



Scoil Mhuire Ogh 1

Loreto Senior Primary School, Crumlin

Code of Behaviour

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1. Introduction

As a Loreto school, we believe that the Holy Family is our model and inspiration. Our policies, practices, and attitudes are rooted in Gospel values and inspired by the Loreto philosophy of education.

Our school community believes that:

- We are all loved and gifted by God.
- Love and learning transforms.
- Every day is a learning day.
- With love and care, we grow.
- Success looks like our best effort.

Courtesy, respect and general good behaviour are expected at all times, and this applies to the manner in which pupils treat staff, visitors and each other, and in the care they take of their classrooms, their school and its environment.

The quality of relationships between teachers and students is one of the most powerful influences on student behaviour. For many students, their teachers may be a major source of support, adult empathy and pastoral care, and are hugely significant figures in their lives. We understand that this relationship should be one that is characterised by respect and trust thus enabling students to venture, explore and grow. Parents/Guardians and teachers in the school work together in a supportive and respectful manner to model good behaviour for the pupils in our school.

We aim to help each student learn well and live a full life as a child and to develop their full potential as both a learner and as a responsible citizen. In Scoil Mhuire Ogh 1, we recognise that behaviour has a significant influence on the quality of learning and teaching. The purpose of this school Code of Behaviour is to help develop the kind of ethos, relationships, policies and practices that promote positive behaviour [See Loreto Education Guidelines Kolkata, 2002]. This code has developed from the Discipline for Learning policy previously used in the school and also incorporates Restorative Justice Practices.

This Code of Behaviour has been formed by and is for the information of all members of our school community - pupils, parents, staff and Board of Management. Working in partnership with parents/guardians is essential for the effective implementation of the code. An annual review of this policy will take place and amendments will be made as necessary.

2 . Principles underpinning the Code of Behaviour

Learning, behaviour and relationships are inextricably linked. Our School Code of Behaviour supports teaching and learning and thus encourages:

- children to reach their full potential and to take personal responsibility for their learning and their behaviour.
- children to mature into responsible, participating citizens.
- members of the school community to build positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support.
- the creation of a positive, disciplined learning environment where the rights of others are respected and learning can take place.

Our code is informed by the principles of fairness and natural justice and encourages a consistent approach to behaviour on the part of all school personnel. We aim to promote equality for all members of the school community, to prevent discrimination and allow for appropriate accommodation of difference. Our aim is to provide a well ordered, caring and happy school. Routine is important for Primary School children. This gives them confidence and the security of knowing what to do and what is expected of them. Thus, opportunities for disruptive behaviour are minimised.

Our School Code of Behaviour will also apply to all school related activities outside of school

- School tours
- Games and extracurricular activities
- Attendance at events organised by the school.

The Code of Behaviour will apply to incidents of serious misbehaviour outside school, when a child is not under the care and supervision of the school, only when there is a clear connection with the school.

3. Understanding Behaviour

An understanding of the facts that influence behaviour is essential in order to provide a sound foundation for a whole school approach to promoting good behaviour and responding to unacceptable behaviour. When teachers, parents and students understand and subscribe to the school's expectations and practices, they support the school in promoting an atmosphere which is conducive to good teaching and learning.

4. Whole School Approach

School climate, values, policies, practices and relationships support the Code of Behaviour. These elements of our whole school approach include:

- Our ethos, policies and practices that will impact positively on learning and teaching.

- Team-work: a whole-school approach to curriculum and classroom management has a key influence on student behaviour. The skill of the teacher in managing the routine engagement with children is a critical factor in preventing problems.
- An inclusive and involved school community - teachers, school staff, parents and students have responsibilities at different levels for behaviour in the school.
- A systematic planning and review process to ensure a harmonious, positive environment for learning and teaching.

5. Setting Standards of Behaviour

Standards signal positive values and reflect the kinds of behaviour and relationships that will create a positive environment for teaching and learning. Standards also signal the types of behaviour that are unacceptable. Classes will be encouraged to draw up their own Classroom Rules as an integral part of our Code of Behaviour. This will provide clear boundaries and practical guidelines about the behaviour expected of students. Rules shall reflect the age and stage of development of the students. Our School Code of Behaviour expects all members of the school community to behave in ways that show respect for others.

