



## Code of Behaviour

**Introduction:** This Code of Behaviour was formulated by the Principal and staff of St. Sinneach's National School, in consultation with the Board of Management.

**Rationale:** In St. Sinneach's, we aim to achieve standards of behaviour that are based on the principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. This Code of Behaviour was drawn up as a way of achieving these standards. The primary objective in drawing up this policy was to create a system that would be known to all, would be similar in each class, would involve parents/guardians, would have an easily understood recording system and would incur the same sanctions in cases of unacceptable behaviour. This system is designed to acknowledge / reward positive behaviour and discourage negative behaviour. It is also designed to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated, while at the same time acknowledging the right of every child to be educated in a relatively disruption-free environment. The Board of Management of St. Sinneach's National School is committed to safeguarding the safety of all children in the school and to ensuring best practice in this area.

### Principles

- St. Sinneach's National School recognizes the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to tolerate these differences while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruptive free environment.
- It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, parents/guardians and pupils.
- Every effort will be made to ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner.

### Aims

- To create a safe learning environment.
- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships.
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour.
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns, based on consideration and respect for the rights of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.

- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the Parent Information Booklet, school letters, availability of policies and an ethos of open communication.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

**Implementation:** Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. The school hopes that by keeping rules to a minimum and by explaining them clearly to the children both at the beginning and throughout the school year that the pupils are more likely to accept and obey them. By doing this we hope that children will see the necessity for rules to provide a safe, happy and disciplined atmosphere in the school and its environment.

Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents/guardians will be contacted at an early stage.

**School Rules:** School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

- Regular attendance and punctuality is required from every pupil when in good health and safe to attend. Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence. Since the introduction of Aladdin Connect in our school, parents may submit reasons for absences, lateness and early collections electronically. In cases where the parents prefer to use the hard copy method of communication, each and every absence requires written explanation by parent/guardian in the Absence Notes Section at the back of the pupil's Homework Diary (1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> classes) / Notebook (Junior and Senior Infants), upon the pupil's return to school. Each Absence Note will be retained by the class teacher and noted on the Aladdin system. The note is retained in the child's file.
- Pupils must never leave the school grounds without permission. A pupil who has need to leave school during the day will need to be collected by his/her parents/guardians, having notified the school in advance.

**Uniform:** Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance and wear school uniform at all times, with the exception of PE days, sports days and school outings. Pupils can wear the school sports uniform on designated days. Pupils with long hair are expected to have their hair tied back while attending school. The use of make-up of any description is not allowed. Please note that the school uniform consists of a

- Royal blue V-necked jumper
- Dark grey trousers/skirt/pinafore.
- Light blue stiff-collared shirt.

- Special green/blue tie

**Our PE uniform consists of**

- School crested Half- Zip Sports jumper.
- Grey/black tracksuit bottoms.

**Work**

- Pupils are expected to obey a teacher's instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present written work neatly.
- Pupils are required to have all books and required materials. All copies and books should be kept in good condition.
- Sharing of materials is discouraged.
- Pupils are expected to do their homework to the best of their individual ability.

**General Behaviour**

- Pupils are expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable.
- Any form of bullying will not be tolerated (See Anti-Bullying Policy).
- Pupils must enter and leave the school grounds through specific entry points and walk to and from their classroom door, in a safe manner. Pupils are expected to line up at their designated classroom before school.
- Pupils must play with their classmates, within designated playground zones.
- Good behaviour is expected while children are engaged in all school activities.
- Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property. Writing on school furniture and property is strictly forbidden. Damage to school property/other people's property must be made good.
- Offensive language and swearing is unacceptable.
- Any form of physical conflict will not be tolerated.
- Pupils are expected to be responsible in dealing with litter and are expected to keep the school environment clean and litter free. Pupils are encouraged to co-operate fully in any organized clean-up activity.
- Pupils must walk while indoors; Running, shouting, pushing or any similar activity in the school corridor is strictly forbidden.
- Loitering in school toilets is not permitted.
- Pupils go outside for breaks except when all pupils stay inside due to inclement weather. If you wish your child to remain indoors due to sickness, please inform the child's class teacher in writing. The class teacher will arrange a suitable place indoors for the pupil to sit.
- Pupils are not permitted to climb walls, gates or barriers in the school grounds.

