Parents will be informed of such a closure either by letter or text message. The school may remain open to pupils, staff, BOM or Parents Association, if issues such as a church service, Guards of honour, readings or counseling are required. Please refer to the school policy on Critical Incidents.

5.2.5 Death of a President/ Bishop
The Minister of Education and Skills or the Catholic Church may issue a statement to schools to close following the death of a President or Bishop. Should this arise parents, staff members and bus operators will be informed of this decision by letter or text message.

5.2.6 Essential repairs to the school
Every effort will be made to ensure that maintenance works on the school building and grounds will be carried out after school hours, during weekends and school holidays. However this may not always be possible e.g. burst pipes, collapsed ceilings, fire damage. Should this arise parents will be contacted via text message and informed that the school will remain closed. If the school has already opened and is in operation when damage occurs and remaining on the premises is a risk to all teachers will remain on the premises until all the children have been collected by either parents/guardians or bus operators.

5.2.7 Insufficient Staff/ Strike in the school
In the event of an official INTO directive to teacher to go on strike parents will be given as much advance notice as possible either by letter or text message. In the event or this arising the school must remain closed on health and safety grounds.
In the event of insufficient staff attending school, the school must close on health and safety grounds. The principal may not be aware of this until school opening time. Should this arise the principal will contact the chairperson of the B.O.M to discuss this matter with a view to closing the school. All parents and bus operators will be contacted and all teachers present will remain in the school until all children have been collected by parents/guardian or bus operators.

5.2.8 School premises required for voting
Under Rule 61 of the Rules of National Schools the school must close if the school premises or any part of it is required for voting purposes. Should this arise parents will be given as much advance notice as possible either by letter or text message.

5.2.9 In the Interest of Public Health
Under Rule 62 of the Rules for National Schools, schools may close in the interest of public health if it is the recommendation of the H.S.E. Such occasions may arise if there was an outbreak of an infectious, highly contagious disease and remaining open would be a risk to other pupils and staff. Any outbreak of a contagious infectious disease must be reported to the HSE and advice would be given to the school on what measures to take. Should this arise the principal would discuss the matter with the chairperson of the board of management and the advice of the H.S.E. taken. Parents, staff and bus operators will be informed of the decision to close the school and on what grounds and informed by either letter or text message.

Please note:
- All half days, in-Service closures, voting in the school and staff strike days are notified to parents at least one week in advance.
- The most recent Department of Education and Skills Circular in relation to adverse weather will be consulted in relation to making up days lost due to exceptional closures.

6. Efforts to keep the school open
The decision to close the school is never taken lightly and every effort possible will be taken to try to keep the school open. The following measures will be undertaken with a view to keeping the school open:

In the event of inclement weather:
- The principal will contact the caretaker and inform him that the school will be open. This contact will take place as soon as a decision has been reached to keep the school open. This may be late evening or early morning.
- The principal and/or caretaker will check that systems within the school building are working (water supply, electricity and heat).
- The caretaker will be instructed to clear a pathway from the school gate to the main door of the school. Parent volunteers will help with this. This is to allow all pupils and staff enter and leave the building safely.
- All parent volunteers will be reminded that should they undertake in this matter they are setting precedence and will have to continue during the course of adverse weather.
The caretaker and volunteers will aim to clear a pathway outside the school (in the car park area) to allow pupils, parents and staff members to get to and from the school car park to the gate safely.

Every effort will be made to keep these pathways clear. However this may not be possible in the event of heavy or prolonged snowfall.

In the interest of health and safety all children will remain inside for the duration of the school day.

Children from senior classes will be allowed leave the school at 2 p.m. if their parent/guardian is collecting a pupil from the infant classrooms at 2 p.m.

Safe access and egress will be monitored on a daily basis as will the heating system and water supply.

Should matters deteriorate the school may have to be closed for any or a combination of the reasons given above.

Procedures as outlined above will be followed at all times.