The adults in the school have a responsibility to model the school's standards of behaviour, in their dealings both with students and with each other, since their example is a powerful source of learning for students. Parents/guardians and visitors to the school are also expected to model the standards that students are asked to respect.

Parents'/Guardians' Responsibilities

- Parents/Guardians, upon their child's enrolment, agree to abide by and support the school in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.
- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves, other children, the staff and school property.
- Ensure that children attend regularly, punctually and in the school uniform or tracksuit.
- Encourage children to take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- Be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and support its implementation.
- Cooperate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing disruption to others.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect a child's progress or behaviour.
- Parents/Guardians and school staff are expected to model good behaviour at all times within the school grounds.
- Parents/Guardians and school staff are expected to be polite, respectful and courteous in their interactions with one another.

6. Promoting Good Behaviour

Promoting good behaviour is the primary focus of our school Code of Behaviour. School management and staff will actively aim to foster a school ethos, school policies, protocols and practices geared towards promoting positive behaviour.

General School Rules:

Children are expected to:

- Treat others with kindness, respect and good manners at all times
- Attend school daily and on time. Absences must be explained by parent/guardian using Aladdin Connect or by phone call.
- Do their best and let others do the same.
- Walk quietly and safely at all times.
- Keep the school clean and safe for everyone.
- Have respect for the property of the school and the property of others.
- Observe all the policies eg. Anti-bullying, Uniform, Acceptable Use, Healthy Eating, Homework etc.

Class Rules:

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the pupils. They should be kept to a minimum and should emphasise positive behaviour. Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner.

Yard/ Playground Rules:

Children are expected to:

- use our hands and feet safely.
- follow instructions immediately.
- speak kindly to everyone in the yard.
- use equipment safely and sensibly.
- stay inside the yard boundaries.
- when the bell goes, line up and stay in line.
- leave food and drink in the classroom.

7. Strategies to affirm and promote good behaviour

There are a range of strategies for affirming good behaviour at class and school level.

- Teaching /modelling good behaviour.
- Displaying School and Classroom Rules in all classes.
- Explicit teaching and specific praise of good behaviour - catch children being good.
- Reinforcing good behaviour expectations at the beginning of each term.
- Celebrating Good Manners Month at the start of each year.

The following are examples of how praise might be given.

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A word of praise in front of group or class

- A mention to parent/guardian by written or verbal communication.
- A visit to another class or the principal for commendation.

Whole School Incentives:

- Attendance/Punctuality: *See Attendance Policy for whole-school initiatives.*
- Loreto Spirit Awards: This award is presented at the 6th Class Graduation Ceremony to the two pupils who most emulate the Loreto Values during their time in Loreto Senior Primary School.
- Value and Belief Awards: These awards may be given to pupils when they exhibit our school values and root beliefs in school.
- Dalta na Seachtaine/na Téarma/na Bliana: These awards are given by class teachers weekly, termly and annually. Weekly award is announced at whole-school assembly.

Rewards for the Playground / Other Areas in the School:

- Compliments for lining up / good behaviour.
- Verbal praise from other teachers.
- Report good behaviour to the class teacher.

Classroom Incentives: A number of classroom strategies and programmes are in place to encourage and support positive behaviour:

- **Praise and affirmation**
- **Root Beliefs and Values:** Our school root beliefs and values are taught explicitly and reinforced during the school day. Value Awards are given to pupils who are observed to be displaying the desired value.
- **WYN Time:** WYN time is a strategy used in 5th and 6th classes. WYN (What You Need) Time is 10 minutes at the end of each school day that is earned by staying on a green card or adapting behaviour to work back to a green card. The 10 minutes may be used for a variety of purposes - starting homework, completing work that was unfinished during the day, reading or playing.
- **Golden Time.** Golden Time takes place in classes for twenty minutes on a Friday afternoon. This time is earned during the week by pupils who remain on a green card or who have adapted their behaviour to work back to a green card during the week.
- **Group Rewards:** The ability to work well as part of a team is very important. Groups may be rewarded in class for working well as part of a team or for an activity or value highlighted by the teacher.
- **Class Award Systems:** Where a teacher identifies a behaviour or norm that needs improvement across the class, they may introduce a positive reward system (eg. Class Dojo) to encourage pupils to learn this new behaviour.
- **Individual Good Behaviour or Improvement in Behaviour Certificates** may be awarded.

