

**Fermoyle National School  
Lanesboro  
Co Longford.**

# **Code of Behaviour**

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 In order to function efficiently and to serve the needs of its pupils, Fermoyle N.S requires rules and regulations, which are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly. The school’s ethos of respect for persons and property underpins this Code of Behaviour. Pupils, staff and parents show respect for each other at all times.
- 1.2 All members of the school community have a role in ensuring that this Code is upheld and promoted, so that a happy and positive learning environment can be maintained. By adhering to this Code and the School’s rules, with the support of parents and teachers, pupils contribute to sustaining a secure and caring atmosphere within the school.

- 1.3 Teachers are viewed as being *in loco parentis* during the course of the school day. Each member of staff is consistent in enforcing this Code throughout the School and has an important role to play in this area. Staff members are made aware, as appropriate, of circumstances and of particular challenges facing individual pupils, which may affect the pupils' behaviour. Teaching staff use their professional judgement when investigating misbehaviour and applying this Code of Behaviour to pupils.
- 1.4 In order to ensure that this Code is complied with, the school relies on the goodwill, support and co-operation of Parents/Guardians.
- 1.5 This Code applies in School, on School tours and at any other School activity/event, including those which take place outside the school, as provided for in this Code. We believe in teaching pupils that they have a responsibility to respect the wider community and to promote a positive image of their School.

## **2 DEVELOPMENTS OF THIS CODE**

- 2.1 Under Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 (the "**2000 Act**"), the Board of Management of each school must prepare and make available a code of behaviour for its pupils.
- 2.2 This Code has been prepared by the school, in accordance with Section 23 of the 2000 Act and the National Educational Welfare Board<sup>1</sup> ("**NEWB**") Guidelines and involved consultation with staff, the Parents' Association and the Board of Management.
- 2.3 The Child & Family Agency ("**Tusla**") must advise schools on matters relating to the conduct of pupils and must "promote and foster, in recognised schools, an environment that encourages children to attend school and participate fully in the life of the school."

## **3 AIMS OF THIS CODE**

- 3.1 Pupils are educated in a caring and orderly environment. Every effort is made by members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the issue of behaviour in the school. This Code offers a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are utilised.
  - 3.2 We want to create an environment where every pupil is afforded the opportunity to develop to his/her full potential. To achieve this, pupils are expected to choose to behave appropriately.
  - 3.3 It is very important that pupils understand that they have rights. It is also essential that they understand that with these rights come responsibilities.
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#### The school:

- Fosters in its pupils, habits of good conduct, good behaviour and self-discipline.
- Creates a safe, secure and orderly environment, so that all pupils are given the opportunity to learn, achieve and be successful in the school.
- Promotes, among the pupils, respect and caring attitudes for each other, for those who work with them and for the school itself.
- Ensures that teachers can deliver the educational programmes and that staff members can work effectively in the interests of all pupils.
- Develops the pupils' interpersonal skills and their ability to work co-operatively with others, to resolve problems and address actual conflict as the need arises. Recognises the importance of attendance and punctuality.
- Prevents pupils being disadvantaged by the behaviour of others. Each child has the right to an education in an environment where teaching and learning is not disrupted by the behaviour of others.
- Creates an atmosphere of courtesy and tolerance.

## **4 EXPECTED STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR**

The approach to school behaviour focuses on promoting good behaviour, which is built on respect for ourselves, for each other and for property. There are a number of specific School Rules but in general our Rules can be expressed very simply as:

Show respect for yourself, have respect for others and have respect for property.

## **5 PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**

- 5.1 Encouraging and acknowledging good behaviour and good work plays an important role in overall discipline. The strategies for promoting positive behaviour are set out in this Code. Essentially, a whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour is adopted and the standards of behaviour that are expected are communicated to the school community. Positive behaviour is acknowledged at all school events, including assemblies.
- 5.2 A high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among and between staff, pupils and parents/guardians.
- 5.3 It is hoped that all pupils, parents/guardians and staff will share a sense of responsibility about good conduct within the school. All members of the school community are actively encouraged to be involved in promoting positive behaviour.
- 5.4 The School promotes positive behaviour by:

- Providing an appropriate, broad curriculum.
- Using a variety of teaching approaches.
- Developing a pleasant, safe and stimulating learning environment.
- Developing co-operative learning.
- Giving constructive feedback to pupils, about their work and progress.
- Communicating in journals by telephone and/or by email with Parents/Guardians.
- Encouraging good relationships and affirming good behaviour.
- Striving for high standards and having high expectations for all.
- Stating clear and consistent expectations.
- Exploring with pupils how people should treat each other.
- Delivering programmes which promote wellbeing, appropriate peer interaction, empathy and resilience.
- Directing pupils to understand why their Code is important and that it is carried out in a fair and consistent way.
- Granting appropriate recognition and rewards.
- Giving some special privileges or responsibilities to pupils as appropriate.

## **6 MINIMISING UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR**

### **To minimise unacceptable behaviour:**

- Rules are enforced consistently and fairly and are consistent with the ethos of the school in terms of safety, learning, communication and respect.
- Rules are expressed in positive terms.
- Rules are discussed with pupils in classrooms and addressed at assemblies.
- Rules and routines are explicitly taught to younger children and there are regular rule reminders for older pupils.
- Understanding of rules is checked and pupils are encouraged to explain rules in their own words.
- New rules may be introduced as and when circumstances arise.

- Staff members are committed to addressing unacceptable behaviour and demonstrate this by:
  - a) Modelling the rules.
  - b) Being sensitive to the language used in describing inappropriate behaviour.
  - c) Making every effort to understand the reasons leading to incidents.
  - d) Following the procedures outlined in this Code.