- Smart Watches, e.g. FITBIT, GARMIN, APPLE, SAMSUNG must not be a distraction in class and may not be used only for the purpose of 'telling the time' and 'step-counting'. Alarms must be always 'muted'.
- Mobile phones: In extraordinary circumstances, should a pupil require a phone for after-school purposes, he/she must hand it over to the class teacher, at the very start of the school day, for safe-keeping. In the event of pupils having phones at school for medical reasons, it is expected that he/she uses the phone responsibly and only for the specific purpose required. In the event of pupils having phones on school trips, all phones must be handed up to the teacher for the duration of the day. Failure to do so will result in the confiscation of phones, which will only be returned to the pupils' parents/guardians only (no other party) after 3 school nights have passed. There is no NEED for pupils to have phones at school; if the need arises, pupils will be allowed to use their teacher's phone. Recording of any member of the school community (pupils, teachers, staff, guest speakers, etc) is strictly forbidden. In the event of pupils communicating with staff members via social media, parents/guardians will be informed immediately and the matter will be dealt with appropriately.
- The following are not permitted on school grounds: Tippex, Aerosol deodorants (roll-on stick variety is acceptable), Chewing gum, Trading of cards, Mobile phones.

**Bullying: Bullying is targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society. (New Definition from Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying)**

**Affirming Positive Behaviour:** Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions.

#### **Strategies/Incentives**

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment on a child's exercise book.
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group.
- Individual class merit awards, points awards
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Written or verbal communication with parent/guardian.

**Unacceptable Behaviour:** Four levels of misbehaviour are identified:

- Minor Misbehaviour
- Repeated Minor Misbehaviour
- Serious Misbehaviour
- Gross Misbehaviour

Examples are listed in each category along with the corresponding sanctions. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher. In cases of serious and gross misbehaviour, parents/guardians will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or principal to discuss the child's behaviour.

**Sanctions:** In the implementation of any sanctions, it should be noted that it is the behaviour that is rejected and not the child. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom whilst sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises. A pupil will be referred to the principal for serious breaches of behaviour and for repeated incidents of minor misbehaviour. We will reprimand the pupil whilst at the same time reasoning with him/her and advising on how to improve.

Our use of sanctions is characterised by the following features:

- It is made clear to the pupil why the sanction is being applied.
- It is made clear to the pupil what changes in behaviour is required to avoid future sanctions.
- We will reprimand the pupil whilst at the same time reasoning with him/her and advising on how to improve.
- Group punishment is avoided at all times.
- A clear distinction is made between minor and major offences.
- The focus is always on the behaviour rather than the person.
- Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a school-based curricular area except on the grounds of health and safety.
- A pupil will be referred to the Principal for serious breaches of behaviour and for repeated incidents of minor misbehaviour.

If misbehaviour persists, the following strategies may be used:

- Reasoning with pupil.
- Verbal Reprimand, including advice on how to improve.
- Time out – appropriate to each class level.
- Recording of incident of misbehaviour in School Incident Book.
- Communication with parents/guardians.
- Loss of privileges.
- Detention during the break time – parents/guardians will be contacted when a pupil has been detained for a third time.
- Prescribing additional work.
- Child may be asked to write a description of the unacceptable behaviour, how that behaviour has impacted on others' feelings and how the situation can be improved going forward. The piece of writing to be signed by parent/guardian.
- Referral to the principal.

- Older children may not be allowed to go on school tour, to a match/swimming if no effort has been made to improve after repeated corrections.
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).