Note: *Where pupils miss their rewards regularly, it will be discussed with the pupil and the parent/guardian may be contacted to decide how progress can be made to ensure that patterns of behaviour improve.*

Children with Additional Needs:

- All children are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with additional needs may require additional assistance in understanding certain rules. Children's needs and cognitive development, along with advice and recommendations from psychological assessments will inform our approach to behaviour management.
- Goal/Target/Incentive systems may also form part of a planned intervention by a teacher to help individual pupils manage their own behaviour (Individual Behaviour Plan). These are agreed upon in consultation with the child's parent/guardian and the principal. These may be put in place where a pupil struggles with a particular behaviour or if they miss Golden Time regularly.
- Targets for pupils with additional needs must take account of their particular learning style. The reward should be communicated in ways that reflect this understanding.
- 'Success looks like our best effort' and this will be the goal when rewards are presented.
- Rewards and incentives must not become the goal of learning but are a part of the overall school system.

8. Categories of Misbehaviour

Despite the promotion of good behaviour, the school recognises that on occasion unacceptable behaviour happens. It is important to distinguish between unacceptable behaviour and behavioural difficulties that are associated with behavioural or learning difficulties. Staff are aware of external and interpersonal factors that affect behaviour.

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour, parents may be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

The classification of misbehaviour as minor, serious or gross, is, in some cases, a matter of judgement and it is acknowledged that the person best placed to assess this is the member of staff who witnessed the behaviour in question.

The following is non- exhaustive list of misbehaviours:

Examples of Minor Misbehaviour:

- Interrupting class work
- Running in the school building
- Littering around the school

- Chewing gum
- Being discourteous or unmannerly
- Using disrespectful language
- Talking out of turn
- Being disruptive in class
- Repeatedly ignoring teachers' instructions
- Sulking
- Telling lies
- Rowdiness and horseplay that hurts another
- Minor breaches of General, Class or Yard Rules
- Bringing toys/food to yard
- Cheating

Examples of Serious Misbehaviour:

- Persistent minor misbehaviour above may be classified as serious misbehaviour.
- Bullying behaviour and harassment, which falls short of Gross Misbehaviour (see Anti-Bullying Policy Pgs. 4 and 5).
- Persistent telling of lies.
- Using mobile phones/devices at school
- Defying teachers' direct instructions.
- Rudeness or disrespect in addressing a staff member (including using curse words)
- Deliberate continuous disobedience.
- Threats or physical hurt such as choking, kicking, biting, punching another person.
- Deliberate spitting at somebody
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Verbal Abuse or inappropriate comments
- Serious breaches of General, Class and Yard Rules.
- Name calling involving sexist, racist, sectarian, homophobic or anti-Traveller language or any discriminatory language based on the nine grounds of the Equality Act (See anti-bullying policy Pgs. 6 and 7)

Examples of Gross Misbehaviour:

- Persistent incidents of serious misbehaviour will be classified as Gross Misbehaviour
- Bullying behaviour and harassment which is deemed graver than serious misbehaviour.
- Serious verbal abuse or serious physical assault on a teacher or pupil.
- Leaving school premises without permission.
- Bringing weapons or dangerous substances to school.
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a staff member or pupil.
- Serious theft.
- Serious damage to property.
- Very serious breaches of General, Class and Yard Rules.

Specific Unacceptable Behaviour

Specific unacceptable behaviours such as bullying and harassment are prohibited in our school.

Definitions:

What is Bullying?

Bullying is repeated aggressive behaviour, verbal, physical, or psychological conducted by an individual or group against another. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while to be condemned, should not be described as bullying. Only aggressive behaviour, which is systematic and ongoing, should be regarded as bullying. Bullying can take many forms:

- Name calling (Including name calling involving sexist, racist, sectarian, homophobic or anti-Traveller language or any discriminatory language based on the nine grounds of the Equality Act)
- Slagging—making fun of another
- Isolation
- Intimidation
- Malicious rumour
- Physical aggression
- Systematic damage to another's property
- Extortion

What is Harassment?

Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct in relation to any person on discriminatory grounds. It is conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for the person.

Schools and the Equal Status Acts, The Equality Authority

The procedures for dealing with bullying behaviour are detailed in the school's Anti-Bullying policy Pg. 12. Copies of this policy are available upon request.

