Code of Behaviour for Scoil Fhursa

Introductory Statement:

The staff of Scoil Fhursa reviewed the Behaviour Policy during the school year 2021. They consulted The Board of Management and Coiste na dTuismitheoirí.

Rationale:

- To ensure an orderly environment for learning in the school.
- It is a matter of diligence for the school's community to regularly revise the policy.
- It is a requirement under the Education Act (Amended) 2000 Section 23 (1) which refers to the obligation on schools to prepare a Code of Behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in Section 23 (2), that the Code of Behaviour shall specify:

  a) The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school.
  b) The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards.
  c) The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned.
  d) The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student.
  e) The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

Interpretation:
For the avoidance of doubt, this Code is to be read with the National Education Welfare Board Guidelines for Schools. If there is any conflict between the Code and the Guidelines, the Guidelines prevail.

Vision Statement - Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School:

Scoil Fhursa is a Christian All Irish model school under the patronage of the Bishop and the Minister for Education and Skills.

A core value of the school since its foundation in 1932 is the preservation of the Irish language.

We understand in Scoil Fhursa that young people have a very important role in promoting the Irish language and in speaking it outside the school.

We aim to provide a positive, stimulating kind and safe environment for each child – irrespective of their religion, race, gender, economic status, home status or sexual orientation.

We support the spiritual, moral and cultural needs of each child.

We understand differences in ability, - the intellectual needs, and the talents and personalities of the children.

The school has a central role in reinforcing strengths and ameliorating weaknesses.

It is our vision that we would build the self confidence of each member of the school community, promote respect in each person for others, and lay the foundation for lifelong learning.

- In accordance with the philosophy of the school, we want the children to be happy and safe during playtime and learning time in the course of the day.

- It is the aim of primary education to develop the child's ability, to have a complete and thorough education as is expected for a child, and to prepare the child for further education and lifelong learning so that the child will have the ability to progress as a social being through living and co-operating with other people in a way that benefits society in general.
- We wish to nurture a safe environment for the children of the school so that they can fully realise their own potential. For this reason behaviour will not be tolerated that is not in keeping with the foregoing philosophy and that impacts negatively on the education and safety of other people.

Irish:

Irish is the language of the school. We make every effort to encourage the children to speak Irish well and to be proud of speaking it. Every child must speak Irish in the classroom, in the playground, in the school environs and at school related occasions (i.e. tours, games, competitions, etc.)

Aims:

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement.

- To create an atmosphere where there is respect and understanding for each other and in which people are accepted.

- To promote positive behaviour and self discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.

- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.

- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community.

- To assist parents and children in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the Code of Behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.

- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

Content of Policy:

The content of the policy is as follows;

1. **Guidelines for behaviour in Scoil Fhursa**

2. **Whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour**
   - The Staff
   - The Board of Management
   - Parents
   - Children

3. **Positive strategies for managing behaviour**
   - The Classroom
   - The Playground
   - Other areas in the school
   - School Related Activities

4. **Rewards and sanctions**
   - Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour
   - Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour
   - Involving parents in management of problem behaviour
   - Managing aggressive or violent behaviour

5. **Procedure for notification of a pupil's absence from school.**

6. **Keeping records**
   - The Classroom
   - The Playground
   - School records

7. **Suspension/Expulsion**
   - Suspension
   - Expulsion
   - Appeals

8. **Reference to other policies**

Section 1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school:

The Education Welfare Act, Section 23 states that the code of behaviour shall specify, " The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school"

General school rules

- The children are expected to respect themselves and others.
- The children are expected to respect school property, other children's property, the property of teachers and their own property.
- The children are expected to be polite, truthful and honest with the school's community, teachers, pupils, parents and visitors.
- It is expected that each pupil will attend school on a regular basis and be punctual.
- Each child is expected to be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults.
- Children are expected to be kind to their peers and to be helpful towards others.
- Each child is expected to do his/her best at school and with homework.
- Children are expected to use conflict resolution skills (discussion etc) to resolve conflicts.
- Children are expected to use respectful language.
- Children are expected not to run wildly or to scream loudly.
- It is expected that mobile phones will not be used in the vicinity of the school or at school events e.g. school tours, games, etc.
- No pupil/parent/staff member is permitted to take photographs of, or record in any form, other pupils, staff, parents or school events without specific permission to do so.
- No pupil/parent/staff member is permitted to publish photographs or recording in any form, of other pupils, staff, parents or school events without specific written permission to do so.
- Pupils/Parents/Staff should not upload photos/video or recording in any form of Scoil Fhursa children onto social media sites e.g. Facebook etc.

Specific rules that apply in the classroom

Specific rules apply in the classrooms. Rules are developed in discussion with the pupils. Here are examples of classroom rules:

- In the morning, come in, sit down and begin work.
- Irish is the language of the school.
- I will raise my hand when I wish to speak.
- Everyone will respect each other.
- Come to school ready to work.
- Be polite to everyone.
- Listen when the teacher is speaking.
- Hold the railing when on the stairs.