**Behaviour in the Classroom** (N.B. Group Punishment will be avoided)

<b>Minor Misbehaviour</b>	
<b>Examples</b>	<b>Sanctions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking out of turn</li> <li>• Regularly out of their seat</li> <li>• Distracting others</li> <li>• Constant talking</li> <li>• Not making an effort</li> <li>• Homework not completed to the best of one's ability</li> <li>• Non-compliance with any class and/or school routines that are in effect at any particular time.</li> <li>• Littering</li> <li>• Passing Notes</li> <li>• Inappropriate Touches</li> <li>• Inappropriate Conversations</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reason with pupil</li> <li>• Verbal reprimand</li> </ul>
<b>Repeated Minor Misbehaviour</b>	
<b>Examples</b>	<b>Sanctions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reason with pupil</li> <li>• Keep in at Break-time</li> <li>• Loss of privileges</li> </ul>
<b>Serious Misbehaviour</b>	
<b>Examples</b>	<b>Sanctions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaking disrespectfully to a member of the school community</li> <li>• Telling lies</li> <li>• Verbal abuse towards other pupils</li> <li>• Intentional use of bad language or slang language</li> <li>• Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning</li> <li>• Deliberate non-compliance with any class and/or school routines that are in effect at any particular time.</li> <li>• Shouting within close proximity of another person</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make contact with parents/guardians</li> <li>• Keep in at Break-time</li> <li>• Loss of privileges</li> <li>• Involve Principal</li> </ul>
<b>Gross Misbehaviour</b>	
<b>Examples</b>	<b>Sanctions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intentional rough play</li> <li>• Intentional disregard for instructions from staff – Refusal to comply</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sent to Principal</li> <li>• Meet with parents/guardians</li> <li>• Loss of privileges</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbally abusing a teacher i.e. the use of bad language or slang language</li> <li>• Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards staff member or pupil</li> <li>• Confrontational interaction with staff member</li> <li>• Stealing</li> <li>• Truancy</li> <li>• Fighting in the classroom</li> <li>• Destruction of school property/vandalism</li> <li>• Disregard for any class and/or school routines that are in effect at any particular time.</li> <li>• Engaging in any action that could injure another pupil, including cyber-bullying i.e. texting/Facebook</li> <li>• Bullying</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspension</li> <li>• Expulsion</li> </ul>
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### Behaviour in the yard

Minor Misbehaviour	
Examples	Sanctions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breaking up of other pupils games</li> <li>• Using bad language</li> <li>• Verbally abusing other children</li> <li>• Intentionally not playing by the rules of a game e.g Using toilet area as part of playground to avoid 'being caught' / Leaving playground boundaries to avoid 'being caught'</li> <li>• Loitering in the Toilets</li> <li>• Lack of respect for others' personal spaces, both pupils and adults</li> <li>• Climbing on railings</li> <li>• Disregard for personal space</li> <li>• Littering</li> <li>• Passing Notes</li> <li>• Inappropriate Touches</li> <li>• Inappropriate Conversations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal reprimand</li> <li>• Reason with child</li> <li>• Child sent to the Staffroom</li> <li>• Entry in Yard Incident Book</li> </ul>
Repeated Minor Misbehaviour	
Examples	Sanctions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child sent to the Staffroom</li> <li>• Loss of privileges</li> <li>• Entry in Yard Incident Book</li> </ul>
Serious Misbehaviour	
Examples	Sanctions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intentional verbal or physical abuse towards another pupil</li> <li>• Climbing (onto shed roof)</li> <li>• Verbally abusing a teacher (Giving cheek to the teacher)</li> <li>• Use of foul language</li> <li>• Bullying</li> <li>• Deliberate disregard for personal space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sent to the Principal</li> <li>• Entry in Yard Incident Book</li> <li>• Loss of privileges</li> <li>• Contact Parents/Guardians</li> </ul>
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### Gross Misbehaviour

Examples	Sanctions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical abuse towards a teacher</li> <li>• Using/carrying a dangerous implement – guns, knives etc.</li> <li>• Deliberate disregard for personal space Serious physical abuse towards other pupils with intent to injure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sent to the Principal</li> <li>• Entry in Yard Incident Book</li> <li>• Loss of privileges</li> <li>• Involvement of Parents/Guardians</li> <li>• Suspension</li> <li>• Expulsion</li> </ul>

**Procedures and Sanctions** - In imposing a sanction, it is the inappropriate behaviour that is unacceptable and not the individual. Sanctions will be, as far as possible, relevant to the inappropriate behaviour. Participation in curriculum subjects e.g. Visual Arts, Physical Education will not be withdrawn from a child unless her/his behaviour in such a class or activity is a source of danger or disruption to himself/herself or others.