Advice from the D.E.S, C.P.S.M.A, I.N.T.O. and I.P.P.N. will be followed.

In the event of temporary loss of services (Heat, water, electricity)

Water

- There will be a limited supply of water in the storage tank in the attic. The tank in the attic services most, but not all classrooms.
- Children will be encouraged to conserve water
- Children will be encouraged to only go to the toilet when essential.

Loss of heat/electricity

- Children will be allowed wear their coat in the classroom. While this will impact on many activities children should be warmer.
- Activities will take place in the classrooms to keep the children warm.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Emergency closures in the school place particular responsibilities on various personnel within the school chain of command. The BOM must comply with DES circulars, Rules for National Schools and Health and Safety Legislation. The chairperson of the BOM has the final decision regarding closing the school. The principal (or deputy principal) shall consult with the chairperson to discuss the matter. The principal (or deputy principal) shall inform parents, staff and bus operators of the decision to close by text message.

8. Ratification and Communication

This policy was presented to the BOM for discussion in December 2011. It was discussed again in January and ratified on 26th January 2012. A copy of this policy will be issued to all parents and school staff. This policy will be included in the School Information Booklet and uploaded on the school website in due course.

9. Implementation and Review

This policy will be reviewed at two year intervals or sooner if the need arises.

References

Circular 11/95 Time in School
Rules for National School (In particular Rules: 60, 61 and 62)
Policy on Transition to Second Level

1. **Introduction**
This is a whole school policy to assist children in their transition to second level education. This policy was formulated between September and December 2012 at various staff meetings during this time. All staff were involved in the process.

2. **Rationale**
This policy was prioritised by staff in order to assist all pupils to have a smooth transfer to second level. The current programme being taught also needed to be reviewed and as the school has grown substantially during the last number of years, all staff needed to the informed of the current policy and procedures.

3. **Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School**
Children are the messengers we send forward to a future we may not see. St. Joseph’s N.S. is a co-educational, catholic, primary school which strives to provide a well ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupil are identified and addressed. Our school cherishes all pupils equally and aids them in achieving their true potential in all situations and scenarios. Thus, careful preparation is needed to help them to adjust to their new setting, variety of subjects and selection of teaching staff in their new schools. The transition from primary to post-primary can be a stressful event for all students and their parents so the primary school and the staff concerned need to establish effective communication, consultation and consolidation between all parties involved.

4. **Aims**
To prepare the sixth class pupils for the move to second level education in a practical way to ease any worries and provide extra support for pupils with special needs who may find this move more difficult.

5. **Guidelines: Content of the Transition Programme**
The Transition programme is delivered over a six week period in weekly half hour slots as arranged with the sixth class teacher. It is currently delivered by the SET (Catherine Mc Gowan). The programme content is outlined below. The subject areas may vary depending on the needs of the children concerned.

### Week 1
**Meeting New Challenges**

(a) **Change and Live!**

(b) **Being Prepared**

The purpose of this lesson is to help children to realise that change is a necessary part of living and to get them to examine the principal physical, social and emotional changes that take place in a lifetime. It also identifies the transition to second level school as a big change which is about to take place in a person’s life and it affords the
children an opportunity to share possible strategies to assist management of this change.

**Week 2**
**Time Management**
(a) Know your School  
(b) Focus on Timetables

The purpose of this lesson is to provide an opportunity to study second-level schools as an organisation, identify school personnel and their roles and identify the school’s resources. Children will be given a copy of the school’s layout and a sample timetable. They will also be familiar with subject names, their abbreviations, where each subject is taught (classrooms) and how to follow an actual timetable from the secondary school.

**Week 3**
**Making Friends**
(a) Friendships  
(b) Peer Pressure

The purpose of this lesson is to help children to reflect on their friendships and realise that friends enhance the quality of life. It also allows the children an opportunity to discuss situations where there may be conflict between what the child wants to do and what his/her friends wish him/her to do. It also allows the children an opportunity to reflect on how they reacted in a “peer pressure” situation.