Refer to Appendix 1 for examples of rules for the lower , middle and senior classes. Refer to Appendix 2 for examples of minor misdemeanours, of serious misdemeanours, and of gross misdemeanours**.** Refer to Appendix 3 for the School Rules.

Section 2. Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour:

Our Code of Behaviour will provide sound guidance for a whole school approach to promoting good behaviour and for responding to unacceptable behaviour. It will provide an understanding of what influences the behaviour of children and positive strategies for affirming and promoting good behaviour.

The Staff

- Particular emphasis is put on the cultivation of a positive atmosphere/surroundings both in the classroom and in the school, which will support and sustain good behaviour. We encourage good behaviour so that each child is happy and safe in their school surroundings.
- Staff will ensure that they consistently give good example.
- Praise and encouragement aids the development of self confidence in children. In Scoil Fhursa we emphasise recognition of good behaviour rather than punishment in order to develop good manners and a high standard of learning.
- Praise is given for positive behaviour through a mixture of strategies as outlined here;
- A quiet word to indicate respect or to show satisfaction e.g., "I like the way you said/did that" etc
- A written comment in the child's copybook
- A visit to another teacher or the Principal for due praise
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Giving the child a special responsibility or privilege e.g. "Golden Time"
- A word of praise to a parent – written or spoken
- Varying modes of recognition e.g., a badge, a certificate, etc.
- The name of the child to be entered into the "Crannchur" and for names to be drawn at specified time (Home time, Friday afternoon etc.)
- Staff have an opportunity to discuss good and bad behaviour and to learn from each other. Behaviour strategies are reviewed regularly.
- Teaching is effective, the curriculum is comprehensive and encouraging, the programme for learning is adapted according to the ability of the children, the active participation of the children is encouraged and they are motivated to learn.

- Skills and routines of class management are promoted, along with effective teaching methods.

- The code of behaviour applies to every child including children who may have behavioural difficulties arising from special educational needs. Such needs are addressed through Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Behavioural Plans, social groups and clear strategies being set out in consultation with the learning support/resource staff, consultation with parents, class teachers and special needs assistants.

- The Social Personal & Health Education (SPHE) curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour e.g., group/circle time. Its aim is to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, as well as conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem, accept difference and to develop citizenship.

The Board of Management:.

It is the overall responsibility of the Board of Management to ensure that a code of behaviour is developed in the school and to ensure that the entire school community is active in its development, its implementation, and in its review. The Board has particular responsibility to develop the ethos of the school which includes a Scoil Lán Ghaelach ethos (where emphasis is on consistent development of the language) as well as overall responsibility for school policies.

A formal record is kept by the Board of Management of the acceptance and confirmation of the code of behaviour, its start date, and decisions as to when reviews are carried out.

The Board of Management supports the staff in implementing the code of behaviour through the development of staff development opportunities as well as the provision of books, resources to promote good behaviour and its positive development. The Board of Management gives support to staff and to parents by providing all necessary opportunities for the effective implementation of the school's code of behaviour.

Parents/Guardians

In order that the code can be applied effectively and in a meaningful way, we need full co-operation from parents/guardians. The success of our code of behaviour will be enhanced through good communication, goodwill, and parental loyalty to the school.

- An open relationship exists between the staff and the parents/guardians regarding every aspect of school life. Parental co-operation is encouraged through various events and an opportunity is given for them to participate in school work as much as is possible.
- Prior to the Junior Infant children starting school, an information meeting for parents/guardians is held in the school where the school rules are explained to them.
- In September/October an information meeting is held, by each class teacher with the parents/guardians of respective classes, in which they outline the year's work and the behavior which is expected.

- The parents/guardians are informed of the rules, positive rewards and sanction systems in the school, and they co-operate with them.
- The parents/guardians attend meetings at the school if they are invited.
- We work in a co-operative manner with the Parents' Committee and we listen to their viewpoints.
- Information nights regarding particular aspects of the code of behaviour are organized to help parents/guardians with issues of discipline e.g., Cyberbullying, Safety on the internet, Stay Safe, Conflict Resolution.
- Parents on the Board of Management have an input into every aspect of school policy.
- According to section 23 (4) of the Education Welfare Act, the Principal makes available a copy of the code of behaviour to parents/guardians of the child on registration in the school. The Principal will (as a condition of registering the child) ask the parents/guardians to confirm in writing that they accept the Code and that they will make every reasonable effort to ensure that their child will fulfill that code.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to support children in having a sense of respect for themselves and for property.

