

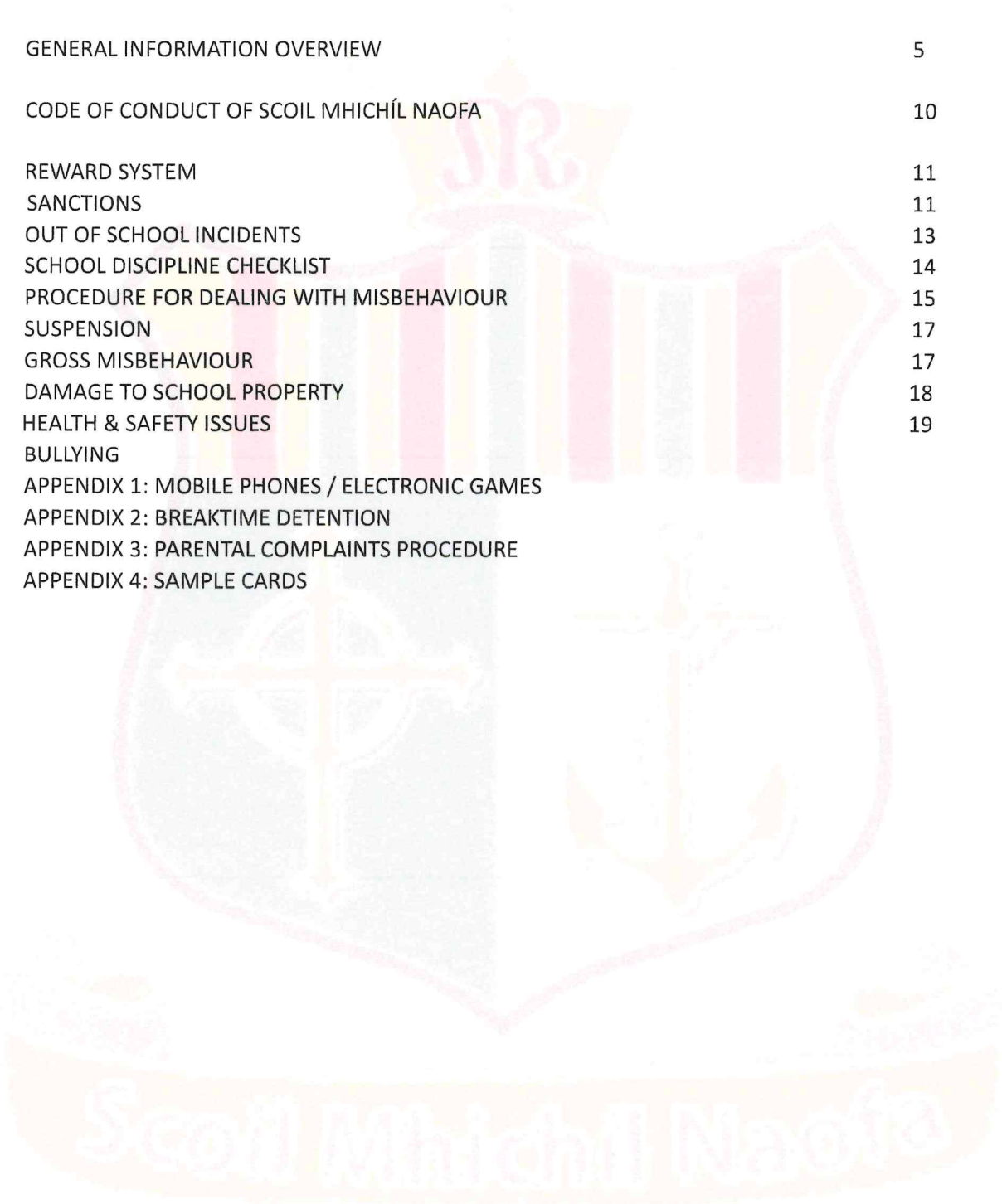


# **Scoil Mhichíl Naofa**

## **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR & EXCELLENCE**

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## MISSION STATEMENT

*We strive to make Scoil Mhichíl Naofa a place of education and development, where each child is cherished and encouraged to reach his/her full potential, in an atmosphere of respect for self, others, our heritage, our environment & God.*

*We promote self worth, personal responsibility, love of learning, academic competence and a belief that we can make the world a better place.*

*We work towards this in a spirit of co-operation and dialogue between all the education partners.*

## THE MERCY PHILOSOPHY

**Attain high educational standards.**

**Ensure that each pupil reaches his/her potential.**

**Make provision for children with special needs**

**Educate the young so as to make them self reliant and capable of valuing their own worth.**

**Show a passionate concern for the poor and the deprived.**

**Share a concern for justice in society.**

**Encourage awareness of preserving our environment.**

**Develop tolerant and caring members of society who grow into responsible adults, making a positive contribution to the community in which they live.**

## INTRODUCTION

This policy, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act (1998) and the Education Welfare Act (2000), details the procedures for dealing with discipline matters that may arise while your child is attending Scoil Mhichíl Naofa. It is further informed by 'Developing a Code of Behaviour – Guidelines for Schools (NEWB 2008). We trust that by detailing these procedures, it will assist all parties in relation to discipline matters. The Chairperson/Principal will be happy to clarify any matters arising from this policy, should it be required.