A whole class will not be punished because of one child's/small group's inappropriate behaviour.

#### Step 1

When an incident of inappropriate behaviour occurs the following procedure is followed -

The class teacher/supervising teacher deals with the incident using the following procedure -

1. The teacher explains to the child why her/his behaviour is unacceptable.
2. The child's seating arrangement may be changed and the child may be temporarily separated from the class group.
3. A note/comment may be written in the child's homework notebook to be signed by parents/guardians.
4. A pupil may be given a written assignment relating to her inappropriate behaviour to be signed by parent/guardians.
5. If a pupil's behaviour is a source of disruption or danger to her/him or others, she/he may be removed from the activity in which she/he is involved.
6. A pupil may be referred to the Principal.
7. If a child damages, loses or steals school property, recompense is expected to be made by the pupil/parents/guardians for same.
8. The behaviour incident will be recorded by the teacher if she/he feels that it is significantly serious or if it is part of ongoing inappropriate behaviour.



If the incident occurs in the yard, the child will be corrected by the supervising teacher and separated from the other children if necessary. There is a designated area in both yards where a child will be sent to stand or sit for a short period of time, where she/he can be supervised by the supervising teacher –

Junior Yard – Along windows of Halla on Junior Yard.

Senior Yard – Along windows of Halla on Senior Yard.

After break-time, the supervising teacher will inform the class teacher of the issue.

Significant incidents will be recorded by the supervising teacher and the report will be stored in the appropriate class Incident file in the office.

## **Step 2**

If the sanctions at Step 1 fail to resolve the problem or if the teacher feels that the incident warrants it, she will request the parents/guardians of the child to meet with her/him to discuss the child's behaviour. The teacher will have a written record of the behaviour incident(s) to show the parents/guardians. The teacher will inform the principal of the behaviour issue and that a meeting with parents/guardians is taking place. The class teacher will write a report documenting the issues discussed at the meeting with the child's parents/guardians. This report will be stored on the child's pupil file. If the parents/guardians refuse to meet with the class-teacher the principal will be informed and step 3 of the process will be implemented. The class-teacher will record this on the pupil file. At this stage, the parents/guardians of the pupil concerned will be given a hard copy of our Code of Behaviour and they will be advised which step in the process their child has reached and what will be the next step.

## **Step 3**

If the child continues to behave inappropriately or in the case of serious misbehaviour, the teacher and principal will meet the parents/guardians to inform them that their child's behaviour at school is inappropriate and unacceptable.

If deemed appropriate by the principal and class teacher, a behaviour contract will be drawn up which all parties will be asked to sign and adhere to. Adherence to the behaviour contract will be monitored by the class-teacher and principal. The class-teacher, principal and parents/guardians will meet regularly along with the child to discuss adherence to the contract. Positive efforts to adhere to the contract will be affirmed.

The principal will inform parents/guardians that if the child fails to adhere to the behaviour contract, the process will have to move to the next step (Step 4).

The principal or class-teacher will document the meeting and store records on the child's pupil file.

## **Step 4 - Suspension**

If the procedures followed in steps 1 to 3 have proved unsuccessful and the child continues to behave in an inappropriate and unacceptable manner the principal teacher may decide to suspend the child. The procedures for suspension are outlined below.

**Suspension** - The Board of Management of Colehill N.S. has delegated this authority to the principal, for periods of up to three days. The Board of Management has also authorised the Principal, with the approval 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. The Board of Management has placed a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. A decision to suspend will be taken only in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

**Immediate Suspension** - The Board of Management of Colehill N.S. authorises the school principal to impose immediate suspensions in exceptional circumstances. Immediate suspension may be warranted in cases such as -

- The pupil's own safety is at risk due to her/his behaviour.
- The safety of the other children, staff or visitors to the school is compromised by the pupil's behaviour.
- The pupil is unable or unwilling to cease offensive behaviour after repeated requests from the school's teaching staff.
- Teaching and learning is severely interrupted by the pupil's behaviour.