9. Strategies to Address Misbehaviour

Problem Solving and Restorative Practice

We use the Restorative Practice approach to resolving conflicts. If there are a number of children involved in unacceptable behaviour, each child will be given an opportunity to explain using the restorative justice questions. They are also given the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour in an attempt to find a different way of behaving.

Restorative Questions:

When someone has wronged another

- What happened?
- What were you thinking of at the time?
- What have you thought about since?

- Who has been affected and in what way?
- What would you have done differently?
- What are you prepared to do to repair the harm?

When someone has been harmed

- What did you think when you realised what had happened?
- How did this incident affect you?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- How could things have been done differently?
- What needs to happen to make things right?

A small minority of pupils may show particularly challenging behaviour. These students will need a sustained and systematic response involving the important adults in their lives, in school and at home.

In the case of a serious and gross misbehaviour, a record is made on Aladdin of the occurrence and the procedure taken by the teacher or member of staff dealing with misbehaviour. In dealing with this behaviour, the following steps can be followed.

Established Intervention Strategies (*See anti-bullying policy*)

- Gather information. It is important that the context and factors that may be affecting behaviour are understood. Consultation with parents may be necessary.
- Generate ideas about possible solutions that take into account the reasons why behaviour may be happening. Consultation with senior members of staff may be necessary.
- Decide and agree on specific strategies.
- Implement the agreed strategy consistently.
- Review progress.

Whole School Approach to Behaviour Management and Sanctions:

A sanction is a form of positive intervention. Our approach provides for clarity about the objective and purpose of sanctions.

- The objective of a sanction is to help the student learn.
- The purpose is to bring about a change in behaviour.

The decision to apply agreed sanctions and the manner of using sanctions will always be guided by professional judgement and discretion.

Card System for Classroom and Yard Behaviour Management:

Each child starts the day on a **green** card. The child remains on green if he/she is following the class rules.

If a child is misbehaving:

Step 1 Non-verbal redirection. Teacher moves to the area of the classroom where the pupil is. Teacher may compliment desired behaviour by another pupil.

Step 2 Verbal redirection. Teacher reminds the pupil of the class rule related to action.

Step 3 Warning with a choice. Teacher gives the pupil a choice to redirect their behaviour and follow the rule or change their card to **yellow**.

If the pupil changes his/her card to yellow, the teacher coaches the pupil on how to earn back their green card. For example, if the pupil follows the class rules for a set period of time (15 minutes/to the end of the lesson) he/she may change their card back to green.

Step 4 If a pupil continues to misbehave, he/she must change their card to **orange**. The sanction for an orange card is to **miss 5 minutes of yard time** (the pupil must remain in the time-out zone for 5 minutes) if the misbehaviour occurs before break or lunch time.

If the misbehaviour occurs after the 2nd break, the child must change his/her card to orange. If the child is in 3rd class, 4th class he/she must complete a Think Sheet in their class. If the child is in 5th or 6th class he/she **loses 5 minutes of their WYN time** and must instead complete a Think Sheet during this time.

Teacher must coach the pupil on how to earn back their yellow card and then their green card.

Step 5 If the pupil continues to misbehave, he/she must change their card to **red**. Class teacher/relevant teacher makes a phone call to the parents/guardians. At this stage, despite several warnings, the child has not amended his/her behaviour and is deemed to be causing significant disruption to the teaching and learning process. The child must leave his/her own classroom and complete a Think Sheet and/or assigned work under the supervision of a teacher in another classroom assigned by his/her own teacher. A restorative conversation is held before the child returns to his/her own classroom. The child is encouraged and coached to return to a green card. A record of red cards will be kept on Aladdin.

Note: *Where a pattern of misbehaviour emerges, the teacher or principal may contact the parent/guardian. The parents/guardians, SET teacher, class teacher and principal may collaborate to implement an Individual Behaviour Plan or a Targeted Individual Intervention Plan.*

Note: *Some misbehaviours may be treated as Serious or Gross Misbehaviour at the first instance and invoke sanctions accordingly, therefore, bypassing the card system.*

General Procedure in the Case of Serious Misbehaviour:

1st incident of serious misbehaviour within a half term.	Step 1 Docket is signed by the teacher and principal. Parents/Guardians also sign the docket to acknowledge that they have been informed of their child's misbehaviour. The docket is kept in the child's file. Sanction: Pupil will miss the next astro yard session and spend that time
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	in detention under the supervision of the SET teacher completing a restorative practice think-sheet.
2nd incident of serious misbehaviour within a half term.	<p>Step 2 Docket is signed by the teacher and principal. Parents/Guardians also sign the docket to acknowledge that they have been informed of their child's misbehaviour. The docket is kept in the child's file.</p> <p>Sanction: Pupil will miss the next astro yard session and spend that time in detention under the supervision of the SET teacher completing a restorative practice think sheet and a letter of apology to those affected by the behaviour. A loss of school privileges* will also be invoked.</p>
3rd incident of serious misbehaviour within a half term.	<p>Step 3 Docket is signed by the teacher and principal. Parents/Guardians also sign the docket to acknowledge that they have been informed of their child's misbehaviour. The docket is kept in the child's file.</p> <p>Sanction: Pupil will incur a half day in-school suspension (8:45am - 12pm) in another teacher's class. Pupil may go to the yard with his/her own class. A meeting is held with the principal, parents/guardians, class/SET teacher. An Individual Behaviour Plan is devised. Pupil completes a restorative work pack for the period of suspension - reflection on the school rule broken and a letter of apology to those affected by the misbehaviour. A loss of school privileges* will also be invoked.</p>
4th incident of serious misbehaviour within a half term.	<p>Step 4 Docket is signed by the teacher and principal. Parents/Guardians also sign the docket to acknowledge that they have been informed of their child's misbehaviour. The docket is kept in the child's file. A letter will be issued to parents/guardians outlining the reasons for the sanction.</p> <p>Sanction: Pupil will incur a full day in-school suspension (8:45am - 2:25pm) in another teacher's class. Pupil may go to the yard with his/her own class. Principal meets with parents/guardians to review the Individual Behaviour Plan. Pupil completes a restorative work pack for the period of suspension - reflection on the school rule broken, a letter of apology to those affected by the misbehaviour and a class work pack. A loss of school privileges* will also be invoked.</p>
5th incident of serious misbehaviour within a half term.	<p>Step 5 Docket is signed by the teacher and principal. Parents/Guardians also sign the docket to acknowledge that they have been informed of their child's misbehaviour. The docket is kept in the child's file. A letter will be issued to parents/guardians outlining the reasons for the sanction.</p> <p>Sanction: Pupil will incur a full day in-school suspension (8:45am - 2:25pm) in another teacher's class. Pupil will go to the yard with the class he/she has been assigned to. Principal meets with parents/guardians and the class/SET teacher. A consultation with NEPS or external services may be required at this stage as well as a review of</p>

	the Individual Behaviour Plan. Pupil completes a restorative work pack for the period of suspension - reflection on the school rule broken, a letter of apology to those affected by the misbehaviour and a class work pack. A loss of school privileges* will also be invoked.
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***Loss of school privilege may include but is not limited to:**

- *Loss of Golden Time or WYN Time*
- *Not representing the school in a match/sporting activity*
- *Not taking part in a non-curricular school activity*

Important Notes:

- *Principal or Deputy Principal may be involved at any stage depending on the incident.*
- *Every effort will be made to contact parents/guardians to inform them of the misbehaviour.*
- *Any refusal by a child to abide by the sanction imposed will automatically move the child to the next Step, with the corresponding sanction.*
- *At the beginning of each half term children start again with a clean slate. However, Behaviour Plans for those who need them, will continue to be implemented for as long as necessary*
- *Repeated incidents of serious misbehaviour may result in a child not being allowed on trips outside the school if there is a health and safety risk to the child or to his/her peers as a result of his/her behaviour ie. an inability to follow the instructions of staff.*

At-Home Suspension:

The safety and welfare of all students and staff is our highest priority. The decision to implement an At-Home Suspension is not taken lightly but may be implemented for a single incident of serious or gross misbehaviour;

- Where the student’s behaviour has had a detrimental effect on the education and/or welfare of other students and/or staff and on the administration and management of the school.
- Where the student’s presence in school constitutes a threat to safety.
- Where the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

General Procedure in the Case of Gross Misbehaviour (including aggressive/violent behaviour) or Continued Serious Misbehaviour:

Step 1	Referral to principal.
Step 2	Principal communicates with parents/guardians.
Step 3	Inform the Board of Management if appropriate.

Step 4	Consultation with NEPS where appropriate.
Step 5	Exclusion e.g. In-school suspension/suspension/expulsion from school (in accordance with rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circulars and Education Welfare Act 2000 or/and other appropriate sanction.