It should be understood in the context of our 'Mission Statement' and the 'Mercy Philosophy'[see above].The policy should be read, though not exclusively, in conjunction with the following Scoil Mhichíl Naofa policy documents:

1. Health & Safety Policy
2. Child Safeguarding Statement
3. Anti-Bullying Policy
4. Social, Personal & Health Education Policy
5. Special Education Policy
6. Acceptable Use Policy
7. Mobile Phone Use Policy.
8. Data Protection Policy

## GENERAL INFORMATION

School : Scoil Mhichíl Naofa

Address : Mount Hawkins, Athy, Co. Kildare R14 XD86

Telephone/Fax : (059) 8631794

E-Mail : officesmnathy@gmail.com<sup>1</sup>

Principal : Pauline O'Shea Doogue<sup>2</sup>

Chairperson Board of Management : Morag McGowan<sup>3</sup>

### Teaching Staff : <sup>4</sup>

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- 28 Mainstream Teachers
- 13 Teachers for Special Educational Needs.
- 5 ASD Teachers
- 1 Early Intervention
- 2 MGLD

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<sup>1</sup> Amended 29.04.26

<sup>2</sup> Amended 29.04.2026

<sup>3</sup> Amended 29.04.26

<sup>4</sup> Updated at Board of Management Meeting 26.11.2019

- 1 Support Teacher
- 1 HSCL

### **Non-Teaching Staff:**

- 18 Special Needs Assistants
- 1 Caretaker
- 2 Administrative Staff
- 2 Housekeepers
- 7 Cleaning Staff.

## **OVERVIEW**

Scoil Mhichíl Naofa is a 'co-educational vertical primary school' under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. The ethos of our school is a significant factor in establishing and maintaining high standards of behaviour and excellence. This involves a sense of 'community' within the school and a high level of co-operation between staff, students and parents/guardians, which is best achieved by fostering and building positive relationships.

A positive school ethos is based on the quality of these relationships, both the professional relationships between staff and the manner in which staff and students interact with each other. This positive ethos permeates all our activities, occasioning a strong sense of social cohesion within the school.

As a school community, we aim to create a 'happy and secure' environment for our students, where there is a sense of order and a reasonable approach to discipline. Through 'effective communication' between school and home, we hope to ensure that discipline is consistent and fair.

Misbehaviour is assessed, having regard to age, temperament, range of ability and/ or other relevant factors.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the partners in education i.e. the Board of Management, Principal, Staff, Pupils and the Parents/ Guardians of the pupils in Scoil Mhichíl Naofa.

### **Responsibilities of Board of Management**

- Provide a comfortable & safe environment for all.
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is relevant and applied consistently.
- Ratify the Code of Behaviour

### **Responsibilities of Principal:**

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

### **Responsibilities of Staff**

- Support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour & Excellence.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil and affirm good work.
- 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.

### **Standards of behaviour expected of pupils within the school**

- Do one's best in class
- Attend school regularly and not miss days without good reason
- Arrive on time with homework completed
- Do not leave the school building or activity during the day without permission
- Respect all school property
- Wear the school uniform
- Show respect for yourself and others
- Use good manners at all times
- Avoid swearing, fighting and name-calling.
- Listen to messages given and do as requested.
- Participate in school activities
- Be willing to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- Keep the school tidy and litter-free.

## Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

Schools need the support of parents with regard to good behaviour and discipline. Parents can help their children in the following ways:

- Parents should provide their children with positive models of behaviour
- Children need boundaries and rules about behaviour. Talk to your child about school rules. They help make the school a safe place where everyone can learn and nobody feels left out or threatened.
- Ensure that your child attends school regularly and on time.
- Ensure that homework is completed and signed
- Be interested in, support and encourage your child's schoolwork.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where your child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Ensure the school has up to date contact information for parents / guardians
- Ensure an ordered, structured day for your child with regular meal times and bed times.
- Check your child has all their needs for class i.e. books, copies pens, pencils, rubber, ruler, etc.
- Share information with the school in relation to any problems which may affect a child's progress / behaviour.
- Behave in a respectful manner

## GENERAL SCHOOL RULES

The school has five core **Classroom Rules**, three core **Corridor Rules** and five core **Yard Rules**:

### Classroom Rules:

1. Bí in am, bí ullamh, bí ag obair.
2. Lámha suas.
3. Work quietly, know when to speak.
4. Leave your place only when allowed.
5. Please obey without delay, Be courteous, it will pay.

### Corridor Rules:

1. Siúl go réidh ó áit go háit.
2. Doras oscailte, béal dúnta.
3. Siúl ar dheis.

### **Yard Rules:**

1. Respond to the bell – freeze, count, walk.
2. Wait quietly in line for your teacher.
3. Be in the right place at the right time.
4. Keep your hands and your feet to yourself.
5. Stay within the yellow lines.

Behaviour that does not conform to one or more of these rules may be considered unacceptable. The list of rules may vary slightly from time to time, depending on circumstances and as the need arises. For each rule we have certain expectations, and these are explained and taught to all pupils.