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted, a preliminary investigation will be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. If the principal teacher is of the opinion that a pupil should be suspended immediately for reasons of safety, she/he will notify the parents/guardians so that appropriate arrangements may be made for the collection of the pupil. The pupil will not be permitted to leave the school on her/his own.

As soon as is practicably possible following the imposition of the period of suspension -

1. The principal, along with another member of staff, will carry out a formal investigation into the incident resulting in a decision being made to suspend the pupil immediately.
2. The principal will meet with the pupil's parents/guardians to discuss the incident and offer them an opportunity to respond.
3. The principal teacher will write to the parents/guardians to confirm the following -
  - a. The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
  - b. The reason for the suspension
  - c. The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parents/guardians
  - d. The provision for appeal to the Board of Management
  - e. The provision for appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education where the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days.
  - f. The National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) will be notified if the total number of days reached is 6.

The duration of a suspension imposed immediately will not exceed a period of three days.

The Board of Management will be notified of all instances of immediate suspension.

**Procedure** - The following procedure will be followed before a decision is made to suspend a pupil -

- An investigation of the facts to confirm serious misbehaviour. The Principal and at least one other adult will be involved in this investigation.
- Parents/Guardians will be informed by phone or in writing about the incident.
- Parents/Guardians will be given an opportunity to respond.

If a decision is made to suspend a child, the principal will notify the parent/guardian in writing of the decision to suspend. 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 commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parents/guardians.
- The provision for appeal to the Board of management
- The provision for appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education. (Only where the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days.)
- Where the cumulative total of days reached 6, the NEWB will be notified.

**Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement):** Following a period of suspension, the parents/guardians will be required to give a satisfactory undertaking that the child will behave in accordance with the school's code of behaviour and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil on his/her return to school. Every effort will be made by the school to support the child in the process of re-integration.

When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a pupil will be given the opportunity to make a fresh start on 'a clean slate'.

#### **Records and reports.**

Formal written records will be kept of

- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- The decision-making process.
- The decision and rationale for the decision.
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

#### **Step 5 – Expulsion**

Expulsion should be a proportionate response to a pupil's behaviour. Expulsion of a pupil will only occur in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will take significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a pupil including, as appropriate -

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

A proposal to expel a pupil requires serious grounds such as that

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

There may be exceptional circumstances where the school's 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 the code include

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

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

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

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

- Inform the pupil and their parents/guardians about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion
- Give parents/guardians and the pupil 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 will also ensure 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 behaviour.

Parents/Guardians and the pupil will be given an 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 with the pupil and their parents/guardians will occur. It will provide the pupil and their parents/guardians with 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. It may also provide an opportunity for the school to explore with parents/guardians how best to address the pupil's behaviour.

If the pupil and their parents/guardians fail to attend a meeting, the Principal should write to the parents/guardians advising them of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of school authorities to make a decision to respond to inappropriate behaviour. The school will keep a copy of the letter written to parents/guardians in the pupil file.

#### **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 -

1. Inform the parents/guardians and the pupil that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion

2. 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
3. Provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parents/guardians
4. Notify the parents/guardians of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing
5. Advise the parents/guardians that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
6. 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 will undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It will ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberation (for example, a member of the Board who may have made an allegation about the pupil).

Where the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a pupil, it will hold a hearing. The Board meeting for the purpose of the hearing will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures. At the hearing, the Principal and the parents/guardians put their case to the Board 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 will take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be, impartial as between the Principal and the pupil. Parents/Guardians may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board should facilitate this, in line with good practice and Board procedures.

After both sides have been heard, the Board will ensure that the Principal and the 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 action.

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 will notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion (Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 24(1)). The Board of Management will refer to the National Education Welfare Board reporting procedures for proposed expulsions. The pupil will not be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the Education Welfare Officer receives this written notification (Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 24(1))

An appeal against an expulsion under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will automatically succeed if it is shown that the Education Welfare Officer was not notified in accordance with

section 24(1) or that twenty days did not elapse from the time of notification to the Educational Welfare Officer to the implementation of the expulsion (Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2997, Section 4A).