Parents/guardians are asked to:

- Ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually.
- Encourage their children to respect themselves, and to respect others and their property.
- Be interested in their children's schoolwork and give every support and encouragement to the children to do their best.
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect their child's progress/behaviour at school.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to get in contact with the class teacher with regard to any anxiety regarding their child's behavior. The procedures for contacting the school are in Section 5.
- Provide a definite place for their children to do their homework. It is important to read with the child every day.
- Ensure that children have the appropriate books and materials for school each day.
- Co-operate and support the school's Irish language policy, ie speak Irish in school (if possible)

The Children:

- Rules/class code of behaviour is drawn up with the children.
- The main points of the code of behavior are discussed with the children and they are afforded regular opportunity to give their own views.
- The children familiarise themselves with general rules of the school, the schoolyard and the classroom. They discuss the rules at home with their parents.
- Children attend school regularly and on time.
- Children participate fully in the work of the class.
- Children respect others.
- Children respect school property and others' property.
- Children do their assigned homework to the best of their ability.

Section 3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour:

Positive Strategies are implemented throughout the school to promote good behaviour and to prevent misbehaviour.

The Classroom

Practical Strategies for teachers to encourage and promote good and positive behaviour in the classroom:

- We will promote a warm and accepting classroom environment, where children feel cared about and are encouraged to care about others.
- Be alert to what is going on in the classroom at all times.
- Praise and reinforce positive behaviour by saying to the children e.g., "I like the way you did that, said that, showed that etc…"
- We use age appropriate vocabulary to correct a child.
- We create a positive atmosphere for learning in each class.
- Classroom rules are devised with input from the children. The rules are clearly displayed in the classroom.
- The teachers ensure that the pupils understand the behavior which is expected and they regularly remind the children
- The teachers explain the connection between a child's behaviour and its consequences, e.g. sanctions such as removal if distracting others to an appropriate time out space. The learning support/resource teacher and the classroom teacher will discuss classroom rules with the children with special educational needs.
- Use strategies to help children maintain these routines and boundaries e.g. using prompt card systems for keeping children on task, use of visual time-tables.
- We use a clear system giving due recognition to good behaviour and occasionally providing a prize or privilege as part of that recognition. We use suitable prizes such as a star chart, extra golden time, a weekly certificate of good behaviour etc. Sanctions are implemented in the event of poor behaviour.
- We use classroom management strategies which encourage the active participation of the children in their learning. We use varying teaching methodologies e.g. mixture of whole class teaching, group work, pair or individual work.
- The changing of seats/places allocated in the class – this is advised as appropriate.
- Ensure a smooth transfer between subjects and classrooms.

The schoolyard:

- Clear rules are defined for the playground emphasising good behaviour and clearly outlining the permitted activities. These rules are discussed at staff meetings at the beginning of the year and at other times during the school year if necessary. The rules are explained to the children in the classroom and at assembly.

- The yard is divided into two different periods at break time and lunch time.
  Break time
  Group 1: 10.10 - 10.25 Junior / Senior Infants – 1st and 6th Class
  Group 2: 10.30 - 10.45 2nd to 5th Class
  Lunch time
  Group 1: 12.10 - Junior / Senior Infants – 1st and 6th Class
  Group 2: 12.35 - 12.55 R3 B - R6.
  A rota has been set out for supervision.

- The classes play in their own space - Infants, 1st and 2nd class, 3rd and 4th class, 5th and 6th class and at the moment in their own pod thanks to Covid 19. The Senior classes are in Coláiste Mhuire at lunchtime: Group 1 12.10 to 12.30 Monday to Thursday and from 12.00 to 12.20 on Friday ***. Group 2 12.35 to 12.55 Monday to Thursday and from 12.25 to 12.45 on Friday ***.

- Children will play appropriately with specific regard to the safety of everyone in the schoolyard. If a child's play/activity is deemed to be unsafe or inappropriate, it will be necessary for a child to go the reflection wall (for a short period).

- Teachers will enforce rules promptly, consistently and in a fair manner.

- There are five staff members in the yard in Scoil Fhursa yard and three staff members in the yard in Coláiste Mhuire each time children are out.

- Requests to visit the toilet are addressed to the supervising teacher.

- When a child is sick they are sent home, while they await collection they remain in the Principal's Office or in the Covid Room under supervision.

- Sanctioned children remain in their Classroom, Class Teacher, Principal or Deputy Principal to supervise.

- Serious misbehavior is reported to the class teacher. Any incident in the yard is recorded in the notebook. For minor incidents some time out at the wall may be given. (short age appropriate time).

- When the children are going to the playground they are asked to walk in a line to their section. After playtime the school bell is rung and all activity is stopped in a "freeze".

- Teachers bring their own class to and from the playground.

Wet Days

- On wet days children must sit in their place; walking about is not allowed. The children are allowed to play with board games and to talk to one another etc. Irish language Videos /DVD's may be shown especially in Infant classes.
- Supervision – there is an arrangement in place between class teachers for supervision.

Other school areas

- **It is the duty of each teacher to ensure that every child is adhering to the school rules in all areas of the school.**
- The teachers remind the pupils of the importance of walking in and out of the school, to the hall, on the corridors, attending the toilets, etc.
- Reminders of the rules are given at assembly. The children are frequently reminded of them, particularly at the beginning of the school year and at the start of term.