**Week 4**
**Rules and Choices**
(a) Reasoning behind Rules  
(b) Consequences of our Choices

The purpose of this lesson is to help children to explore the necessity for rules and apply reasoning behind a set of rules that children are already familiar with. Children will be given a copy of the secondary school rules to study and have to discuss with their parents. The children will explore the consequences of breaking rules.

**Week 5**
**Self-Esteem**
(a) Personal Profile  
(b) Pride in our School

The purpose of this lesson is to help children to create a positive self-image and appreciate their own uniqueness. It will also help children to focus on positive aspects of their school and foster a pride in their school.

**Week 6**
The final week will consist of the following activities – “Helping Hand” activity, “Fan of Support” activity and the “Moving On Up” board game. Children will be given actual accounts from current first years and these will be read and discussed.
The purpose of this lesson is to tie in all the previous lessons and empower the students and advise them about other avenues of support available to them. Their own fears and worries will also be raised and addressed in the other student’s accounts of their first few months in secondary school.

Depending on the needs of the cohort of students in sixth class each year, these sessions may need to be extended to an eight week block of time. This can be decided upon each January.

Throughout their time in St. Joseph’s NS, the following activities will be carried out with all pupils to gradually prepare them for any transitions:

- The students will be taught how to read school timetables and will be given samples.
- The classes will be given different due dates for certain pieces of homework in order to prepare them for a more complex timetable.
- Colour coding of copies and books will be carried out when necessary to develop better organisational skills among students.
- Key words for specific subjects may be taught through the oral language strand of the English curriculum.
- This Transition Programme could be taught / reinforced into the SPHE programme.
- Pupils will model and practice recording homework in a journal at the end of lessons as opposed to the end of each day.

Each sixth class pupil will be given a copy of the layout of the secondary school and will be strongly encouraged to attend the annual open evening in the school. These can be used to familiarise pupils with the school prior to entry. Key personnel in the post-primary school will be identified and their role will be explained to the pupils. Parents will also be encouraged and assisted to inform the post-primary school as soon as possible if their child has a SEN.

In order to celebrate their time in St. Joseph’s NS and set them off on the next step in their educational journey, a special “Graduation Ceremony” takes place annually specifically for sixth class pupils and their parents. The celebration includes spiritual, academic, musical and visual elements and is student led throughout. Pupils and their parents are then invited to some light refreshments as a gesture of support from the school and to acknowledge that they are now on the verge of young adulthood.

6. Success Criteria
A six week block of time will be chosen by the class teacher and the teacher delivering the programme that accommodates all parties concerned. It will be delivered in half hour slots once per week for six weeks. The student’s worries and concerns should be addressed and alleviated as the programme progresses.

The effectiveness and success of the policy will be measured in a number of ways:-

- Feedback from students and their parents
- Teacher designed tasks and tests
- Completion of questionnaires
- Level of participation by students in various lessons.
7. Roles and Responsibility
The policy will be supported by all staff, pupils and their parents. It will be further developed if necessary by the class teacher and the teacher delivering the programme. The planned content will be implemented by Catherine Mc Gowan (SET). This may change on a yearly basis.

The policy and planned programme of work will be monitored by the sixth class teacher, the teacher delivering the programme and the school principal. The planned programme of work will be presented to all those concerned in advance of its delivery to the students.

8. Implementation and Review

The policy will be implemented in full, once ratified, during the academic year 2012 – 2013. The transition programme will provisionally begin in March 2013 as the six week block is usually delivered prior to the student’s enrolment night in the secondary school.

All teaching staff will be involved in the review process every two years or earlier if the need arises. The staff member who delivers the Transition Programme to the sixth class pupils (currently Catherine Mc Gowan) will be responsible for amending this policy document. This policy will be reviewed in January 2015.

9. Ratification and Communication

This policy will be presented to the Board of Management in early 2013 for discussion with a view to ratification. Once ratified all teachers will have a copy of this policy and any parent who wished to view this copy will be facilitated.