The Board should 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 Education Welfare Officer.

#### **Step 5 - Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer**

Within twenty days of receipt of a notification from the Board of Management of its opinion that a pupil should be expelled, the Education 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 (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 24).

The purpose of the consultations and the meeting is to ensure that arrangements are made for the pupil to continue in education. These consultations may result in an agreement about an alternative intervention that would avoid expulsion. However, where the possibility of continuing in the school is not an option, at least in the short term, the consultation should focus on alternative educational possibilities. In the interests of educational welfare of the pupil, those concerned will come together with the Educational Welfare Officer to plan for the pupil's future education.

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 the pupils is secured (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 24(5)). The Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a pupil during this time. Suspension will only be considered where there is a 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 of 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 should 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 proceed. The pupil and their parents/guardians will be informed about the right to appeal and will be supplied with the standard form on which to lodge the appeal. A formal record will be made of the decision to expel the pupil and stored on the pupil file. The decision will also be recorded in Board of Management minutes.

#### **Appeals**

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

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.

**Children with Additional Needs** - All children are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with additional needs may require assistance in understanding the code. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents/guardians, class teacher, Special Education Teacher and the Principal. Recommendations in psychological assessments will be taken into account when developing the behaviour plan. The school will maintain regular contact with parents/guardians in relation to the child's behaviour patterns. Children will be taught strategies to provide peer support to pupils with special educational needs in order to assist them to adhere to the school's Code of Behaviour.

Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times as the Code of Behaviour is implemented or followed.

**Physical Intervention and Restraint** - In the following situations staff must judge whether or not physical intervention would be reasonable or appropriate when dealing with inappropriate pupil behaviour

- Risk to the safety of staff, pupils or visitors
- Where there is a risk of serious damage to property

Staff will view physical intervention or restraint of pupils as a last resort to maintaining a safe environment. If pupils are behaving disruptively or anti-socially, every effort will be made to manage behaviour positively to prevent a deterioration of the situation. Staff intervening with children will seek assistance from other members of staff at as early a stage as possible, since single-handed intervention increases the risks of injury to both parties and does not provide a witness.

Staff will be aware of the need to tell the pupil being restrained, in a calm and gentle manner that the reason for the intervention is to keep the pupil and others safe. Staff should take care that their actions should in no way be capable of being interpreted by the pupil as aggression.

Physical Intervention/Restraint Approaches which can be regarded as reasonable in appropriate circumstances

- Physically interposing between pupils
- Blocking a pupil's path
- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm

**Recording an incident** - All incidents that result in non-routine interventions will be recorded in detail and stored on the pupil file. The class teacher, principal teacher and parents/guardians will be made aware of the incident.

**Before/After School:** Parents/Guardians are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening time of 9:30am or after the official



closing time of 2:10pm (Infants) 3:10pm (other classes) except where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management. Pupils involved in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with school behaviour policy during these times.

### **Board of Management's Responsibilities**

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- Ratify the Code of Behaviour.

### **Principal's Responsibilities**

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

### **Teachers' Responsibilities**

Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.

- Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- Recognise and affirm good work.
- Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with Parents/Guardians when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

### **Pupils' Responsibilities**

- Attend school regularly and punctually, when healthy and safe to do so.
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- Show respect for all members of the school community and visitors at all times.
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger themselves and others.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.



- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow school and class rules.

**Parents/Guardians’/ Responsibilities**

- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves, their belongings and school property.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children’s school work.
- Be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and support its implementation.
- Encourage their child to respect systems in place that help the smooth running of the school and the health and safety of the school community, e.g very limited restricted access to the school, etc
- 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 child’s progress/behaviour.

**Success Criteria**

- Discussion/Evaluation at Staff Meetings.
- Positive feedback.
- Teacher Observation.
- Efficient routines and well organised procedures.

**Review:** This Code of Behaviour will be reviewed on an annual basis.

**Ratification:** This Code of Behaviour was ratified by the Board of Management on 10th March, 2025.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Fr. Liam Murray  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Principal