School Activites.

The standards and rules that are in the code of behaviour apply to the children when they are attending activities outside of the school e.g., school tours, games, extra curricular activities and attendance at events that the school organises.

Section 4. Rewards & Sanctions:

Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour.

Praise is given for good behaviour by means of a combination of the following strategies:

- A quiet word to indicate respect and satisfaction e.g. “I like the way you did, said that, etc.”
- To write an account in the child’s copybook
- To visit another teacher or the Principal to receive praise and recognition
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Giving special privilege or responsibility e.g Golden Time, star charts, a weekly certificate for good behaviour
- A written and/or spoken word of praise to a parent/guardian
- To give special recognition e.g. a badge, a cert, a green card (for speaking Irish)
- To put the name of the child in the raffle and to pick out names for a prize at a specific time – home time, Friday evening etc.
- Prizes are awarded for effort, not just for success.
- All awards will be devised in such a way that they are achievable for all children.

These strategies are reviewed on an annual basis at staff meetings. Each teacher will have the opportunity to share their thoughts regarding strategies in use.

Examples of the types of prizes and awards that are given

A night without homework, DVD time for the class, additional time on the computer, reading a favourite book, prizes from the €2 shop, scholar of the week, sweets.

Strategy for responding to inappropriate behaviour

The aim of sanctions and strategies is to address inappropriate behaviour and to promote positive behaviour thereby avoiding inappropriate behaviour.

As regards children with special needs, teachers will be careful to help the student to understand the aims of the sanctions clearly and the reason that their behaviour is unacceptable. The school and classroom practices that support good behaviour are for all children including those with special educational needs.

1. Speak to the child and give them advice
2. Verbal Reprimand and discuss ways on how to improve.
3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class.
4. If stages 1 – 3 fail, privileges will be withdrawn
    - Detention during lunch break.
    - Reflection wall at lunchtime – reflection space (in their own yard, age appropriate number of minutes).
    - Additional homework to be given.
    - Homework to be given at the weekend.
    - A worthwhile task to be performed in the school e.g. sorting out sports equipment in the hall, helping in the Junior Infants' room etc.
    - Removal of privileges.

During stages 1-4 the teacher will record minor incidents.

5. The teacher informs the Principal. The Principal speaks to the child and discusses with him/her the inappropriate behaviour and why it may not reoccur.
6. The teacher informs the parents/guardians (by means of a note to sign/a phone call.)
7. If the difficulties continue the parents/guardians will be invited to discuss the child's case with the class teacher initially. The matter will be discussed and it will be explained that the school is expecting full co-operation. Reference will be made to the code of behaviour and parents/guardians will be informed of the next stage in the disciplinary process if the behaviour does not improve. If the child is in a senior class, perhaps the child could be present at the end of the meeting along with the parent/guardian (depending on the case).
8. Daily monitoring/weekly monitoring of the child.
9. If the difficulties still continue, parents/guardians will be invited to come and to discuss the matter with the teacher and the Principal. The next stage in the disciplinary process is explained to them.
10. If the misbehaviour continues the Board of Management will be informed. It is recommended that the Board of Management send a registered letter to the parents/guardians explaining matters to them and the implications.
11. Another invitation will be given to the parents/guardians to come into the school and to discuss the matter with the parties mentioned herein. The parents/guardians will then be informed of the next stage - 3 day suspension.

Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school will be in accordance with procedures as outlined in "Developing a Code of Behaviour: guidelines for Schools" and with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circulars and Education Welfare Act 2000)

Involving parents/guardians in the Management of Problem Behaviour

To ensure good behavior, the school looks for the support and co-operation of parents/guardians. It is the parents/guardians who are responsible for the child's behaviour when they come to school. The loyalty and attitude of parents/guardians to the school helps considerably regarding the behaviour of children. The staff will ensure that the school is an open and welcoming place for parents/guardians so that they will not be reluctant to come and talk to staff of the school regarding any matter of concern to them.

- There is open communication between school staff and the parents/guardians of the school. If there is concern regarding a child's behavior, parents/guardians are contacted. The class teacher contacts parents/guardians initially by phone or note.
- Depending on the case, the teacher may request that the parents/guardians attend the school. Depending on the case and the child, it might be arranged that the child would be present at the end of the meeting.

Managing aggressive or violent behavior:

An angry outburst in the class, in the school yard, in the vicinity of the school, or at a school activity.

Sometimes we get indicators that a sudden outburst could occur e.g., physical signs, stamping of feet, facial colour, tone of voice, fidgeting furiously, a change of expression, etc.

Strategy to quell the outburst

- Stay calm and collected.
- Assess the situation.
- If other children are in danger, remove them.
- Send a message to the person nearest you as quickly as possible.
- Attempt to quieten the child and to quell the anger.
- Distract to something else. This will be more efficient with younger children, to direct their attention to a nice toy or to an event happening elsewhere.
- Remove the source of anger.