This policy was ratified by the BOM on Thursday 17th January 2013.

St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village, Roll No: 01125B
Healthy Eating Policy

1. Introduction
This policy was devised following consultation with teachers, staff and parents of St. Joseph’s N.S, Leitrim Village, over numerous after school staff meetings between September and December 2011.

2. Rational
While healthy lunches were always encouraged in St. Joseph’s N.S. and the school participated in the Food Dudes programme in early 2011 teachers would have noticed a deterioration in some children’s lunches over the past number of years. This often resulted in disputes between children with some parents enforcing a healthy lunch and other parents taking a more flexible approach. The contents of children’s lunchboxes varied considerably and parents frequently sought advice from class teachers in relation to this matter.
As parents provide the lunches it was decided that parents should be consulted in the development of the policy. In addition to this, as primary educators of their children input was considered paramount in promoting healthy eating throughout the school and for life in general.

It was also recommended that a whole school approach should be taken to integrate healthy eating into school life.

After much discussion on current school practice, it was agreed that all teachers should take responsibility to encourage healthy lunches within their classroom. The staff also agreed that parents should have a major role in assisting in developing this policy.

3. Ethos
In St. Joseph’s N.S. we aim to provide a well ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed. The school adopts a holistic approach to the education and development of each child and to the enhancement of teaching and learning process. We believe that an effective Policy on Healthy Lunches will help to achieve this.

4. Aims and objectives
The aims and objectives of this Healthy Lunch Policy are:

- Encouraging the nutritional and overall well being of all children attending the school.
- To support children in developing a life-long healthy eating practice.
- To foster positive attitude towards healthy eating in partnership with parents.
- To make staff aware of any children with specific food allergies such as in the case of nut allergies and children with special dietary needs i.e.: diabetic children.
- To promote healthy eating habits by informing children about nutrition through a series of S. P.H.E lessons: food related theme of Taking Care of My Body: Food and nutrition; Making Choices. This will also be integrated into Science lessons.
- To help improve children’s concentration, learning and energy levels.
- To continue to support the Green School policy in reducing waste: - children are encouraged to bring in lunches which contain food items with less/no packaging i.e.: sweet bar wrappings.
- Children are encouraged to bring in the same drinks container instead of a different drink carton every school day.
- Children are encouraged to bring home fruit peelings for composting or to have pre-cut fruit pieces in reusable containers.
- To raise awareness of the benefits of eating at least 5 pieces of fruit and vegetables a day.
- Food rich in calcium such as milk and cheese is also recommended for healthy teeth and bones.
Senior Classes will become familiar with the food pyramid.
To raise awareness of tooth decay as a result of eating food with high sugar contents
The local dentist will visit each classroom in early 2012 to discuss dental hygiene coinciding with the implementation of healthy eating policy.

5. Content
This policy will be looked at under the following headings: -
1. Approach to developing the policy
2. Feedback from parents
3. Food Dudes Programme
4. Healthy Lunch Guidelines
5. Foods Recommended
6. Foods Discouraged
7. Foods never allowed
8. Conclusion
9. Treat Days/ Special occasions

5.1 Approach to the Development of St Joseph’s Healthy Eating Policy
- Children’s current eating habits were identified by teacher observation during break and lunch time.
- All parents were consulted to assist in devising policy. A meeting was held for interested parents.
- Parents thoughts and ideas regarding healthy eating were gathered via the above meeting
- Parent representatives designed a questionnaire informing all parents of recommended food choice and unsuitable food choices.
- This questionnaire was distributed to all parents via the weekly communications letter
- Parents’ feedback was taken into consideration when finalising this policy.

Before finalising the policy according to parents’ wishes, a staff meeting was held to discuss its implementation.