The success of the school's code of behaviour depends on consistency in the implementation of these rules. This will be achieved as follows:

- Teaching of the School Rules
- Rewards and Incentives for keeping the rules
- Prevention Strategies
- Sanctions for breaking the Rules
- Modelling the standards
- Have ways of ensuring that students with special needs understand what is expected of them

### **PROMOTION OF THE SCHOOL RULES**

All pupils are taught the School Rules when they start in Junior Infants and they are revised consistently throughout their remaining years in the school. Parents are given a copy of the rules at registration and they are encouraged and expected to talk to their children about the rules and to encourage their children to keep them. Individual rules will be highlighted at regular periods for special attention. The School Rules are promoted through the entire school community as follows:

## **Planning**

Staff members meet fortnightly for a pre-planning meeting. Two rules per fortnight will be highlighted for special attention. Teachers will receive a list of all the rules and the month during which they will be taught.

## **Noticeboards**

The School Rules are displayed prominently in each classroom and on noticeboards throughout the school.

## **Assembly**

Assembly takes place weekly. It forms a valuable role in our whole school approach to developing self-esteem, promoting positive behaviour and effective discipline. Good work and achievements are highlighted, celebrated and rewarded. The school rules are emphasised and explained. Specific school routines for the classroom and yard are emphasised and explained.

## **Information to Parents/Guardians**

Notifications of changes to the school policy will be communicated by note/e-mail to parents/Guardians. Updated information is also available on the school website.

## **Parent Information Booklet**

All Parents / Guardians are provided with a copy of the school's code of behaviour before registration as required by Section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. Parents are expected at registration to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the Code by the child.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT OF SCOIL MHICHÍL NAOFA**

The School community is made up of students, parents/guardians, volunteers, visitors and all school staff. All members of the school community are included in this code of conduct whether they are on school property, or at school-authorized events or activities.

Our vision is to have a happy, caring and inclusive school where everyone is valued, shows respect and strives to be the best we can. Children need to be educated in an environment which encourages and reinforces positive behaviour where all members of the school community are treated with fairness and respect.

We expect all members of the school community to show respect and concern for others by:

1. Treating all members of the school community with respect and dignity.
2. Supporting the respectful ethos of our school by setting a good example in our own speech and behaviour, to all members of the community.
3. Working together for the benefit of the children.
4. Resolving any issues of concern in order to bring about a positive solution.
5. Resolving conflict and difference using positive behaviour in a respectful manner.

## REWARD SYSTEM

We in Scoil Mhichíl Naofa put a greater emphasis on rewards, affirmation and positive reinforcement rather than on sanctions, in the belief that this will, in the long run, give the best results. All efforts will be made to match the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and interests of each student in our school.

The following are some of the awards that your child or your child's class could achieve:

- Praise in the form of a quiet word/gesture;
- A positive comment in the child's 'Le Chéile Book' or copybook;
- A visit to the Principal/Deputy Principal for commendation;
- Commendation in front of class or at Assembly;
- Weekly individual class prizes for the most improved student in each class;
- Student of the Week Awards;
- Student of the Month Award;
- Dojo Points;
- Additional choice time;<sup>5</sup>
- Student of the Year Award;
- Sports Person of the Year Award;
- Homework pass;
- Prizes for uniform and attendance;<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Amended 29.04.26

<sup>6</sup> No longer used as a reward 29.04.26

- Green Cards recognising excellence in work and behaviour. [See Appendix 4]

Teachers operate 'in-class reward systems' to encourage and reinforce 'excellence' in work and behaviour. Rewards include 'Golden Time', 'Bonus Trips', Homework passes etc.

Encouraging high standards of behaviour among students and creating an orderly atmosphere for learning in the school involves the use of sanctions as well as praise and rewards. Sanctions are used to register disapproval of unacceptable behaviour. When sanctions are invoked, pupils should understand that what they have done is not acceptable and that it is the misbehaviour that is rejected and not the pupil.

## **SANCTIONS**

The most effective methodology in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place. 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's SPHE curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship.

It is important that we keep in mind that the behaviour expected in school may differ significantly from that accepted at home for some children. Recognising this, teachers will teach our pupils strategies that will enable them to meet the school's expectations. Prevention strategies used in the school may include:

- Restorative Practice
- Circle time
- Organised football, skipping and other activities at break time
- Carrying out useful tasks
- Helping in the school garden
- Time Out
- Lunchtime Indoor Activity Groups
- Litter Pickers
- Support from SET team
- Use of individual behaviour plans
- Membership of the Sports Council
- Membership of the Green School Committee

- Membership of the Maths Council

## **ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS**

Children with special needs may require assistance in understanding and respecting certain rules. Additional inputs and interventions may also be required to help some pupils manage their behaviour and to prevent them failing educationally. Such interventions could include

- Referral to another teacher or adult who can work with the student
- Involving the pastoral care team
- Individual Behaviour Support Plans may be devised in consultation with parents, class teacher, support teacher, special education teacher (SET), HSCL Co-ordinator and Special Needs Assistant (SNA). Professional assessments where available may inform and shape the plan. Targets will be set for the pupil and they will be monitored in a supportive way.
- Behaviour Contracts

## **SPECIALISED SUPPORTS**

A small minority of students may exhibit particularly challenging behaviour. In addition, we acknowledge that challenging behaviour might occur more frequently in students who present with special needs and that these behaviours might be beyond the control of the students. In these cases, Individual Behaviour Plans will be used to assist the pupil to adjust and manage his/her behaviour. The school, in cooperation with the student's parents will seek to avail of any local services that may assist in responding to the needs of the student. These services could include the National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS), CAMHS, Athy Health Centre Drop-in Clinic, relevant professional counselling services, SENO etc. Having availed of these services and where serious, challenging misbehaviour continues to persist or poses a health and safety threat, the school reserves the right to follow the **'PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH MISBEHAVIOUR'** set out below.