- Remove the child from the situation that is causing them distress. Send the child on an errand etc. If the anger is directed at a teacher, it is best if the teacher moves away from the child.
- Change the task that you are asking the child to perform.
- Avoid sarcasm. Try to lighten the atmosphere.
- Listen to the child and show respect for his/her opinion.
- Beforehand teach calming techniques such as breathing, running, punching a pillow.
- It is important that a positive behavourial programme is available for children so that they understand their triggers so they can choose a different behaviour when they are upset.

Escaping from the classroom/school yard:

Send word immediately to the person nearest you. Use the phrase "Solas Dearg" to indicate an emergency or help required.

Depending on particular cases, it may not be to the benefit of the child to pursue them from the yard. This status will be understood by the staff in preselected cases.

In other unexpected cases, without forewarning, the teacher/teachers/other people in charge at that time, will make every effort to coax the child back to the school. Parents and an Garda Síochana will be informed immediately.

The management of violent or aggressive behaviour.

Each child is a unique individual, has its own differences and identity. From time to time external or internal influences can affect a child. Teachers recognise that in the event of a child experiencing difficulties which impact directly on his/her self discipline, on class discipline and on the safety of teachers that such behaviour will present significant problems. Each child has his/her own right to a safe and healthy school environment and this entitlement must be promoted as much as possible.

- If a child displays behavioural problems to the extent that other children and the teachers' safety are at risk, the Principal will advise parents to have their child assessed professionally eg. a Psychological Assessment.
- Recommendations will be made to look for support from local support services such as Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO), the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Community Care, the Health Service Executive (HSE), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Community Psychology Services, The National Council for Special Education (NCSE), Guidance services for children. The Code of Behaviour must be followed by every child in the school.

- With help from Learning Support/Resource Teachers, Individual Behavioural Plans for children are compiled.
- Each member of the staff working together can provide support for the class teacher by helping the teacher to assess and analyse the reasons that might trigger bad behaviour in a child and by finding methods to change that behaviour.
- We seek support from Professional Development Services for Teachers (PDST) assistants in all of the subjects including behavioural issues. Members of staff are informed of courses pertaining to the subject of behaviour in the Education Centre. Personnel from the Special Education Support Service (SESS) can support teachers by disseminating best practice.
- A reference library of books on the subject of behavioural difficulties and methods of dealing with same is available to staff to further their knowledge in this area.

Section 5. Procedures for notification of a pupil's absences from school:

If a child is absent from school for any reason, the parent/guardian writes a note to the class teacher when the child returns to school or the parent provides a note on the school system Aladdin Connect. The note gives the reason for the absence. If the child has attended a doctor, a medical certificate could be provided.

- The class teacher keeps these letters and doctor's certificates for children in a folder in the classroom. Letters and doctor's certificates will be kept until such a time as the child is 21 years of age.
- According to Section 18 of the amended Education Act 2000 there is a statutory obligation on parents to ensure that their child attend a recognised school from the time that they are registered in that school. It is also the duty of parents/guardians, according to the Act, to inform the school if their child is absent and give the reason for the absence.

According to the Act the National Education Welfare Board (now TUSLA) must be informed if a child is absent for 20 days or more The Principal is obliged to write to parents/guardians when a referral is sent to TÚSLA about their child.

The Principal writes to parents/guardians when the child has 15 days' absence. (TÚSLA recommendation)

In junior and senior infants, parents/guardians are requested to inform teachers if someone other than the usual person is taking their child home The designated persons bringing the child home should be listed on the Contact Form.

- Written notification is required from parents/guardians if a child is to leave school during school time. The arrivals/departures book has to be signed opposite the office.
- If a child arrives after 8.50 the arrivals/departures book must be signed.

Procedures relating to making contact with the school - Stages to be Followed:

1. If there is anything concerning a parent/guardian about any aspect of their child's schooling, they should contact the class teacher to discuss the matter. An appointment must be made.
2. A formal arrangement for a meeting should be made in the office. At all times the reason and need for the meeting will be made known. In a similar manner if any teacher wishes to speak to a parent/guardian regarding any aspect of the child's schooling, he/she will contact the parent/guardian and let them know the basis and reason for the proposed meeting.
3. If the problem is about any other aspect of school life or if a parent is not happy after discussions with the class teacher, it may be discussed with the Principal. It will be left to

the discretion of the Principal to arrange a meeting between the parents/guardians and teacher.

Procedures in making a complaint to the school:

Stage 1

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

Stage 2

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

Stage 3

If the complaint is not resolved informally, the chairperson should, subject to the general authorisation of the Board of Management and except in those cases where the chairperson deems the particular authorisation of the board to be required:

a) supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint; and
b) arrange a meeting with the teacher and, where applicable, the principal teacher with a view to resolving the complaint. Such a meeting should take place within 10 days of receipt of the written complaint.

Stage 4

1. If the complaint is still not resolved the chairperson should make a formal report to the Board of Management within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3(b).
2. If the Board considers that the complaint is not substantiated, the teacher and the complainant should be so informed within three days of the Board meeting.