## **7 SCHOOL RULES AND THEIR PURPOSE**

- 7.1 The school rules are clearly stated in this policy, which is on the school's website and is available to all parents/guardians.
- 7.2 A level of behaviour is expected from pupils which conforms to the aims of the school and to the School Rules.
- 7.3 The School considers that all pupils of the school should strive towards a high level of good manners and respect for others. Respect for others forms the basis for this Code.
- 7.4 Pupils abide by this Code and model good behaviour. It is therefore important that:
  - a) Pupils contribute to devising classroom rules.
  - b) Pupils learn about taking personal responsibility for their behaviour, thus contributing to each other's wellbeing and the wellbeing of all members of the school community.
  - c) Pupils are taught that good behaviour promotes a positive learning atmosphere.
  - d) Older pupils are encouraged to "watch out" for the younger pupils and learn the importance of modelling good behaviour, e.g., at whole school assemblies.

## **8 OPENING/CLOSING TIMES & ATTENDANCE**

- 8.1 Each morning, our pupils assemble and form class lines in the playground.
- 8.2 The bell rings at 09.30. Lines are then collected by teachers. All pupils walk into class in an orderly fashion.

- 8.3 Children, who arrive late (after 9.30am) must enter the school by the front reception as the playground gates will be locked.
- 8.5 Pupils are expected never to leave the school without permission. If a pupil is to leave during school hours, it is required either that the class teacher receives such a request in writing from a parent/guardian/nominated adult and / or that the parent/ guardian/ nominated adult calls in person to reception to request that the child leaves. In the interests of the safety of the pupil, it is necessary that the pupil be signed out at and collected from the reception area.
- 8.6 Should a pupil leave the school premises without permission, his/her parents and the Gardaí are contacted.
- 8.7 A written explanation for all absences from School is expected from parents/guardians.
- 8.8 School starts at 9.30am and ends at 2.10 pm for pupils in Infant Classes and at 3.10 pm for pupils in First to Sixth Classes. Pupils exit the grounds in a timely manner. The School does not accept responsibility for pupils outside of these times, unless on a School outing or engaged in an organised School related activity/event, about which parents/guardians have been notified in advance.

## **9 CLASSROOM & SCHOOL BUILDING**

- 9.1 Pupils are expected to enter the classroom in an orderly manner.
- 9.2 Pupils are expected to use the coat hooks provided.
- 9.3 Pupils are expected to follow the "Kind hands, kind feet, kind face, kind words" rule.
- 9.4 Unless otherwise instructed, pupils should remain seated during class and while eating and at appointed times, e.g., at playtime on wet days.
- 9.5 Pupils take care of their own belongings, i.e., school bag, books, copies, coats etc.
- 9.6 Pupils are expected to store their bags safely as instructed by their teacher.
- 9.7 Pupils are only permitted to use the bathrooms one person at a time. They flush the toilet after use and always wash their hands.
- 9.8 Pupils listen to instructions carefully and follow them. Pupils are encouraged to seek clarification from the teacher if they do not understand an instruction.
- 9.9 Pupils tolerate differences and accept that others may have challenges.
- 9.10 Pupils are expected to be truthful.
- 9.11 Pupils are expected to take turns, show respect for the views, ideas and property of others and co-operate with other pupils and staff.



9.12 Pupils are expected to apply themselves to all tasks and work to the best of their ability.

9.13 Pupils are expected to follow agreed class rules.

9.14 Class teachers escort their classes to the exit at break times and escort pupils in from the yard.

9.15 Pupils are expected to walk inside the school building. They should show consideration to others and enter/exit the school premises/building with care.

9.16 Polite and appropriate language is expected from pupils at all times. For example, pupils are encouraged to say, "excuse me", "please" and "thank you". Swearing/the use of inappropriate language are considered misbehaviour.

9.17 Pupils listen without interrupting and allow other pupils to learn. They recognise that all pupils have a right to contribute during classes.

9.18 Pupils show respect for the views, ideas and property of others.

## **10 HOMEWORK**

Homework should be completed to the best of the pupil's ability as per the Homework Policy of the School.

## **11 BREAKTIMES**

11.1 Follow the "Kind hands, kind feet, kind face, and kind words" rule.

11.2 Playing in the schoolyard is confined to the designated areas and pupils are expected to use the activity zones correctly.

11.3 Under no circumstances should a pupil leave the schoolyard without the permission of the teacher on yard duty.

11.4 Rough play of any description is not allowed and any incidents of such should be reported to the teacher on duty by pupils

11.5 It is strictly forbidden to climb up to or on to the railings, walls or fences.

11.6 Pupils are expected to follow the instructions of the teachers and Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) on yard duty and any issues arising during playtime should be reported to the members of staff on duty.

11.7 Pupils are expected to stop the activity they are engaged in when the teacher blows the whistle.

11.8 Pupils are expected to walk to their lines.

- 11.9 Pupils are expected to line up in an orderly fashion on the line and avoid skipping places or pushing.
- 11.10 Pupils are expected to walk back to their classrooms in an orderly fashion.
- 11.11 If the weather does not permit going out to the yard, the pupils will remain in their classrooms and are supervised by teachers and SNAs assigned to specific areas. The pupils remain seated and may not eat when their class teacher is not in the room. Pupils may not leave their places without the permission of one of the supervising staff. The class teacher provides suitable safe activities for the pupils.
- 11.12 Pupils are expected to go to the yard every day. Those, who for medical reasons and at the request of their parents/guardians do not go out to the yard remain in the 'First Aid' area where they are supervised by the teacher on duty there.
- 11.13 As previously stated, polite and appropriate language is expected from pupils at all times. For example, pupils are encouraged to say, "excuse me", "please" and "thank you". Swearing/the use of inappropriate language are considered misbehaviour.
- 11.14 The class teacher and/or the teacher(s) on yard duty investigates incidents and use their professional judgement to decide if an incident needs to be recorded and/or reported to parents.

