

Code of Behaviour



Scoil Maelruain Sinsear

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This is a fluid live document

Introduction and Rationale:

In line with Scoil Maelruain Senior's Mission Statement, the Code of Behaviour in our school is designed to provide a happy, secure, friendly, learning environment where children, teachers, parents, special needs assistants, ancillary staff and Board of Management work in partnership. Each individual is valued, encouraged and respected for their uniqueness and facilitated to reach their full potential- academically, physically, emotionally, spiritually and socially -in a positive atmosphere. The key to the code is ***respect for the rights and feelings*** of others.

Aims:

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour based on consideration and respect for the rights of others.
- To facilitate the education and holistic development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

Approaches to Rewards and Praise

Scoil Maelruain Senior places greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the long run, give best results. Our approach to rewards and praise include the following:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in the pupil's dialann/copy
- A visit to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Awarding some special responsibility or privilege

Teachers engage in a variety of rewards that suit the various age levels and interests of the pupils. These may include:

- Tokens, points, treats or stickers awarded to individuals/groups /class for good behaviour and effort invested in school and homework
- Homework passes
- Student of the week certificates

Restorative Practice

Restorative Practice in our school focuses on developing positive relationships between all members of the school community. It gives opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and learning. Restorative Practice is a process whereby children are given the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and how they and others have been affected by it so as to help heal broken relationships and prevent reoccurrence

Restorative Questions:

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking of at the time?
3. What have your thoughts been since?
4. Who has been affected by what you did?
5. In what ways have they been affected?
6. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

General Guidelines for Behaviour:

All pupils are expected to behave in a reasonable manner both to themselves and to others, showing consideration, courtesy and respect for other pupils and adults at all times.

Behaviour in Class

Courtesy and Respect are essential. Disrespectful behaviour towards other pupils or towards a teacher (e.g. defiance, cheek, insolence) are unacceptable. Pupils must respect the right of other pupils to learn. Any behaviour which interferes with this right (e.g. constant disruption of the class, persistent distracting of others) is considered unacceptable behaviour.

In order that pupils benefit from their work in class full cooperation is required at all times.

At the beginning of each academic year teacher and pupils draw up their own code of conduct for the class. This contract is then displayed in the classroom.

If a pupil is not adhering to the contract the class teacher may

- Send a note home to parents
- Give the child extra written work
- Separate the child from the class temporarily
- Request a meeting with the parents
- Send pupil to principal or deputy principal

Behaviour in Yard

Pupils should treat others as they would like to be treated themselves. Any behaviour which endangers or offends others is not permitted. Rough behaviour e.g. fighting, kicking, spitting, pushing is forbidden. Instructions of the supervising adults must be followed at all times. If a pupil is not adhering to the rules the adult on yard duty may

- Separate the child from his/her peers
- Give the pupil extra written work
- Send a note home to parents
- Request a meeting with the parents
- Send pupils to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

Procedures for Dealing with Repeated Misbehaviour or Unacceptable Behaviour:

Child is sent to the Principal/Deputy Principal.

Yellow card: Pupil will complete the restorative questions and undertake to improve his/her behaviour. This will be signed by both the pupil and the Principal/Deputy Principal

Orange Card: Teacher and Principal/ Deputy Principal meet parents. A behaviour plan is put in place signed by all parties.

Red Card: Teacher and Principal/Deputy Principal meet parents again. Child is moved to a different class

Black Card: Suspension /Expulsion

Note: Child may go straight to any card depending on the seriousness of the offence.

When a child is on a card their behaviour is closely monitored. If there are no recorded incidents in a four week period there is a step back process.

Suspension

Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- the student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- the student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- the student is responsible for serious damage to the property.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

Authority to Suspend

The Board of Management of the school has the authority to suspend a student. This authority is delegated to the Principal in the event that an immediate suspension of no longer than three days is warranted. All longer term suspensions can only be imposed by the Board of Management. The Board of Management places a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension.

The Board of Management will review any proposal to suspend a student, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student 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.

Appeals:

The Board of Management should offer an opportunity to appeal a Principal's decision to suspend a student. In the case of decisions made by the Board of Management an appeals process may be provided by the Patron.

Section 29 Appeal

Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days the parents may appeal the suspension to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 of the Education Act.

Clean Slate

When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a student should 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 should expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

Expulsion:

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a student. Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour. 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 student. The following procedures will be followed:

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

In investigating an allegation, the Principal will

- Inform the parents in writing of the alleged misbehaviour and the proposed investigation.
- Where expulsion may result from an investigation a meeting with the student and his/her parents will take place.

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

The principal will:

- Inform the parents that the Board of Management 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 Board is being asked to consider the expulsion
- Provide the Board with the same reports as given to the parents
- Invite the parents to the hearing by the Board
- Advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board

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

- It is the responsibility of the Board to review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures.
- When a Board decides to consider expelling a student, it must hold a hearing. At the hearing, the Principal and the parents put their case to the Board in each other's presence.

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

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

- Having heard from all parties, it is the responsibility of the Board to decide whether or not the allegations are substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.
- The Board should inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. Where expulsion is proposed, the parents should be told that the Board of Management will inform the Educational Welfare officer.

Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

Within twenty days of receipt of a notification from a Board of Management of its opinion that a student should be expelled, the Educational Welfare Officer must

- Make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents and the student
- Convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend.

The purpose of these meetings is to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education. A Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time.

Step 6: Confirmation of the decision to expel

- Where the twenty day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed the Board of Management should formally confirm the decision to expel. Parents should be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal.

Appeals

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science. An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Board on behalf of a student.

Conclusion :

This policy was drawn up by the teachers, parents and students of Scoil Maelruain.

It was ratified by the Board of Management in June 2018.

It will be reviewed in 2023 or as the need arises.