3. If the Board considers that the complaint is substantiated or that it warrants further investigation it proceeds as follows:

   a) The teacher should be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage;
   b) The teacher should be supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint;
   c) The teacher should be requested to supply a written statement to the board in response to the complaint;
   d) The teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of case to the Board. The teacher would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting;
   e) The Board may arrange a meeting with the complainant if it considers such to be required. The complainant would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting; and
   f) The meeting of the Board of Management referred to in (d) and (e) will take place within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3(b).

Stage 5

When the Board has completed its investigation, the chairperson should convey the decision of the Board in writing to the teacher and the complainant within five days of the meeting of the Board.

The decision of the Board of Management shall be final.

In this procedure 'days' means school days.

If the complainant is still dissatisfied with the Board's decision, he/she may contact the Department of Education and Skills regarding advice as to how best to proceed from this stage.

Strategies to encourage school attendance;

- At the annual meeting of parents and the meeting of new parents of Junior Infants, the Principal informs the parents of the contents of the Amended Education Act 2000, the importance of punctuality and good school attendance. A reminder letter is issued to each parent every September and January in which the importance of punctuality and good attendance is outlined.
- Parents are strongly advised not to take children on holiday during school term
- We create a stimulating and attractive school environment
- Children are regularly reminded to be at school every day and on time

- Parents/guardians are contacted to discuss attendance issues.
- A child is welcomed to the school at whatever time or day he/she arrives.
- Due recognition to be given to improved or good attendance
- We adapt curriculum content and methodologies to maximise relevance to pupils
- We adapt curriculum content and methodologies to maximise relevance to pupils.
- The school fulfills its responsibilities with regard to reporting absences to TUSLA, if necessary.
- The Principal sends a letter to parents/guardians when the child is 15 days absent. (recommendation from TUSLA).

Section 6. Keeping Records.

Class Level:

Teachers record children's good behaviour and misbehaviour. Good behaviour is recorded on star-charts, tickets etc. In line with school policy good behaviour is reported to parents/guardians on a regular basis – a note home, at parent teacher meetings etc.

Class teachers have a Class Diary in which they record minor continuous misbehaviour or minor incidents. The teacher uses appropriate strategies to help the child be responsible for their behaviour.

If the misbehaviour continues it is reported to the principal. The Principal advises the child.

If difficulties continue, parents/guardians are notified. The Class Teacher meets the parents/guardians.

The Playground:

Minor incidents in the playground are corrected by the supervising teacher.

More serious incidents are notified to the class teacher as they take the class from the playground. The class teacher records the incident in the Class Diary.

If there is an accident in the playground it is recorded in the Incident Book.

Section 7 Suspension and Expulsion:

Suspension:

Schools are required under Section 23 (2) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 to include in their code of behaviour the procedures that are to be followed before a child is suspended or before a student is expelled from the school.

The principle of fair procedures and natural justice will be used. (See p 67, Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools)

Before a pupil is suspended, the following will be taken into account:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The Interventions tried to date
- Whether suspension is a proportional response. Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern
- The possible impact of the suspension

Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension and staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

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

Forms of Suspension

Immediate Suspension

In exceptional circumstances the Principal may consider an immediate suspension is necessary in the event of the continuing presence of the student being a real threat to the safety of the student himself/herself, the staff of the school, or of any other person.

Procedures regarding immediate suspension

- Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of safety of the student, other students, staff, or others, a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension.
- The formal investigation should immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. All the conditions for suspension apply to immediate suspension. No suspension should be open-ended.
- In the case of an immediate suspension, parents/guardians must be notified, and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected.
- The Board of Management is immediately informed of the suspension.

Automatic Suspension

The Board of Management may decide, as part of the school's policy on sanctions, and following the consultation process with the Principal, parents/guardians, teachers and students that particular named behaviours incur suspension as a sanction:

- A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Supplying illegal drugs to another pupil in the school
- Sexual assault

Suspension

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirm serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will observe the following procedures:

- Inform the student and their parents/guardians about the complaint.
- Give parents/guardians and students an opportunity to response.

The Period of suspension

- A student will not be suspended for more than three days except in certain exceptional circumstances e.g. the Principal is of the view that a period of more than 3 days is required to achieve a particular objective.
- If a suspension of more than three days is being proposed by the Principal it should be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes.