5.2 Parents’ Feedback
A questionnaire which was prepared by parent representatives was sent home with each child for his/ her parents’ perusal.
The feedback was analysed by the Healthy Eating coordinator (a copy of this questionnaire & parents’ responses have been kept on record in the principal’s office).
The following was noted and taken into consideration by all teachers:-
- All parents were in support of implementing the policy as proposed by the parents’ representatives.
- Parents were in agreement of discouraging certain food with high fat content and little nutritional value.
- Parents agreed with the list of foods that were not recommended.
Some parents agreed that yoghurt while rich in calcium should be permitted in senior classes only but not advisable in junior classes because of the mess it may create.

Parents suggested children bringing in milk, only if there was a means of keeping it cool in the classroom i.e. a refrigerator.

Parents strongly endorsed the ‘NO NUTS’ policy due to same children suffering from adverse reaction to food containing nuts or traces of nuts.

All parents agreed crisps and fizzy drinks should be discouraged.

Some parents put forward the suggestion that reusable drink containers should be encouraged in keeping with the Green school Ethos.

Certain fruit juices, such as those which are difficult to open for junior class children, should be discouraged.

Any processed food high in salt content should be discouraged.

Homemade buns and biscuits were considered acceptable but kept to a minimum such as treat day on Fridays.

Some juices or squashes should only be consumed if low is sugar content.

Children should be allowed one treat on a Friday or special occasions only.

Teachers should follow suit, in limiting sweets as rewards but may do so on a Friday or special occasions; sweets such as jellies which are low in sugar are considered acceptable.

Some parents recommend soup during the winter months but only in the most senior classes so as to avoid spillages or accidents.

A list of recommended foods and food to be discouraged as well as foods banned for the school has been drawn up based on the findings of the questionnaire. These lists are contained in sections 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7 of this policy.

5.3 Food Dude Programme
St. Joseph’s N.S participated in the Food Dude programme in early 2011 which has helped to encourage a more positive attitude towards eating more fruit and vegetables. Since undertaking this programme, many children have continued to bring their own fruit and vegetables to school. A certain number of children bring in a handful of raw vegetables or fruit pieces maintaining the ethos of fruit and vegetable consumption in the longer term.

5.4 Healthy Lunch Guidelines
A healthy lunch should contain:
- Food which are rich in protein, vitamins and calcium.
- Food which contain no colouring or additives.
- Foods which are low in sugar and fat.

5.5 Food Recommended
✓ All fruits: cut in small pieces in junior classes if possible; fruit salad, apple chunks, whole bananas, Kiwis (pre-cut in half or sliced), pineapple pieces, grapes. (Some children may have allergies to cherry tomatoes).
✓ Vegetables: cucumber slices, carrot sticks, peppers, sweet corn.
St. Joseph’s N.S., Leitrim Village
Roll No 01125B
Information Booklet

✓ Bread/ rolls / scones/ wraps/ preferably wholemeal.
✓ Home baked buns and scones (but only on a Friday.)
✓ Crackers, low in salt.
✓ Plain rice cakes.
✓ Oat cakes.
✓ Cheese (unprocessed).
✓ Sandwich fillings: turkey, ham, tuna, chicken, roast beef, low sugar jam, egg & onion or vegetarian such as sweet corn.
✓ Drinks: Water or milk, low sugar fruit juices, low sugar diluted fruit drinks. Re- usable drink containers/ bottles are encouraged to reduce waste in the school.

Certain foods required to maintain sugar levels in the case of any child suffering from diabetes, or other medical conditions will be considered acceptable upon parent’s request and class teacher’s discretion.

5.6 Foods Discouraged
The following food items are discouraged, and may only be brought to school, in a limited quantity, for special occasions and on treat days such as Fridays.
  o All chocolate products.
  o Pastries, biscuits, cookies, buns, cakes, doughnuts, biscuits and cookies.
  o Fruit winders.
  o Sausage rolls, wedges, breakfast rolls & all other hot food from garage deli.
  o Crisps.
  o Some cereal and fruit bars which are deemed high in sugar contents.
  o Natural or sugar free jellies

5.7 Foods never allowed
The following food items are never allowed in school: -
  o Chewing Gum
  o Nuts
  o Sandwich fillers such as peanut butter, hazelnut or chocolate spread.
  o Fizzy drinks

5.8 Conclusion
Lunch is an important meal for school-going children. It should provide one third of their recommended daily allowance of nutrients without being high in fat, sugar or salt. It should also provide dietary fibre (roughage).