## **12 SCHOOL OUTINGS**

- 12.1 The expected standards of behaviour are maintained by pupils on School outings/School organised events.
- 12.2 As previously stated, appropriate and polite language is expected from pupils at all times, including on School outings and at school related events/activities. Swearing and/or the use of inappropriate language is considered to be misbehaviour.

## **13 GENERAL SAFETY**

- 13.1 Swinging on chairs is forbidden.
- 13.2 Skateboards, roller blades and heellies are not allowed on the school grounds.
- 13.3 Cycling/ Scootering are not allowed on the school grounds.
- 13.4 It is strictly forbidden to climb up to or on to the railings, walls or fences.
- 13.5 Pushing or horseplay is forbidden.
- 13.6 Food should never be brought into the toilet area.
- 13.7 Groups of boys/girls should not gather in the toilets.
- 13.8 Pupils are expected to move in and out of the toilets as quickly as possible.

13.9 Pupils are strictly forbidden from bringing articles to school which could cause injury to others.

## **14 SCHOOL PROPERTY**

14.1 Pupils respect School property and ensure that litter is put in the bins. Theft or damage of any sort is considered serious misbehaviour.

14.2 Pupils are responsible for the appearance of, condition and safe keeping of School books.

14.3 Chewing gum and tip-ex, as well as other brands of correction fluid are forbidden.

14.4 Graffiti is not tolerated and is considered serious misbehaviour.

14.5 As fire alarm systems and fire equipment are designed to save lives, any interference with same is considered serious misbehaviour.

## **15 PERSONAL PROPERTY**

15.1 Personal belongings such as games consoles, music players, toys etc. should not be brought to school

15.2 Mobile phones are not permitted in school, except where special permission to have a phone has been granted by Board of Management. (Refer Mobile Phone Policy).

## **16 UNIFORMS**

16.1 Pupils should wear the school uniform and suitable footwear while attending school, unless otherwise informed.

16.2 Pupils are not permitted to wear clothing with offensive graphics, logos or lyrics.

16.3 Pupils are expected to comply with the School's Policy on jewellery. (Refer Jewellery Policy)

16.4 Pupils are expected to be neat and tidy.

## **17 INCLUSIONS**

17.1 Inclusion of all pupils is promoted. Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) may need additional instruction and support to reach the expected standards for their behaviour, taking account of their needs and challenges. Behaviour targets may be included in their School Support Plans and/ or Plans to Promote Positive Behaviour

- 17.2 In the event of a pupil with SEN exhibiting aggressive or violent behaviour, the appropriate interventions are put in place, to ensure the safety of the pupil, other pupils and staff.
- 17.3 Plans to promote positive behaviour are drawn up. These may include functional behaviour analysis, strategies to help the pupil to manage his/ her behaviour, self-regulation strategies, breaks from the classroom, differentiated behaviour expectations etc.
- 17.4 When notwithstanding the use of the appropriate interventions, the inappropriate behaviour persists; the behaviour will be dealt with, in accordance with this Code, which may include the use of suspension and/or expulsion as appropriate.

## **18 MANAGING EMOTIONAL BEHAVIOURAL DISORDERS (EBD)**

- 18.1 Parent/guardian consent is sought for psychological assessment /multidisciplinary assessment for pupils who present with indicators of an emotional and/or behavioural disorder.
- 18.2 Following assessment, appropriate support is sought from available services, e.g. Tusla, NEPS, and National Council for Special Education (NCSE). Where care needs are identified, and if a written recommendation has been made by a suitably qualified professional e.g. Psychologist, SNA support is also applied for through the NCSE.
- 18.3 When notwithstanding the use of the appropriate interventions, the inappropriate behaviour persists and/or where there is no parent/guardian consent for an assessment, the behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with this Code, which may include the use of suspension and/or expulsion as appropriate.

## **19 PARTICIPATION IN THE SCHOOL DAY**

- 19.1 Prior to admission or at any other time during the pupil's time in the school, there may be consultation with the parent/guardians and/ or The Education Welfare Officer to review the pupil's participation in the school day. This would be considered in exceptional circumstances where a pupil's behaviour is such that it interferes with his/her right to education or that of other pupils or with his/her safety or that of other pupils and the school is awaiting support from the Special Education Needs Organiser.

In such instances, a plan may be put in place that allows for temporary, phased participation in the school day. (Shortened day)

- 19.2 This phased participation, which is not a sanction, would be reviewed on a regular basis, participation being increased, maintained, or decreased, based on the child's ability to manage the school day as judged by school staff in consultation with parents, EWO and SENO.

19.3 Where notwithstanding the use of this intervention the behaviour persists, the behaviour may have to be dealt with under the suspension/expulsion provisions of this Code.

## **20 THE ROLE OF STAFF**

20.1 Staff members treat all pupils with respect and dignity. All members of staff familiarise themselves with this Code and support its implementation. Staff model the school's standards of behaviour in their interactions with pupils and others.

20.2 Each teacher has a responsibility to maintain discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school and at School related activities/events.

20.3 Teachers conform to the Teaching Council's Code of Conduct.

20.4 The promotion and recognition of positive behaviour is achieved through:

- Modelling and reinforcing good behaviour.
- Using opportunities to praise and encourage pupils.
- Using reward systems e.g., star charts, homework passes, group of the week etc.
- Working with pupils to develop a set of class rules each year.
- Explaining School Rules to the pupils.
- Cooperation between class teachers and the SEN team in the preparation of Student Support Plans Specific targets are set in relation to behaviour. When necessary, a Behaviour Plan is devised and added to a pupil's support file.
- Ensuring that new staff members are made aware of this Code.  
  