- The Board may authorise the Principal with the permission of the Chairperson of the Board to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance concerning such suspension. This authority will be provided in writing.
- A maximum period of 10 days will pertain for one period of suspension.
- The Board should formally review any approval 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 20 days or more.
- These provisions enable the student a reasonable time to reflect on their behavior without losing too much time at school. They recognize the serious nature of the sanction of suspension and ensure that this seriousness is reflected in school procedures. The provisons mean that the Board of Management takes ultimate responsibility for sanctions of significant length, especially where such suspensions might reach twenty days in one school year. Such a suspension is subject to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act.
- Parents/guardians should be informed of their rights of appeal if a child is suspended over 20 days, pursuant to Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by the Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2007.
- Written notice is given by the Principal to the parents/guardians and to the student with regard to the decision to suspend him/her. The letter will affirm the following;
    - the duration of the suspension
    - the start and finish dates of the suspension
    - the reasons for the suspension
    - any programme of study that needs to be followed
    - the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents/guardians (e.g., parents/guardians might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour).
    - the provisions of an appeal to the Board of Management, after a suspension of more than 20 days in a school year.
    - the right of appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (the Education Act 1998 Article 29) after 20 days suspension in one school year.

In providing such notification, particular care will be given by the school, in communicating to parents/guardians who may have reading difficulties or whose first language is not the language of the letter.

After the Suspension Ends:

- The student should be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start.
- A significant emphasis will be put on Social Personal & Health Education (SPHE) lessons during the return period.
- The school should expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

Appeal

- In the case of decisions made by the Board of Management to suspend a student, the Patron can supply a process of appeal
- After 20 days suspension in one school year, the parents/guardians may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007. The Board must inform the parents/guardians in writing of this right.

Records and Reports

Formal written records should be kept on the following;

- The investigation (notes on each interview)
- The decision making process
- The decision and the rationale for the decision
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the supervision

The Principal is obliged to give a report on every suspension to the Board of Management. The Principal is obliged to report suspensions under the guidelines of the National Education Welfare Board (the Education Act (amended) 2000 Section 21 (4) (a))

Review on the use of suspensions

The Board of Management should 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.

Expulsion.

A student is expelled from a school when the 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 has authority to expel a student. Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that should only be taken by the Board of management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.

The grounds for expulsion

The school should have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid the expulsion of a student including as appropriate the following:

- Meeting with the parents/guardians and the student to try to find ways of helping the student change their behaviour.
- Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their misbehaviour if it should persist.
- Ensuring that all other possible options have been tried.
- Seeking assistance of support agencies (the National Educational Psychology Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education.)

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

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

The grounds for expulsion are similar to the grounds for suspension. The difference is that the school authorities have tried a range of other interventions and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

Automatic Expulsion:

The Board of Management may decide as part of the school's policy on sanctions and following the consultation process with the principal, parents/guardians , teachers and students that particular named behaviours incur expulsion as a sanction. Due process and fair procedures must be followed.

- A serious threat of violence against another student or a member of staff

- Actual violence or physical assault
- Supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
- Sexual assault

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 breach of the code could include:

- A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Supplying illegal drugs to another pupil in the school
- Sexual assault

Factors to consider before proposing to expel a student:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date
- Whether expulsion is a proportionate response
- The possible impact of expulsion

Procedures with regard to expulsion:

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 from the Principal to the Board of Management.
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 with the Education Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel the student.

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

In investigating an allegation in line with fair procedures, the principal should:

- Inform the student and their parents/guardians in writing about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- Give parents/guardians and the student every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.
- If the student and his parents/guardians fail to attend a meeting the Principal should write to them informing them that it is a serious matter and that there is specific importance attaching to the attendance at a re-scheduled meeting and if they fail to attend that meeting, that there will be a duty on the school authority to respond to the misconduct.
- A record should be kept of all correspondence (invitation and 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 Board of Management to consider expulsion. The Principal should:

- Inform the parents/guardians and the student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- Ensure that the parents/guardians have records of the allegations against the student, 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 holding a hearing:

The Board of Management should undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. Where a Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it must hold a hearing.

- At the hearing, the Principal and the parents/guardians , put their case to the Board in each other's presence so that they can question the evidence of the other party.
- The Board should ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations (e.g. a member of the Board who may have made an allegation about the student).
- The meeting may be an opportunity for parents/guardians to make their case for lessening the sanction.
- The Board must take care to ensure that they are and are seen to be impartial.
- Parents/guardians may wish to be accompanied at the hearing and the Board should facilitate this in line with good practice and Board procedures.
- After both sides have been heard, the Board should ensure that the Principal and parents/guardians are not present for the Board's deliberations.

Step 4 – Board of Management Deliberations and actions following the hearing:

Having heard from all the parties, it is the responsibility of the Board to decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.

- If in the opinion of the Board, the student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion and the reasons for its opinion. Education (Welfare) Act 2000 s 24 (1)).
- The Board of Management should refer to National Education Welfare Board procedures for proposed expulsion.
- The student cannot be expelled before the passage of 20 school days from the day the Education Welfare Officer receives the notification
- Where expulsion is proposed, the Board should inform the parents/guardians in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. The parents/guardians should be told that the Board of Management will now inform the Education Welfare Officer.

Step 5 – Consultation arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.

Within 20 days of receipt of notification by the 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/guardians and the student, and anyone else who may be of assistance.
- To organise a meeting with the parties who consent to attend.
- In the event of it not being an option to continue in the school, the Educational Welfare Officer should find a new school for the child.
- If it is the opinion of the Board that the continued presence of the student during this time, will seriously disrupt the learning of others or represent a threat to the other students or staff, suspension may be imposed.