With parental involvement, we hope as a staff to encourage a healthy lunch right from the start of junior infants to sixth class.

Children are encouraged to bring a lunch box to school to reduce the waste generated in the school. Children eat their lunches in the classroom before going to the yard. Children are not allowed to swap their lunch with other children. Any unfinished items may be brought to the yard and children are encouraged to put any waste in the bins. Unfinished lunches are taken home. This allows parents to see exactly what
lunch had been eaten and provides an opportunity for parents to discuss this matter with their child/children.

5.9 Treat Days/ Special Occasions
Treats will be allowed on Fridays and on specials occasions such as the day of the holidays or school celebration e.g. teacher retirement, school tours/trips etc. Parents will be given advance notice of upcoming special occasions.

6. Roles and Responsibilities
Every parent/guardian is responsible for providing his/her child/children with a healthy lunch, in line with this policy. Each class teacher will co-ordinate the progress of this policy and can encourage the children to bring healthy lunches but ultimately the responsibility for eating healthily lies with the Parent/Guardian of each child.

7. Implementation and Review
While many aspects of this policy are the current practice in the school, this policy will be implemented in full once it had been formally ratifies by the Board of Management of the school. As this policy was ratified on Thursday 26\(^{th}\) January 2012 we hope to commence full implementation on Monday February 6\(^{th}\) 2012.

The policy will be reviewed annually in consultation with the staff, parents, healthy eating coordinator and Board of Management of the school.

8. Ratification and Communication
This policy will be presented to the Board of Management of St. Joseph’s N.S., in early 2012 for discussion, with a view to ratification. Once ratified, every teacher will have a copy of this policy. Every parent of children enrolled in the school will be given a copy of this policy via the weekly communications letter. It will be included in the school Information Booklet for new pupils and will be uploaded onto the school website in due course.

Please keep this ‘Information Booklet’ safe as it contains important information about the school.

Please detach the last page ‘Healthy Lunch Reminders’.
Healthy Lunch Reminders

Healthy Lunch Guidelines
A healthy lunch should contain:
- Food which are rich in protein, vitamins and calcium.
- Food which contain no colouring or additives.
- Foods which are low in sugar and fat.

Food Recommended

✔ All fruits: cut in small pieces in junior classes if possible; fruit salad, apple chucks, whole bananas, Kiwis (pre-cut in half or sliced), pineapple pieces, grapes. (Some children may have allergies to cherry tomatoes).
✔ Vegetables: cucumber slices, carrot sticks, peppers, sweet corn.
✔ Bread/ rolls / scones/ wraps/ preferably wholemeal.
✔ Home baked buns and scones (but only on a Friday.)
✔ Crackers, low in salt.
✔ Plain rice cakes.
✔ Oat cakes.
✔ Cheese (unprocessed).
✔ Sandwich fillings: turkey, ham, tuna, chicken, roast beef, low sugar jam, egg & onion or vegetarian such as sweet corn.
✔ Drinks: Water or milk, low sugar fruit juices, low sugar diluted fruit drinks.
Re-usable drink containers/ bottles are encouraged to reduce waste in the school.

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- All chocolate products.
- Pastries, biscuits, cookies, buns, cakes, doughnuts, biscuits and cookies.
- Fruit winders.
- Sausage rolls, wedges, breakfast rolls & all other hot food from garage deli.
- Crisps.
- Some cereal and fruit bars which are deemed high in sugar contents.
- Natural or sugar free jellies

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The following food items are never allowed in school: -
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- Fizzy drinks
The Food Pyramid