Preparation of and use of social stories where appropriate.
- Liaison with outside agencies eg. Tusla, School Age Disability Team (SADT) Camhs etc.
- Using the SPHE curriculum to support this Code.

## **21 THE ROLE OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

21.1 The Board of Management has overall responsibility for ensuring that this Code is prepared and implemented. The Board of Management provides support to the principal and staff, where necessary, in implementing this Code, e.g. provision of

opportunities for staff development, as appropriate. Where suspension or expulsion of a pupil may be deemed necessary, the Board of Management will adopt the procedures laid out in this Policy, which are in accordance with the NEWB Guidelines.

#### 21.2 The Board of Management:

- Is involved in the consultation review and ratification of this Code.
- Supports staff in the implementation of this Code.
- Becomes involved in certain matters, as outlined in 10.1 of this Code.

## **22 THE ROLE OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

22.1 Good behaviour in our School depends upon co-operation between parents/guardians, pupils and teachers.

22.2 Parents/guardians are requested to support this Code and to model the standards of behaviour expected from pupils. Parents/guardians who wish to enrol their children are given a copy of this Code and are required to confirm in writing their acceptance of this Code

22.3 Parents/guardians are requested to:

- 22.3.1. Read this Code and become familiar with its contents.
- 22.3.2. Be aware of the school's rules and procedures and encourage their child/children to abide by them.
- 22.3.3. Communicate with the School about any factors likely to affect the behaviour of their child/ children in school.
- 22.3.4. Act as positive role models for their child/ children in their relationship with the school.
- 22.3.5. Make appointments to see teachers and/or attend planned meetings with teachers.
- 22.3.6. Provide the School with all the necessary background information about their child/children, including informing the school promptly about any concerns they have or any significant change in their son/daughter's needs or home circumstances.
- 22.3.7. Be aware of and co-operate with the school's system of rewards and sanctions.
- 22.3.8. Adhere to signs around the school.
- 22.3.9. Support the expectation of appropriate behaviour.

- 22.3.10. Supervise younger, non-school going children at all times while on the school premises.
- 22.4 Posting of derogatory comments on social media platforms about members of staff/ the school and/or members of the School community by pupils/parents/guardians is treated with the utmost seriousness. In the case of pupils, it will be deemed a serious breach of this Code. In the case of others, the Board of Management reserves the right to take appropriate action. Staff members/other members of the school community may also have recourse to options available to them.
- 22.5 As the Board of Management is responsible for the health and safety of all staff and pupils, parents/guardians are requested not to reprimand another person's child on the school premises and/or at school related activities/events, but to bring such matters/ concerns to the attention of school management and/or teaching staff.
- 22.6 The Board of Management does not tolerate rude, threatening or aggressive behaviour and/or assaults by parents towards staff members or other parents. The Board of Management has a duty of care to protect staff under the Health, Safety & Welfare at Work Act 2005. In the event of a person engaging in rude, threatening or aggressive behaviour and/or assault, the individual will be asked to leave the premises and the Board of Management informed. The matter may also be notified to An Garda Síochána.
- 22.7 Parents/ Guardians who wish to make a complaint may do so by following the Complaints Procedure as outlined on the school's website under "Policies".
- 22.8 Meetings with teachers and the Principal are by appointment only. Supervision and teaching cannot be interrupted, as a staff member cannot adequately supervise children while at the same time speaking to a parent. Every effort is made to facilitate a meeting with the teacher/Principal, as soon as possible. If a parent/guardian has an urgent message for a teacher, the message may be passed on via the secretary or by email to the school. Parents/guardians are requested not to go into classrooms in the mornings to speak to teachers.
- 22.9 In any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this matter is private to the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents/ guardians and the school.

## **23 MANAGEMENT OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR IN THE INFANT CLASSES**

- 23.1 From September, the Infant classes are gradually introduced to the school's rules and to the reasons for their existence. These rules are constantly reinforced so that pupils become familiar with them. Good behaviour is lauded and rewarded during this learning period.
- 23.2 Various strategies are employed by staff to discourage unacceptable behaviour in our infant classes, including (but not limited to):
- 23.2.1 Reasoning.
  - 23.2.2 Temporary separation from peers.

23.2.3 Loss of privilege.

23.2.4 Reprimand issued by class teacher, support teacher, Principal, or Deputy Principal.

23.2.5 Temporary removal to another classroom or to the office of the Principal or Deputy Principal.

23.2.6 Communication with parent/guardians.

23.3 In rare situations where all of the above strategies have not been effective, a child may leave early by mutual agreement of parent/ guardians and school authorities.

23.4 During the recreation period, children who pose a danger to themselves and/or others are withdrawn from the play area for a short period. If the behaviour persists, it may be necessary to remove the child from the playground for his/her safety and the safety of others.

## **24 MANAGEMENT OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR IN FIRST TO SIXTH CLASSES**

24.1 The nature of the behaviour will determine the strategy to be adopted and the proposed sanction. Judgement on the part of staff is based on a commonsense approach with regard to the gravity and frequency of breaches of discipline/this Code.

24.2 Unacceptable behaviour is categorised under:

1. Minor Breaches of Discipline (25)
- and**
2. Serious Breaches of Discipline (26)

## **25 MINOR BREACHES OF CONDUCT**

25.1 The nature of the misdemeanour(s) will be judged by the teachers and/or Principal, with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours as outlined below.