Note: *There is an increasing level of seriousness built into the above list of suitable sanctions. However, it would be inappropriate to stipulate a rigid ladder of intervention, to be applied in all cases, as such an approach would not take account of both context and individual children's circumstances.*

Note: *Anyone who has seriously or grossly misbehaved on a school outing or who has seriously or grossly misbehaved in school (including consistent failure to follow the instructions of teachers/principal) may not be allowed on the next school outing.*

Playground Management for Minor Misbehaviour:

Step 1:	Non-Verbal Redirection: Teacher moves to the area in the yard that the pupil is.
Step 2:	Verbal Redirection: Pupil is reminded of playground rules and teacher gives the pupil the choice to either re-direct and follow rule or take 5 minutes time out in the Thinking Triangle.
Step 3:	The pupil is given 5 minutes Time Out in the Thinking Triangle.
Step 4:	If breaking of rule continues after Time Out or if it is close to the end of break, the class teacher is informed and the sanction will be applied to the next yard break.

Note: *For incidents of serious and gross misbehaviour on yard, see the previous section for sanctions.*

Our Code of Behaviour prohibits inappropriate sanctions or responses which include:

- ridicule, sarcasm or remarks likely to undermine a pupil's self confidence
- public or private humiliation
- applying sanctions to whole groups or classes in cases of individual or small groups' wrongdoing
- leaving a student in an unsupervised situation (eg. a corridor)
- persistent isolation of or ignoring a student in class
- depriving a student of access to any part of the curriculum, as a sanction, unless such action is warranted due to safety reasons
- sanctions that are used in a discriminatory way; the *Equal Status Acts* require that schools do not discriminate in the use of sanctions and also forbid victimisation because of assertion of rights or involvement in proceedings under the Acts

- physical punishment or threat of physical punishment. Physical punishment, chastisement of a student is illegal under section 24 of the *Non-Fatal Offences against the person Act 1997*).

10. Implementing the Code of Behaviour

The essential elements of our implementation plan will be:

- Communicating the Code of Behaviour
 - Each family will receive a link to an online version of the Code of Behaviour at the start of each school year. A hard copy may be requested from the office.
 - All staff members receive a hard copy of the Code of Behaviour.
 - The principal will present, explain and discuss the Code of Behaviour with all parents/guardians present at the general meetings for each class level at the start of each new year. Any changes from previous years are highlighted. Parents/ guardians are expected to read the Code of Behaviour. All parents/guardians, upon enrolment of their child, sign to agree to abide by the Code of Behaviour and to support the school in its implementation.
 - The principal will explain the Code of Behaviour to parents/guardians of incoming 3rd class students.
 - Our school staff will model and teach the behaviours they expect from pupils.
- Providing supports for teachers (CPD), pupils (SCP) and parents/guardians (HSCL).
- Monitoring and recording behaviour in the school using Aladdin to gather reliable, factual information.

We aim to offer students a range of opportunities to have a say in decisions that affect them and to practice active citizenship e. g. through the Student Council, SPHE curriculum and student surveys.

11. Suspension

The decision to suspend a pupil rests with the Principal who must then inform the Board of Management. 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. The process of determining whether suspension is an appropriate response to a pupil's behaviour should include a review of:

- the nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- the context of the behaviour
- the impact of the behaviour on the learning of other students and on the teaching process
- the interventions tried to date
- whether suspension is a proportionate response to the pupil's behaviour

- the possible impact, positive or negative, of suspension

Achieving a balance between the needs of an individual student and other students will require the application of professional skill and judgement, on a case-by-case basis, drawing on factual and objective information. In school suspension under the supervision of the Deputy Principal may be considered where appropriate.

Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130 (5) for National Schools which states: *“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 the Principal to exclude a pupil or pupils from school, the maximum initial period of such exclusion shall be for 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.”

Procedures for Suspension:

Suspension can be considered for gross misbehaviour or persistent serious misbehaviour. Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. The decision to suspend a pupil must require serious grounds such as:

- The pupil’s behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others in class.
- There is a real and immediate threat to the safety of others or that of the student by continuing in the school or classroom at that time.
- Serious damage to property.

In exceptional circumstances, the principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff of the school, or any other person.