## **SANCTIONS FOR MISBEHAVIOUR**

The school strives to solve issues at the lowest level possible. Teachers encourage, support and show pupils how they may be able to resolve issues themselves. Most issues will be resolved at this point and in an effort to foster self-management and independence, they may not always be relayed to parents. Where sanctions are imposed they will be graded and reflect the seriousness of the behaviour. (See *'School Discipline Checklist'*)

The school yard is always supervised during breaks and the teachers in charge deal with problems that arise during play using SALT/Restorative Practice where appropriate.

The emphasis is on promoting good behaviour. The yard rules are taught to pupils at the start of each school year and pupils are constantly reminded of them.

The following are some sanctions that could be imposed:

1. Verbal reprimand by staff member;
2. Extra work or repetition of unsatisfactory work;
3. Note/Telephone Call/Letter to parents/guardians;
4. Referral to Principal/Acting Principal;
5. Loss of privilege or practical task, whichever is deemed appropriate, may be decided by a staff member with a view to correcting or redressing an unacceptable deed on the part of the student. This may include a review of offsite trip(s), resulting in possible withdrawal of same during the sanction period<sup>7</sup>;
6. Short-term exclusion from the classroom;
7. Restricted timetable;
8. Yellow/Orange Cards [See Appendix 4];
9. Suspension [Red Card];
10. Expulsion;
11. Breaktime Detention - for serious/persistent breaches of the yard rules.

## **OUT OF SCHOOL INCIDENTS**

It is important to note that students who engage in behaviour outside of school hours that is deemed unacceptable within the terms of this policy, while wearing our school uniform, may be subject to sanction on grounds that they are bringing the school into disrepute. (See Discipline checklist no. 23.)

## **SCHOOL DISCIPLINE CHECKLIST\***

1. Fighting
2. Bad language
3. Defiance of teacher instruction
4. Abuse/vandalism of school property
5. Vandalism of staff member's property
6. Vandalism of another student's property
7. Interference with/Violation of the person (clothing, inappropriate touch, etc.)
8. Leaving the school/yard without permission
9. Verbal abuse/threats to staff members
10. Verbal abuse/threats to another student
11. Smoking and/or Vaping<sup>8</sup>
12. Possession of dangerous items e.g. knives, blades, aerosols, glue, matches, lighters
13. Persistent classroom disruption
14. Physical assault of a staff member
15. Stealing
16. Bullying (See Anti-Bullying Policy)

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Amended 29.06.26

Amended BoM Meeting 08.01.2020.

17. Back answering
18. Throwing objects
19. Spitting
20. Lying to staff members
21. Physical threats to staff
22. Physical threats to other students
23. Incidents outside of school grounds. (In uniform – bringing school into disrepute)
24. Entering school grounds after school hours without permission
25. Persistent infringement of school rules
26. Identity-based comments. (Racist/ethnic, Homophobic, SEN/Disability, Membership of the Traveller Community)
27. Biting
28. Physical assault of another student
29. Breaches of Acceptable Use Policy
30. Breaches of Mobile Phone Policy
31. Inappropriate comments/gestures
32. Rough play
33. Setting off School Alarm
34. Possession, Purchase, Supply, Sale, and/or Use of banned items/substances. e.g. Cigarettes, Vape, Drugs. (this is not an exhaustive list)<sup>9</sup>

\*THESE INCIDENTS MAY MERIT IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION AND/OR EXPULSION.<sup>10</sup>

## PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH MISBEHAVIOUR

As a school community, we aim to create a happy and secure environment for our students, where there is a sense of order and reasonable approach to discipline. The school community accepts that discipline is an essential element in the socialisation of children and does not threaten the child's independence, self-esteem and self confidence. It is part of our professionalism to teach the pupils to take responsibility for behaviour which can be appropriate or inappropriate.

Through effective communication between home and school, we hope to ensure that discipline is consistent and fair. Teachers have the authority to investigate and assess incidents of reported misbehaviour, without having personally witnessed the incident. Teachers are entitled, while investigating such incidents, to question pupils who have witnessed the reported misbehaviour. In the case of investigations concerning pupils receiving special education teaching, the pupil may be accompanied by his/her Special Education Teacher (SET) and/or S.N.A. The SET and/or S.N.A. will be available to the child for aftercare, if necessary.

The procedure outlined here is followed when dealing with misbehaviour as detailed in the 'Discipline Checklist' EXCEPT those incidents that 'may merit' or 'merit'

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Amended BoM Meeting 28.05.2019.