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 student should be expelled, the Board of Management should formally confirm the decision to expel. Parents/guardians should be informed immediately that the expulsion will now proceed.

Parents/guardians and the student should be told of their right to make an appeal and supplied with a standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record should be made of the decision to expel a student.

Appeal

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

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

Review on the use of expulsion

The Board of Management should review the use of expulsion from the school on a regular basis to ensure that its implementation is consistent with school policies.

Section 8. Reference to other policies

School Policies that have a bearing on the Code of Behaviour include:

- Social Personal & Health Education (SPHE) Plan
- Anti-bullying
- Enrolment
- Health and Safety
- Learning Support
- Acceptable Use Policy (for ICT)
- Substance Misuse Policy

Criteria for Success

- Observation of positive behaviour in the classrooms, playground and school environment.
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by each teacher.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents/guardians, and pupils.

Roles and Responsibilites:

- The Board of Management has a central role to ensure that the policy is being implemented in the school
- The staff have a central role to implement this policy in the school with the support of parents/guardians and the students.
- The Principal and the Deputy Principal will co-ordinate and monitor the code with support from the staff.
- Support and understanding will be expected from the pupils and the parents/guardians in the implementation of the code of behaviour .

Implementation Date:

This revised code is being applied already and has been formally ratified by the Board of Management on 22nd June 2021.

Timetable for the Review:

A review will be completed on the implementation of certain practical aspects of this policy regularly, but once a year at a minimum.

Ratification and Communication:

The Board of Management ratified this policy on 22nd June 2021. A copy of the policy is being sent to each parent. The Irish version of the policy is the original policy.

Appendix 1

Examples of classroom rules

Junior Classes

Be nice and kind to everybody.

I will sit on my seat correctly

Work quietly.

Speak Irish.

If you wish to speak, put up your hand.

Middle classes

In the morning, come in, sit down and begin work.

Irish is the language of the school.

If you wish to speak, put up your hand.

Do not disturb others during work.

Everyone will respect each other and no one will upset anyone else.

Senior Classes

Speak Irish.
Come to school ready to work.
Be polite to everyone.
Respect other's property.
Listen when the teacher is speaking.
Do not throw anything in the classroom.
Hand on the rail as you go downstairs.

Appendix 2

Examples of Misconduct

Examples of minor misdemeanours**:**

- Moving about after the schoolyard bell has been rung
- Interrupting class work
- Running in the school building
- Talking in the line
- Getting out of the line
- Leaving your chair without permission
- Putting drinks and food in the refuse bin in the class (without permission)
- Throwing refuse about in the school
- Not wearing appropriate school uniform
- Being ill-mannered
- Being disrespectful
- No homework completed
- Eating chewing gum
- Climbing on school railings
- Being in the classroom at lunchtime or in the morning without permission
- Showing disrespect for others – (especially with regard to religion, race, gender, ability, economic status, family status or sexual orientation)

Examples of serious misdemeanours:

- Consistent interruption of the class
- Consistent lying
- Stealing
- Bullying
- Damaging a pupil's or school equipment
- Back answering the teacher

- Leaving the school environment without permission during school hours
- Using bad and inappropriate language
- Deliberately hurting another child
- The use of a mobile phone in the school.
- The use of the Internet without permission.
- Showing disrespect for others – (especially with regard to religion, race, gender, ability, economic status, family status or sexual orientation)

Examples of extreme gross misdemeanours:

- Aggressive behavior.
- Threatening a person.
- Violent conduct against a teacher or child.
- Continuing with bullying despite interventions
- Showing disrespect for others – (especially with regard to religion, race, gender, ability, economic status, family status or sexual orientation)
- The possession of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco and its use in the environment of the school or at a school event
- Bringing harmful implements to the school
- Deliberately causing damage to school equipment or the school building.

Appendix 3

These are the School Rules:

1. Be gentle, kind and well mannered towards each other and towards adults.
2. Be loyal to the school. Speak Irish in school always.
3. Be on time in the morning. Sit down and begin work.
4. Wear uniform every day except when you have P.E.- then wear your tracksuit and runners.
5. On the stairs: Have good manners, Hand on the rail, Look forward, Walk quietly.
6. The Playground: Speak Irish, do not throw anything in the playground or in the toilets and do not run too quickly.
7. Respect the school furniture and other people's property.
8. Children are not permitted to have aerosols, perfume or aftershave in school.
9. Children are not permitted to have a mobile pone, an ipod, mp3, camera or any other electronic apparatus in school.(see mobile phone policy).
10. No child is permitted to leave the school without a note for the class teacher and the principal. The Secretary will sign the Arrival and Departure Book on behalf of the parent or guardian.
11. Learn the fire drill and pay attention to it.
12. 12 Do not remain in the playground after 2.10pm.