Except in the case of immediate suspension, the Chairperson of the Board of Management (BOM) will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and Principal. At this meeting, the misbehaviour will be discussed and where appropriate, alternatives to suspension will be considered. This may require the parents to give an undertaking to ensure that their child will comply with the Code of Behaviour.

Following this meeting, (or if the parents fail or refuse to attend without good reason), the pupil may be suspended for a temporary period.

The Chairperson or the Principal is authorised by the BOM to sanction suspension for a period of up to three days without reverting to the BOM, but the BOM may sanction a longer period of exclusion in accordance with Rule 130 (5).

Parents will be advised of the suspension or the possibility of suspension in writing. The terms and date of the termination of the suspension will be communicated in writing.

Records must be maintained detailing context of misbehaviour and reason and procedure for suspension.

Immediate Suspension

Immediate suspension for up to three days can and may be invoked by the Principal in the case of, continued serious/ gross misbehaviour, which constitutes a danger to the pupil or others, or which is unduly disruptive to the education of other pupils. This may also be used for the purpose of respite of staff.

Procedure:

1. Parents will be contacted immediately to take the pupil home. The pupil will be removed from the classroom and supervised until parents arrive to collect the pupil.
2. The Chairperson of the BOM will be informed. The Secretary of the BOM will be informed if the Chairperson is unavailable.
3. At the end of the immediate suspension period, the pupil may be reinstated in accordance with the provisions below, or the BOM may approve a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed.
4. Following suspension, the parent will be advised in writing of the terms and date of the termination of the suspension.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement):

Following or during a period of suspension, the parents/guardians may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parents/guardians must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the Code of Behaviour and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff or unduly disrupt the education of the other pupils. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to class.

12. Expulsion

The BOM has the authority to expel a pupil and this authority should not be delegated. Expulsion of a pupil is a very serious step, and one that will only be taken by the Board of Management in

extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour in accordance with Rule 130(6). Before expulsion is considered, significant steps will be taken to address the misbehaviour in an effort to avoid expulsion e.g.

- meeting with parents and the pupil to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour
- making sure that the pupil understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist
- ensuring that all other possible options have been tried
- seeking the assistance of support agencies (e.g. National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education).

Expulsion:

The Board of Management will undertake a detailed review of a range of factors in deciding whether to expel a pupil.

Determining grounds for expulsion are similar to grounds for suspension, but are more serious, e.g...

- the student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- the student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety of others or that of the pupil
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

Expulsion for a first offence

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence.

The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single offence are:

- a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- actual violence or physical assault
- supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school.

Procedures in respect of expulsion

Our school will follow fair procedures prescribed under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, when proposing to expel a student (see Developing a Code of Behaviour, Guidelines for Schools). Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms gross or persistent serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
2. A recommendation to the BOM by the Principal.
3. Consideration by the BOM of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.

4. BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

The BOM will decide which of the tasks involved in these procedural steps requires separate meetings and which tasks can be accomplished together in a single meeting, consistent with giving parents due notice of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for a Board hearing.

Step 1: A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal

In investigating an allegation, in line with fair procedures, the Principal will:

- Inform the pupil and their parents/guardians about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion
- Give parents/guardians and the pupil the opportunity to respond to the complaint of misbehaviour as the right to reply is central to fair decision making
- Parents/guardians will be given details in writing of the alleged misbehaviour and the proposed investigation. Copies will be kept of all correspondence.
- If a pupil and their parents/guardians fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a rescheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour. The school will record the invitation issued to parents and their response.

Step 2: A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal

Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal makes a recommendation to the BOM to consider expulsion. The Principal will:

- Inform the parents and the pupil that the BOM is being asked to consider expulsion
- Ensure that parents have records of: the allegations against the student; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the BOM is being asked to consider expulsion
- Provide the BOM with the same records as are given to parents
- Notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the BOM and invite them to that hearing
- Advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the BOM
- Ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

Step 3: Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendations and the holding of a hearing

The BOM will review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. The BOM will undertake a review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It will ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the BOM deliberations (e.g. a member of the BOM who may have made an allegation about the student).

If the BOM decides to consider expelling a pupil, it will hold a hearing. The BOM meeting for the purpose of the hearing will be properly conducted in accordance with BOM procedures. At the hearing, the Principal and the parents/guardians will put their case to the BOM in each other's presence. Each party will be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. The meeting may also be an opportunity for parents/guardians to make their case for lessening the sanction. In the conduct of the hearing, the BOM will take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be, impartial as between the Principal and the pupil. Parents/guardians may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the BOM will facilitate this, in line with good practice and BOM procedures.