<sup>0</sup> Updated at Board of Management Meeting 26.11.2019

immediate suspension. The particular steps invoked will depend on the seriousness of the misbehaviour. Minor misdemeanours will be dealt with by issuing verbal reprimands and/or minor sanctions. In the event that a 'misbehaviour is adjudged to be serious, the following procedure will be invoked:

**Card 1 [Yellow].** The misdemeanour will be recorded by a staff member in the 'Discipline Folder'. The parents/guardians of the student will be informed by way of a letter home. An appropriate sanction may be imposed at this point. **Any student who remains out of the discipline folder for a period of four consecutive weeks will return to having 0 cards.**

**Card 2 [Yellow].** The misdemeanour will be recorded by a staff member in the 'Discipline Folder'. The parents/guardians of the student will be informed by way of a letter home. An appropriate sanction may be imposed at this point. **Any student who remains out of the discipline folder for a period of four consecutive weeks will return to having 1 card.**

**Card 3 [Yellow].** The misdemeanour will be recorded by a staff member in the 'Discipline Folder'. The parents/guardians of the student will be requested to meet with the class teacher to discuss their child's misbehaviour with a view to improving the same. A sanction may be imposed at this point.

**Any student who remains out of the discipline folder for a period of four consecutive weeks will return to having 2 cards.**

**Card 4 [Orange].** The misdemeanour will be recorded by a staff member in the 'Discipline Folder'. The parents/guardians of the student will be requested to attend a meeting with the Principal regarding their child's misbehaviour. This will constitute a 'final warning' for the student. The consequences of any further breaches of the school 'code of behaviour' will be explained to the student in the presence of his/her parents/guardians.

**Any student who remains out of the discipline folder for a period of four consecutive weeks will return to having 3 cards.**

**Card 5 [Red].** A further incident being recorded by a staff member in the 'Discipline Folder,' results in the parents/guardians of the student meeting with the Principal/ Board of Management. **Suspension** will be enforced at this point. A letter to this effect will issue to the parents/guardians of the student. In the event that a parent is unable to attend at the school, a letter will be issued to the student and a copy will be forwarded by post to the student's parents/guardians.

## **SUSPENSION**

It is school policy that any student serving a suspension must complete assigned schoolwork for the duration of his/her suspension and will be re-admitted to the school on the following conditions:

1. This work being completed and checked.
2. Returning to school with either/both parents/guardians and/or telephone conversation with Principal/Deputy Principal.

Further and/or repeat incidents may result in a further period of suspension.

Persistent breaches of the school 'Code of Behaviour' will result in the student's case being referred to the Board of Management. Taking cognisance of the facts of each individual case, the Board of Management may authorise further exclusion of the student up to a maximum of ten school days to enable further consideration of the case.

A decision regarding suspension by the Principal or Acting Principal may be appealed to the Board of Management within a reasonable period of time of being informed of the decision, having regard for the educational and safety needs of all parties concerned.

Where the total number of days for which a student is suspended in the current school year reaches twenty, the parents/guardians of the student, pursuant to Section 29 of the Education Act (1998), have the right of appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills, within a reasonable period of time from the date that the parent/guardian was informed of the decision and following the conclusion of any appeal procedures provided by the school.

### **GROSS MISBEHAVIOUR<sup>11</sup>**

Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a student, staff member and/or visitor will be regarded for the purposes of this policy as 'Gross Misbehaviour'. Any such instances may result in **immediate suspension** by the Principal/Acting Principal and/or expulsion by the Board of Management, in accord with procedures set out in this Code of Behaviour.

### **EXPULSION<sup>12</sup>**

Where an incident or series of incidents merit consideration of 'permanent exclusion' of a student by the Board of Management, the procedures set out in Section 12

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<sup>1</sup> Updated at Board of Management Meeting 26.11.2019

<sup>2</sup> Updated at Board of Management Meeting 26.11.2019

NEWB 'Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools' (2008) will inform any such decision as well as the procedures set out within this document.

Grounds for Expulsion:

1. The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others and /or the teaching process;
2. The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety;
3. The student is responsible for serious damage to school property.

Automatic Expulsion – See GROSS MISBEHAVIOUR

Expulsion for a First Offence:

The Board of Management reserve the right to expel a student for a first offence, where it has formed such an opinion. Behaviour meriting such a sanction include *inter alia*:

1. A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff;
2. Actual violence or physical assault;
3. Possession and/or supplying drugs to other students in the school;
4. Sexual assault.

Factors the Board of Management may consider before proposing to expel a student:

1. The nature and the seriousness of the behaviour;
2. The context of the behaviour;
3. The impact of the behaviour;
4. The interventions tried to date;
5. Whether expulsion is a proportionate response;
6. The possible impact of an expulsion.

Procedure to be followed in respect of an expulsion:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal or Acting Principal;
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal or Acting Principal;
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal/Acting Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing;
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing;
5. Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer;
6. Confirmations of the decision to expel.

## Right of Appeal:

A parent/guardian may appeal a decision of the Board of Management to expel a student from Scoil Mhichíl Naofa pursuant to Section 29 Education Act 1998. Further details are available to a parent/guardian from the Department of Education and Skills.

## DAMAGE TO SCHOOL PROPERTY

Damage to school property during/after school hours will result in a fine being imposed to cover costs of repair/replacement and/or referral to Athy Garda Station.

## HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES

- (i) In the interest of Health and Safety, students are not permitted to wear items of jewellery that are 'dangerous', posing a 'risk' to themselves and others while undertaking activities during the school day. Students may only wear on watch, one flat ring and one pair of stud earrings. If a member of staff deems<sup>7</sup> a piece of jewellery to be a 'risk' to the student and others, he or she may be asked to remove it. Scoil Mhichíl Naofa will not be responsible for any items of jewellery that go missing arising from such a request.
- (ii) If a parent/guardian has an issue with a student other than his/her own child, he/she is requested to contact the school office. Parents/guardians do not have the right to reprimand a student not in their care in the school environs.
- (iii) Parents/guardians are asked to take note of the various signs around the school grounds e.g. no dogs permitted on the grounds, no smoking etc.
- (iv) No cars should enter the school grounds without prior permission of the school office. Care should be taken when parking or moving cars at the entrance to the school grounds especially at opening and closing times.
- (v) Students are not permitted to wear any make-up, nail varnish and/or false nails while attending school or at events organised by the school. \*

\*Exceptions will be made for students engaged in performances on behalf of the school where such items are so required for the duration of the performance(s).

## BULLYING

It is a general principle of Scoil Mhichíl Naofa that we endeavour to educate all students entrusted to our care in a 'safe and secure' environment, encouraging each child to develop to his/her potential. In order that our students can work to their full capability, it is important that they are 'happy' within themselves and that a high self esteem is promoted within each child. One of the greatest threats to a child's happiness and self-esteem is 'Bullying'.

For details regarding policy and procedures see Anti-Bullying Policy

This enrolment policy was reviewed and ratified on 24.06.2020

Next scheduled review – April 2027

Signed: Morag McGowan Date: 29.4.2026  
Morag McGowan<sup>13</sup>

Chairperson Board of Management

Policy History	Date
Reviewed and ratified	24.06.2020
Reviewed	29.04.26

<sup>3</sup> Amended on 29.04.26 - new chairperson to BoM



# **Scoil Mhichíl Naofa**

## **Mobile Phone & Electronic Devices Policy**

This policy outlines the appropriate use of mobile phones, and other electronic smart devices in our school.

### **Rationale**

The possession and use of mobile phones and smart devices, e.g. wearables and smartwatches by school pupils is now extensive, even in the primary school sector. Mobile phones, smartwatches and personal devices can in some instances cause a negative effect on teaching and learning in our school. The capacity of many devices to take photographs, make video or sound recordings could lead to child protection and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images. In order to manage the issue of mobile phones, and other personal devices, this policy has been developed.

### **Relationship to Our School Ethos**

The use of personal mobile/smart phones and other electronic devices contravenes the provision of a safe and secure school environment, a provision that is central to the mission statement and ethos of Scoil Mhichil Naofa.

### **Aims**

- To inform all members of our school community about the appropriate use of mobile phones and electronic devices at our school.
- To outline the procedures and processes of this policy.

The school's Board of Management accepts that it is not realistic to have a policy, which prohibits pupils from taking phones to school. We are aware that parents may choose for their child to have a mobile phone traveling to and from school for health and safety reasons.

However, it is the Board of Management's policy to prohibit the use by pupils of mobile phones, smartwatches and electronic devices while on the school premises/grounds or off site activities e.g. school swimming, school trips, matches, etc. For this reason, the school strongly discourages the bringing of these devices to school by pupils unless deemed absolutely necessary by parents/guardians for safety travelling to and from school.

**It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone/personal device to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, in these instances, Scoil Mhichil Naofa's school management may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardaí.**

### **School Procedures**

- Pupils are strongly discouraged from bringing personal mobile/smart phones and other personal devices to school.

If parents permit a pupil to bring personal mobile/smart phones and/ or other personal devices the following procedures will ensue;

- Personal mobile/smart phones and/ or other personal devices must be powered fully off and left in the pupil's school bag before entering the school grounds;

- The use of personal mobile/smart phones and other personal devices by pupils is not permitted while the pupils are:
  - at school;
  - in the school yard;
  - on school trips;
  - at a school related activity;
  - on school buses;
  - involved in school extra-curricular activities;
  - at a school sports activity.
- Mobile phones which are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be given to a teacher / school office;
- Use of these devices for the recording of pupils or staff members will be deemed a serious or gross misbehavior (as per our Code of Behaviour) and will receive the warranted sanction as a result;
- Pupils who need to contact home during school hours may do so only through the School Office with the permission of their class teacher;
- Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the School Office remains the first point of contact and can ensure that your child is reached quickly and a message passed onto them. You can contact the school via telephone on 059-86 31794 or email: officesmnathy@gmail.com Please do not contact your child directly while they are in school on a mobile device;
- Pupils using mobile phones to bully or harass other pupils will be dealt with in line with the BÍ Cineálta and the school's Code of Behaviour;
- Pupils with mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks on other pupils, harass other pupils or post private information about other pupils using phone calls, SMS, Whatsapp, Snapchat, images, videos or social media posts. e.g. Youtube, Facebook, Instagram or any other form of social media;
- Any pupil who feels threatened or disturbed by any message or phone call they receive should report this immediately to a teacher (if it happens at school or on school-related activities) or to a parent /guardian (if it happens outside of school);
- Staff are permitted to use their phones for school-related business only or for emergencies. Staff should not use their phones for personal reasons during teacher-pupil contact time. All staff contact with parents will be through Aladdin, the homework journal or through the school office. Should a teacher need to call a parent, they are requested to use the school line. Should a teacher require to make contact with a parent on their own device, teachers are requested to block their mobile number prior to calling.