25.2 Examples of minor misdemeanours include interrupting class work, talking in class, running in the School building, the pupil leaving his/her seat without permission, leaving litter around the School, being discourteous/unmannerly, not completing homework without written explanation, not having a journal in school, name calling, eating in the classroom other than at designated times, , littering in the classroom or on the School grounds, delaying return to class on time from breaks etc. If any of the above occurs in a persistent and/or regular way, they can be treated as serious misdemeanours. These examples are listed to give an understanding of what can constitute a minor misdemeanour and the list is not intended to be comprehensive or exhaustive.



25.3 Examples of steps that are taken by teachers when dealing with minor breaches of discipline:

25.3.1 Verbal reprimand/reasoning with pupil.

25.3.2 Yard incidents are relayed to class teachers at the end of the playtime if the matter has not been resolved during the play period.

25.3.3 Assigning a Behaviour Reflection and/or prescribing additional work for home or school (Refer Appendix 1)

25.3.4 Note in homework journal to be signed by parent/guardians.

25.3.5 Temporary separation from peers. (Refer Appendix 2)

25.3.6 Loss of privileges.

25.3.7 Send to Principal/ Deputy Principal.

25.3.8 Conversation or meeting with parents (by class teacher)

25.3.9 Conversation or meeting with parents (by principal/deputy principal)

25.3.10 Detention. (Refer Appendix 3)

## **26 SERIOUS BREACHES OF CONDUCT**

26.1 Examples of Serious Breaches of Conduct

26.2 The nature of the misdemeanour(s) will be judged by the teachers and/or Principal with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours.

26.3 Examples of serious misdemeanours include being constantly disruptive in class, telling lies, stealing, damaging other pupil's property, bullying/harassment in any form, bringing weapons/dangerous implements to School, offensive text/social media message(s), deliberately injuring a fellow pupil, bringing inappropriate music/literature to School, leaving the School premises without permission, endangering self/fellow pupils while in the School or on School related events/activities, misbehaviour that is persistent/regular and/or persistently disruptive to learning and/or potentially dangerous, physical or verbal aggression towards others, deliberate violent behaviour towards another pupil or staff member causing harm or putting him/her at risk of injury, using unacceptable/offensive language towards a staff member, participating in games considered dangerous to oneself or others, throwing objects in yard/classroom, damaging other pupils' property/school property, using graffiti on school property/furniture, possession or display of unsuitable material, taking photographs or photographic images of staff or pupils by any media, inappropriate use of any electronic devices including sending of explicit images, any criminal act or act which could be considered criminal, etc. These examples are listed to give an understanding of what can constitute a serious misdemeanour and the list is not intended to be comprehensive or exhaustive.

### **Steps which may be taken when dealing with serious breaches of Conduct**

- Pupil is sent to Principal/ Deputy Principal.
- Principal/ Deputy Principal sends note home in journal, to be signed by parents/guardians.
- Principal/ Deputy Principal meet(s) with parents/guardians/.
- Chairperson of Board of Management informed, and parents/guardians requested to meet with Chairperson and Principal.
- Detention. (Refer Appendix 3)
- Suspension/Expulsion in accordance with this Code and the NEWB Guidelines. (Refer Appendix 4 and Appendix 5)

**NOTE: Bullying is always unacceptable and is dealt with under the School's AntiBullying Policy which is available on the school website. Alleged bullying is, in the first instance be dealt with under that policy and where appropriate under this Code.**

## **27 SEXUALLY EXPLICIT CONTENT**

- 27.1 The creation/sharing/distribution/possession of sexually explicit content is prohibited and is considered a serious breach of conduct.
- 27.2 The creation/sharing/distribution/possession of sexually explicit content involving persons under 18 years of age is a crime and will be reported to an Garda Síochána.

## **28 DAY-TO-DAY BEHAVIOURAL ISSUES**

- 28.1 Pupils frequently bring issues to teachers for resolution when they are unable to resolve them. Teachers encourage, support and show pupils how they may resolve these issues. In this way, pupils build up the skills necessary for the resolution of issues in later life. Pupils are enabled to resolve conflicts with the aid of a teacher.
- 28.2 When the teacher judges it necessary, (s) he will become involved and help resolve a behaviour issue. Most issues can be resolved at this point. This may happen with or without consulting the parents/guardians, or Principal or other designated senior members of staff.
- 28.3 Parent/guardians are kept informed, as appropriate, about the resolution of behaviour issues. The teacher decides when this is appropriate. Parents are asked to respect a teacher's professional judgement in resolving behaviour issues and/or conflict between/ among children.

## **29 INVOLVING PARENTS/GUARDIANS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PROBLEM BEHAVIOUR**

29.1 Ordinarily parents/guardians are contacted when a pupil's behaviour is causing disruption/harm to the pupil and/or to other pupils. For isolated incidents and in appropriate cases, pupils will be given the opportunity to improve before parents/guardians are contacted. However, if the problem behaviour persists or if

the matter merits it, parent/guardians are notified and may be invited to the school to discuss the issue.

29.2 If pupils engage in repeated minor misdemeanours or major misbehaviour, the parents/guardians are informed. Initial contact is made by the class teacher or may be made by the Principal/Deputy Principal depending on the gravity of the misbehaviour. Meetings with parents/guardians are arranged at a mutually convenient time and may be attended by both teacher and Principal/Deputy Principal. The pupil may also be invited to attend. A constructive, mutually respectful approach is encouraged. Parents/guardians are welcome to contact the school regarding concerns they may have regarding their child's/ children's behaviour or the behaviour of others towards their child/children.

## **30 BEHAVIOUR SUBJECT TO THIS CODE**

30.1 The standards and rules contained in this Code apply to all pupils of the School when in attendance at the School and in any situation where the pupil, although not on school premises, is still the responsibility of the School. Examples include, School tours, games and extracurricular activities and attendance at activities/events organised by the School.