After both sides have been heard, the Board should ensure that the Principal and parents/guardians are not present for the BOM's deliberations.

Step 4: Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing

Having heard from all the parties, the BOM will decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.

Where the BOM, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the BOM will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion. (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)). The BOM will refer to National Educational Welfare Board reporting procedures for proposed expulsions. The BOM will inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process.

Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

Within twenty days of receipt of a notification from a BOM of its opinion that a pupil should be expelled, in the interests of the educational welfare of the student, those concerned will come together with the Educational Welfare Officer to plan for the pupil's future education, i.e. the principal, parents/guardians.

Pending these consultations about the pupil's continued education, the BOM may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of students is secured (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(5)).

The BOM may consider it appropriate to suspend a pupil during this time. Suspension will only be considered where there is the likelihood that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other students or staff.

Step 6: Confirmation of the decision to expel

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the BOM remains of the view that the pupil should be expelled, the BOM will formally confirm the decision to expel (this task can be delegated to the Chairperson and the Principal). Parents/guardians will be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed.

Parents/guardians and the pupil will be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record will be made of the decision to expel the student.

Appeals

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act 1998 section 29). An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a student.

The appeals process under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 begins with the provision of mediation by a mediator nominated by the Appeals Committee (Department of Education and Science). For further details about the Appeals process, including requirements for documentation, and the steps in the process, refer to current DES guidance.

Review of use of expulsion

The BOM will review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school, and to ensure that expulsion is used appropriately.

13. Parental Concerns and Grievance Procedures

In implementing this Code of Behaviour, we recognise this requires a high level of cooperation between staff, parents/guardians and the wider school community, all of whom have a common aim in fostering a positive school environment where there is mutual trust and respect and a high degree of consensus about standards of behaviour.

Any parent/guardian who may have a concern about any aspect of this policy and/or its implementation as regards their child should raise that concern with the school. We believe that communication with parents is vital in this regard and would prefer to address any concerns a parent may have at the earliest possible stage.

Any parent/guardian who has a concern should, firstly, contact the pupil's teacher. If a parent needs to raise the concern further, the parent should make an appointment with the Principal.

Where a parent/guardian believes that his or her concerns have not been adequately addressed by these means, the parent may contact the Chairperson of the BOM and request that the concern be considered by the BOM.

14. Record Keeping

Class: Card changes due to misbehaviour are recorded on Aladdin. Serious/Gross misbehaviour is recorded in a behaviour log in Aladdin.

Yard: Teachers on supervision duty will be vigilant in monitoring behaviour and will record incidents of serious/gross misbehaviour on Aladdin. The class teacher and principal, where necessary, will be informed.

School Records: Parents will receive a Behavioural Report as part of their Parent/Teacher Meeting. Parents will also receive an end of year report with regard to their child's behaviour. Dockets and Reflection sheets (signed by parents) along with copies of the End of Year Reports are stored in the pupil's individual file in the office.

15. Notification of a Child's Absence from School

Our Code of Behaviour stresses the importance of notifying the school of a child's absence for any reason. This will normally be done through:

- parent/guardian speaking directly to class teacher/secretary
- the use of Aladdin Connect
- letter from parent/guardian to class teacher
- provision of a doctor's certificate for significant absences due to illness
- See also Attendance Policy

Parents/Guardians are obliged, by the Education Welfare Act 2000, to explain their child's absence from school. Notification of such absences can be given in advance (e.g. going on holidays, on the first day of absence), or when the child returns to school. If a parent/guardian fails to notify the school about a child's absence, then the matter will be pursued by the school. The school must inform the National Education Welfare Board if a child is absent for 20 days or more throughout the school year.

16. Reference to Other Policies

Other policies which have influenced the writing of this code include:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Records Retention Schedule

17. Reviewing the Code of Behaviour

The Code will be reviewed annually to establish if the goals and targets, set out as part of the plan for promoting good behaviour in the school, are effective and, if not, to identify the barriers to making progress towards these goals. With this in mind, this Code of Behaviour has been put in place and ratified by the Board of Management. We request that parents read the policy carefully with their child/children and discuss the contents.

The Code of Behaviour was reviewed in May and June 2024.

This policy was ratified on 18th September 2024.