**In the event that a parent deems it necessary for their child have a phone travelling to and from school and has given written permission via Aladdin the following will apply:**

- Parents must indicate via Aladdin that their child is permitted to bring their mobile phone/device to school. This is an annual process of permission;
- If a parent has given permission for their child to have a mobile phone powered off and in their schoolbag during school hours, pupils and their parents / guardians must first read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy;
- It is strongly advised by the school that pupils use strong passwords or pin numbers on their personal device. Pupils should keep their passwords / pin numbers confidential;

- The phone/device must be turned off at all times throughout the school day and stored in the pupil's bag. Scoil Mhichil Naofa accepts no liability for phones lost/stolen/damaged;
- The School will not be liable for replacing mobile phones or other devices that are lost, stolen or damaged. All devices are brought to school at the owner's risk. i.e. the parent of the child.

### Sanctions

- Any pupil who has a phone /personal device on their person in school, the phone / personal device will be confiscated immediately. A parent / guardian will be required to call in person in to the office to collect the item;
- Where a pupil uses a mobile phone or other personal device for any purpose, it will be confiscated from the pupil and returned only to their parent/guardian;
- Where a pupil repeatedly breaches the Mobile Phone Policy permission to have phone in school will be removed;
- If a pupil uses a mobile phone or personal device to take photographs, video footage, recording of other pupils or staff members, or shares inappropriate messages action will be taken in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour and Bí Cineálta Policies;
- If a member of staff has any suspicion that a mobile phone has unsuitable material stored on it, parents / guardians will be notified and the matter investigated;
- Where there is a suspicion that the material on the mobile may relate to a criminal offence the relevant agencies will be notified and the phone may be requested by the Gardaí. Parents / guardians will be informed in such circumstances.

### School Trips and Activities

Pupils are not permitted to bring mobile phones and other personal devices with them on school trips and tours. Teachers will contact parents via Aladdin App or Phone if it is necessary to make contact with a parent /guardian. For pupils whose parents deem it necessary and have given permission for the pupil to have the phone for travelling to and from school, the device must be powered off, given to school staff and will be left in the school. No liability will be taken by the school for lost/ damaged phones at school activities/ off site trips.

A copy of the Mobile Phone and Electronic Devices Policy is made available to school personnel and from the school office.. The policy is readily accessible to parents on request.

A copy of this Policy is also published on the school website.

Signed: Morag McGowan Date: 29.04.26

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Pauline O' Shea Doogue Date: 29.04.26

(Principal)

Policy Ratified	29.04.26
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## APPENDIX 2 – BREAKTIME DETENTION

### Break time Detention

All children are expected to behave in an appropriate manner during break times whether they are on yard or in the school (e.g. during a wet break). A set of yard/ wet break rules form part of the school's emphasis on positive behaviour. The children are made aware of the yard/wet break rules on an ongoing basis by the class teachers and the principal.

If a child breaches a yard rule, s/he is checked by the supervising yard teachers. The yard teacher will bring the misdemeanour to the attention of the class teacher who will deal with the transgression within the parameters of his/her in-class behaviour management system. Any sanction imposed and the reason for it, should be noted in the child's 'Le Chéile' book and signed by the parent/ guardian.

If a child receives three sanctions for breaches of yard rules, the child will be given a lunchtime detention where school work will be set for him/her. Detention is normally for one lunchtime session. This is at the discretion of the Principal. The class teacher will send a detention notification note to the parent/guardian of the child whom it is intended to place on detention for yard/wet break misbehaviour. In exceptional circumstances, in the interest of health and safety, such notice will be communicated by telephone where the child is deemed by the Principal to be an immediate threat to the safety of him/herself and others.

### Other Detention

The Principal may choose to use detention as a deterrent against other negative behaviour that is not related to yard or wet break behaviour.

The detention system as a whole is overseen by the Principal.

## APPENDIX 3 - PARENTAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### Stage 1

1. A parent/guardian who wishes to make a complaint should, unless there are local arrangements to the contrary, approach the class teacher with a view to<sup>14</sup> resolving the complaint.
2. Where the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher s/he should approach the principal with a view to resolving it.
3. If the complaint is still unresolved the parent/guardian should raise the matter with the chairperson of the board of management with a view to resolving it.

### Stage 2

1. If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent/guardian wishes to pursue the matter further s/he should lodge the complaint in writing with the chairperson of the board of management.
2. The chairperson should bring the precise nature of the written complaint to the notice of the teacher and seek to resolve the matter between the parties within five days of receipt of the written complaint.

### Stage 3

1. If the complaint is not resolved informally, the chairperson should, subject to the general authorisation of the board and except in those cases where the chairperson deems the particular authorisation of the board to be required:
  - a) supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint; and
  - b) arrange a meeting with the teacher and, where applicable, the principal teacher with a view to resolving the complaint. Such a meeting should take place within 10 days of receipt of the written complaint.