30.2 The School reserves the right to apply this Code to a pupil who has or is engaging in behaviour outside School/external to the School, which is considered by the School to have had or to have the capacity to have a negative impact and/or detrimental effect and/or be damaging to the School and/or to members of the School community.

## **31 REWARDS**

31.1 There is a whole school approach to promoting good behaviour. The School operates the policy "catch them being good". Praise or rewards may be given by some or all of the following means:

- Class teachers reward good behaviour in a class setting. At class level, rewards are given at the discretion of the class teacher. Examples of recognition for positive behaviour and good work are: verbal praise, merit award on the class merit chart, earning of reward or 'Golden Time', being sent to the Principal's office and/or other classes for recognition, positive note in the school journal, display of work that deserves particular recognition etc.

31.2 Good news is communicated to parent/guardians at parent/guardian teacher meetings, both formal and incidental, end of year reports, written comments at the end of work and/or homework journal.

## **32 SANCTIONS**

32.1 The objective of a sanction is to help the pupil to learn. As far as possible, sanctions are relevant, related to the misbehaviour and flexible enough to address individual circumstances.

32.2 Curriculum subjects will not be withdrawn from a pupil, except where her/his behaviour in class is a source of danger or disruption to others.

32.3 In imposing a sanction, it is the misbehaviour which is unacceptable and not the individual.

## **33 RECORDING MISBEHAVIOUR**

33.1 Not all incidents of indiscipline are recorded. Staff use a commonsense approach and their professional judgement in this regard. Some incidents of indiscipline are recorded on the back of the school journal by way of informing parents of the misbehaviour. Incidents may be recorded on 'Aladdin' at the discretion of the class teacher. Parent/guardians are contacted as soon as possible when a serious incident is recorded.

33.2 Where necessary, Behaviour Support Plans are put in place and saved on Aladdin in the Student Support File.

33.3 Any incidents of bullying are dealt with in accordance with the School's AntiBullying Policy.

## **34 SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

The procedures in relation to suspension and expulsion are set out in Appendix 4 and Appendix 5.

## **35 REVIEW**

This Code will be regularly reviewed by the Board of Management and may be subject to change at any stage during the school year, as deemed necessary by the Board of Management and/or legislative or other requirements etc.

## **36 RATIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION**

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on **11/11/21**

All parent/guardians/guardians will get a copy of the policy following ratification and thereafter prior to enrolment.

**Signature: Albert Cooney**

**Chairperson of Board of Management**

**Date:** 11/11/21

**Review Date:** November 2022

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1**

**(Depending on the age of the child and the nature of the misbehaviour, other templates may be used)**

**Sample Behaviour Reflection Sheet**

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

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What rule(s) did I break? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What were my reasons? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What should I have done instead? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2

### Internal Exclusion ("Time out")

The primary reason for 'time out' is to protect pupil and staff rights (especially the right to feel safe and the right to learn). It gives the pupil time to cool down and regain composure. The pupil learns to make the connection between behaviour and outcome.

If a pupil continually disrupts teaching and learning, he/she may be withdrawn from the classroom. Reasons for time out include (but are not limited to):

- Persistent talking/laughing causing disruption to teaching and learning.
- Making unnecessary noise
- Throwing objects
- Inappropriate and/ or abusive language
- Misuse of or deliberate damage to equipment, furniture or resources.
- Making unpleasant remarks
- Using negative body language
- Refusal to follow school procedures
- Threatening/aggressive behaviour towards others

The following procedures are followed:

- i. The pupil may be separated from the class/group in the classroom or may be supervised in another room.
- ii. The class is redirected to their work. iii. A Behaviour Reflection may be completed by older pupils.
- iv. If the pupil refuses to leave, additional help is sought from Principal/Deputy Principal/In-School Management Team and parents/guardians are contacted. If the pupil's continuing presence in the classroom poses a health and safety risk to the other pupils in the class, they and their teacher exit the room leaving the pupil under the supervision of a staff member.
- v. Should 'Time Out' fail to calm a child and aggressive behaviour, which interrupts teaching and learning continues, a child may be collected before the end of the school day, subject to parental permission.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Detention**

The sanction of "detention" shall be imposed on a pupil if a teacher, in consultation with the Principal/Deputy Principal, decides that an incident or a series of incidents of misbehaviour warrants a detention.

When the sanction of "detention" is imposed, the pupil shall be detained in the First Aid area of the School hall under continuous supervision during his/her normal lunch-break for the period commencing at 12.30 pm and ending at 1.00 pm.

## Appendix 4

### Suspension from School

Suspension is defined as: *requiring the pupil to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.*

- During the period of a suspension, the pupil retains his/her place in the school.
- The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a pupil. It has delegated authority in writing to the Principal to suspend a pupil for a period not exceeding three days.
- If a suspension for more than three days is deemed necessary, the matter is referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval. However, the Board of Management authorises the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board of Management, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances, where a meeting of the Board of Management cannot be convened in a timely fashion.
- The Board of Management will normally place a ceiling of 10 days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. However, the Board of Management reserves the right to impose a longer period of suspension in appropriate cases.
- Suspension will be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. The decision to suspend a pupil requires serious grounds such as:
  - The pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils.
  - The pupil's continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to safety.
  - The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.
- A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.
- In cases where the Principal is imposing the suspension, the incident, will, where possible, also be investigated by the Deputy Principal.

#### **Factors which will be considered before suspending a pupil:**

##### **1. The Nature and Seriousness of the Behaviour**

- What is the precise description of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been?
- Has the problem escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

##### **2. The Context of the Behaviour**

- What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (eg. in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in a group?)
- What factors may have triggered incidents of serious misbehaviour (eg. bullying, cultural or family factors)



What is the age, stage of development and cognitive ability of the pupil?

- Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (eg. particular circumstances, SEN)?

### **3. The Impact of the Behaviour**

- How are other pupils and staff affected by the pupil's behaviour?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?
- Does the behaviour have a particular or greater impact on some pupils or teachers?
- Does the pupil understand the impact of his/her behaviour on others?

### **4. The Interventions Tried to Date**

- What interventions have been tried? Over what period?
- How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?
- What has been the result of those interventions?
- Have the parents/guardians been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?
- Has the intervention of NEPS 8 or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought, where appropriate?
- Are any other interventions such as peer mediation, restorative justice approaches or family conferencing available and/or appropriate?
- Is the pupil or parents/guardians involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?
- Has any other agency been asked for assistance, e.g. Child and Adolescent Services?

### **5. Whether Suspension is a Proportionate Response**

- Does the pupil's behaviour warrant suspension?
- Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour, the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other pupil?

### **6. The possible impact of suspension**

- Will suspension allow additional or alternative interventions to be made?
- Will suspension help the pupil to change the inappropriate behaviour?
- How will suspension help teachers or other pupils affected by the behaviour?
- Will suspension exacerbate any educational vulnerability of the pupil?

### **7. Suspension will be part of an agreed plan to address the pupil's behaviour. The suspension should:**

- Enable the school to set behavioural goals with the pupil and his/her parents/guardians.
- Give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions.

- Impress on a pupil and his/her parents/guardians the seriousness of the behaviour.

### **8. Informing the pupil and his/her parents/guardians**

The pupil and his/her parent/guardians/guardians will be informed about the complaint, how it will be investigated and that it could result in suspension.

- Parents/guardians may be informed by phone or in writing, depending on the seriousness of the matter. If informed by phone, a follow up letter will be sent.

### **9. Opportunity for parents/guardians and pupil to respond**

- Parents/guardians & the pupil are given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed.
- A meeting is held with the pupil and the parents/guardians and they are afforded an opportunity to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts.
- This meeting may also be an opportunity for the parents/guardians to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents/guardians how best to address the pupil's behaviour.
- If a pupil and his/her parents/guardians fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write to them advising them of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour.
- The School will record the invitations made to the parents/guardians and their response.

### **10. Immediate Suspension**

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 of staff of the school, or any other person. Fair procedures will be applied.

### **11. Procedures in relation to immediate suspension**

- Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the pupil, other pupils, staff or others, a preliminary investigation will be conducted to establish the case for imposition of the suspension.
- The formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension.
- The suspension will not be open-ended. The parents/guardians will be notified and arrangements made with them for the pupil to be collected.

### **12. Review**

The Board of Management will formally review any proposal to suspend a pupil, where the suspension will bring the number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended).

### **13. Appeals**

The Principal's decision to suspend a pupil can be appealed to the Board of Management.

#### **14. Section 29 Appeal**

- Where the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents/guardians may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended).

At the time the parents/guardians are being formally notified of a suspension, they and the pupil are informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Skills under S.29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended) and are given information on how to appeal.

#### **15. Implementing the Suspension**

##### **Written notification**

- The Principal will notify the parents/guardians and the pupil in writing of the decision to suspend the pupil. The letter will confirm:
- The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
- The reasons for the suspension.
- Any study programme to be followed.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitment to be entered into by the pupil and the parents/guardians (for example, the parents/guardians might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to this Code).
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management (where applicable).
- The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Skills under S.29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended) (where applicable).

Where appropriate, when a decision to suspend has been made, the Principal or another member of staff delegated by the Principal will meet the parents/guardians to emphasise their responsibility in helping the pupil to behave well when the pupil returns to school and to offer help and guidance on this. Where the parents/guardians do not agree to meet the Principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.

#### **16. Grounds for removing a suspension**

- A suspension may be removed if the Board of Management decides to remove the suspension for any reason or if the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Skills directs that it be removed following an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended).

#### **17. After the Suspension ends**

- The period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents/guardians about the suspension.

## 18. Re-integrating the pupil

- The school will put in place a plan to help the pupil to take responsibility for catching up on work missed.
- This plan will help to avoid the possibility that suspension starts or amplifies a cycle of academic failure.
- Where possible, the school will try to arrange for a member of staff to provide support to the pupil during the re-integration process.

## 19. Clean slate

- When the suspension is completed, the pupil will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start.
- Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed the school will expect the same behaviour of this pupil as of all other pupils.

A pupil will not be suspended again shortly after s/her returns to school unless:

- S/he engages in misbehaviour that warrants suspension; **and**
- Fair procedures are observed in full; **and**
- The standards applied to judging the behaviour is the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other pupil.
- Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will observe the following procedures:
  - It will inform the pupil and his/her parents/guardians about the complaint; **and**
  - It will give the parents/guardians and pupil an opportunity to respond.

## 20. Records & Reports

### Records

- Formal written records will be kept of:
  - a) The investigation process (including the notes of all interviews held).
  - b) The decision-making process.
  - c) The decision and the rationale for the decision.
  - d) The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

### Report

- The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension

- The Principal will report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines as per the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.
- The Board of Management will review the use of suspension 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 use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

## **Appendix 5**

### **Expulsion from School<sup>9</sup>**

“A pupil is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him/her from the school, having complied with the provisions of Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000”.

The Board of Management’s policy and procedures for expulsion are in line with the NEWB Guidelines and with any additional requirements set down by the Patron.

#### **1. Authority to expel**

- Only the Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil. This authority is reserved to the Board of Management and will not be delegated.