### Stage 4

1. If the complaint is still not resolved the chairperson should make a formal report to the board within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3(b).
2. If the board considers that the complaint is not substantiated the teacher and the complainant should be so informed within three days of the board meeting.
3. If the board considers that the complaint is substantiated or that it warrants further investigation it proceeds as follows:
  - a) the teacher should be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage;
  - b) the teacher should be supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint;
  - c) the teacher should be requested to supply a written statement to the board in response to the complaint;
  - c) the teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of case to the board. The teacher would be entitled to be

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<sup>14</sup> All meetings with teachers should be arranged through the school office.

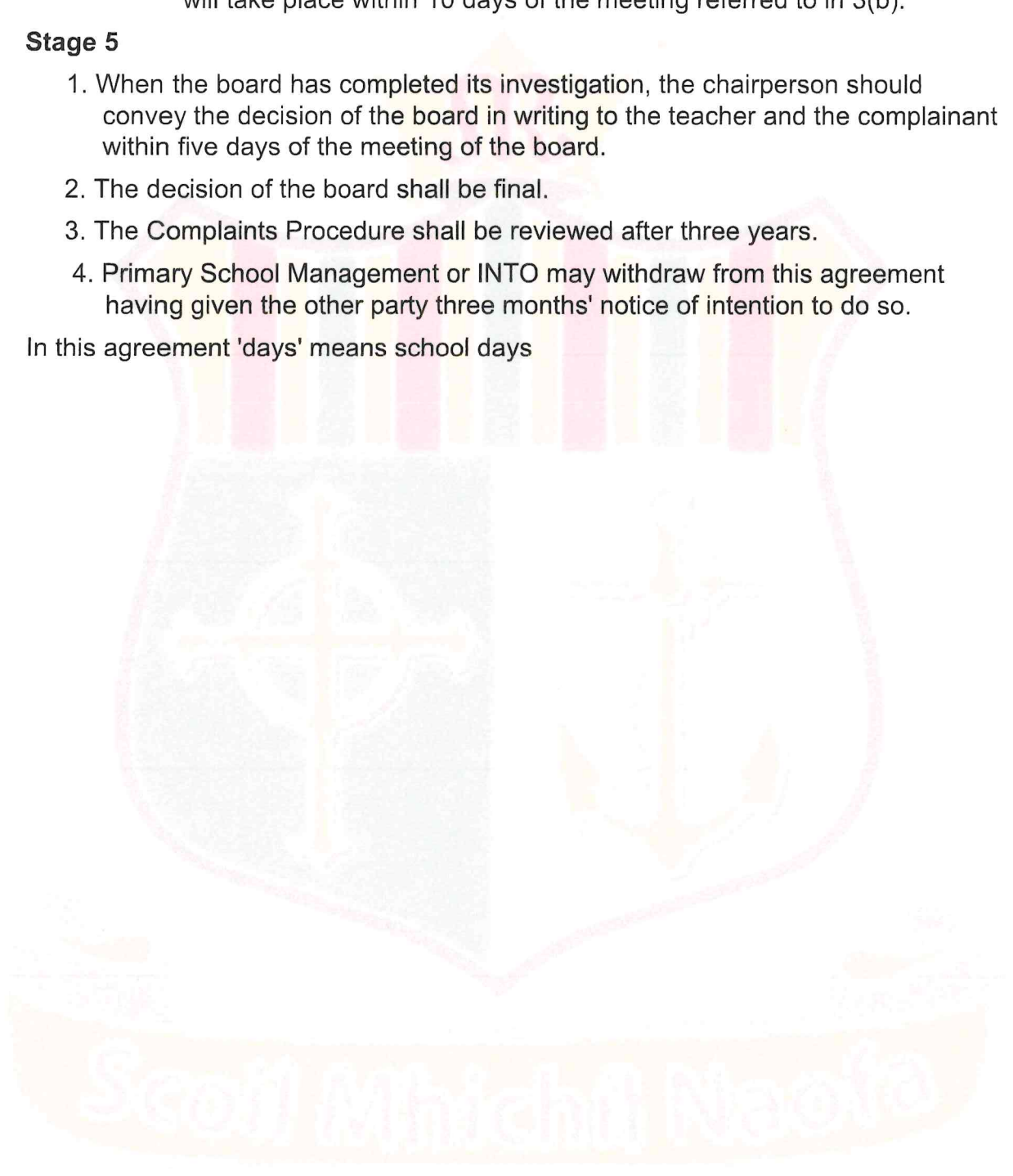
- accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting;  
d) the board may arrange a meeting with the complainant if it considers

such to be required. The complainant would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting; and e) the meeting of the board of management referred to in (d) and (e) will take place within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3(b).

### **Stage 5**

1. When the board has completed its investigation, the chairperson should convey the decision of the board in writing to the teacher and the complainant within five days of the meeting of the board.
2. The decision of the board shall be final.
3. The Complaints Procedure shall be reviewed after three years.
4. Primary School Management or INTO may withdraw from this agreement having given the other party three months' notice of intention to do so.

In this agreement 'days' means school days



**APPENDIX 4 Sample Cards**

**Yellow Card**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Incident :** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Date:** \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_

**Teacher Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent(s)**

**Signature(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Green Card**

**Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**In recognition**

**of:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

—

**Date:** \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_

**Teacher Signature:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent(s)**

**Signature(s)** \_\_\_\_\_