#### **2. Grounds for Expulsion**

- Expulsion will be a proportionate response to the pupil’s behaviour, it is recognised that it is a very serious step.
- A pupil may be expelled where:
  - a) The pupil’s behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
  - b) The pupil’s continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
  - c) The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.
- The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension.
- In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference is that, where expulsion is considered, other interventions will have been tried and it is believed that all possibilities for changing the pupil’s behaviour have been exhausted.

#### **3. Expulsion for a first offence**

- There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a pupil 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 breach of this Code could include:
- Violence or physical assault, including but not limited to, a threat against another pupil, member of staff or a member of the school community.

- Supplying illegal drugs including but not limited to supplying illegal drugs to other pupils.
- Sexual assault.

### **Factors to consider before proposing expelling a pupil**

Given the seriousness of expulsion as a sanction, the Board of Management will undertake a detailed review of a range of factors in deciding whether to expel a pupil including:

#### **The nature and seriousness of the behaviour**

- What is the precise description of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been and over what period of time?
- Has the problem behaviour escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

#### **The context of the behaviour**

- What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (eg. in class, in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in a group)?
- What factors may have triggered or provoked incidents of serious misbehaviour (eg. bullying, cultural or other factors)?
- Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (eg. particular circumstances, special educational needs)?

#### **The impact of the behaviour**

- How are other pupils and staff affected by the pupil's behaviour?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?

#### **The interventions tried to date**

- What interventions have been tried? Over what period?
- How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?
- What has been the result of these interventions?
- Have the parents/guardians been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?
- Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought, where appropriate?
- Is the pupil or parents/guardians involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?
- Has any other agency been asked for assistance (eg. Child Guidance Clinic, Child and Adolescent Mental Health services)?
- Is the Board of Management satisfied that no other intervention can be tried or is likely to help the pupil to change his/her behaviour?

#### **Whether expulsion is a proportionate response**

- Is the pupil's behaviour sufficiently serious to warrant expulsion?

- Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other pupil?

### **The possible impact of expulsion**

- To what extent may expulsion exacerbate any social or educational vulnerability of the pupil?
- Will the pupil be able to take part in, and benefit from, education with his/her peers?
- In the case of a pupil who is in care, what might be the implications of expulsion for the care arrangements?

### **Inappropriate use of expulsion**

Expulsion will not be proposed for:

- Poor academic performance.
- Poor attendance or lateness.
- Minor breaches of this Code.

However, any behaviour that is persistently disruptive to learning or dangerous can be a serious matter. Behaviour will be examined in context to understand both the behaviour itself and the response or sanction that is most appropriate.

### **Procedures in respect of expulsion**

The Board of Management is required by law to follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the *Education (Welfare) Act, 2000*, when proposing to expel a pupil. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms 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 Board of Management by the Principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

The Board of Management will decide whether the tasks involved in these procedural steps require separate meetings and which tasks can be accomplished together in a single meeting, consistent with giving parents/guardians due notice of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for the Board of Management 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 his/her parents/guardians about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion

- Give the parents/guardians and the pupil every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.
- Parents/guardians will be informed in writing of the alleged misbehaviour and the proposed investigation in order to have a permanent record of having let them know. This also ensures that parents/guardians are very clear about what their son or daughter is alleged to have done. It serves the important function of underlining to parents/guardians the seriousness with which the school views the alleged misbehaviour.
- Parents/guardians and the pupil will have every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made about the veracity of the allegation, and before a sanction is imposed. Where expulsion may result from an investigation, a meeting will take place between the pupil and his/her parents/guardians. The purpose of this meeting is to provide them with an opportunity for them to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts. It may also be an opportunity for parents/guardians to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents/guardians how best to address the pupil's behaviour.
- If a pupil and/or his/her parents/guardians fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled 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/guardians 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 will make a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The Principal will:

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

### **Step 3: Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing**

- The Board of Management will review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. The Board of Management will undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It will ensure that no party who had any prior involvement in the case is



part of the Board of Management's deliberations (for example, a member of the Board of Management who may have made an allegation about the pupil).

- Where the Board of Management decides to consider expelling the pupil, it will hold a hearing. The Board of Management meeting for the purpose of the hearing should be properly conducted in accordance with Board of Management procedures. At the hearing, the Principal and the parents/guardians put their case to the Board of Management in each other's presence. Each party should 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 Board of Management must take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be, impartial as between the Principal and the pupil. Parents/guardians may be accompanied at hearings and the Board of Management will facilitate this, in line with good practice and Board of Management procedures.
- After both sides have been heard, the Board of Management will ensure that the Principal and parents/guardians are not present for the Board of Management's deliberations.

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

- Having heard from all the parties, the Board of Management will decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.
- Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled, the Board of Management will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.

The pupil will not be expelled before the passing of twenty school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification<sup>2</sup>.

- The Board of Management will inform the parents/guardians in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. Where expulsion is proposed, the parents/guardians will be told that the Board of Management will inform the Educational Welfare Officer.

#### **Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer**

- Within twenty days of receipt of a notification from a Board of Management of its opinion that a pupil should be expelled, the Educational Welfare Officer must:
- Make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents/guardians and the pupil, and anyone else who may be of assistance •  
Convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend.
- Pending these consultations about the pupil's continued education; the Board of Management may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of pupils is secured<sup>3</sup>. The Board of Management may consider it appropriate to suspend a pupil during this time. Such suspension will only be considered where there is the likelihood that the continued presence of the pupil during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils 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 Board of Management remains of the view that the pupil should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel. This task will 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 will be supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record will be made of the decision to expel the pupil.

### **An Appeal**

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

### **Review of use of expulsion**

The Board of Management 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.