

Code of Behaviour

Rationale

This code of behaviour has been developed for the following reasons:

- ❖ To facilitate delivery of the curriculum to the students. To put in place structures to enable staff to deal with incidents of misbehaviour and indiscipline that may arise.
- ❖ To ensure the safety of all members of the school community both on the school premises and on school activities
- ❖ To help students acquire good habits of discipline and behaviour
- ❖ To create structures to ensure safety and to facilitate efficient learning in the school.
- ❖ To inform students and their parents of the procedures used by the school to address issues of discipline in the school
- ❖ To define standards of behaviour for students
- ❖ To inform students and their parents of the measures that the school may take to address student misbehaviour
- ❖ To inform parents of school procedures that will be followed before a student is suspended or expelled
- ❖ To explain the grounds and conditions under which the suspension may be lifted and to inform parents of their legal responsibilities relating to occasions when their child is absent from school
- ❖ To deal with students who may be disruptive of the work of the school, are uncooperative with their teachers and who may interfere with the delivery of the education that that other students have a right to receive.
- ❖ To conform to the statutory obligation in section 23 of the Education (welfare) Act 2000 which obliges schools to prepare, for the information of students and their parents, a code of behaviour in respect of students registered at the school.

Scoil Mhuire Ethos

Scoil Mhuire is a Roman Catholic School, established with the Minister for Education. It aims at promoting the full and harmonious developments of all aspects of the person, of the pupil, intellectual, physical, cultural and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people.

It provides Religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Catholic Church and promotes the formation of pupils in the Catholic Faith.

While Scoil Mhuire is a Roman Catholic School, we welcome children of other religious denominations.

Statement of Adoption

This statement has been drawn up following a thorough consultative process which included input from the following:

- ❖ Board of Management
- ❖ Parent Representatives
- ❖ Students of the school (represented by the student council)
- ❖ Principal
- ❖ Teaching Staff
- ❖ Special Needs Assistants
- ❖ Other Staff

This consultative process was initiated and progressed by Ms. Mahon

The school is also conscious of the role of the Education Welfare Officer and may refer to them for guidance or input if necessary.

Reasons for Rules

Promotion of good self esteem is the main goal of our Code of Behaviour

What do the rules mean for the students e.g.

- ❖ Allowing learning to happen
- ❖ Playing without being disturbed.
- ❖ Being listened to when speaking
- ❖ Showing consideration for smaller, weaker pupils etc.
- ❖ Having respect for property of others and vice versa
- ❖ Respecting the environment_

Standards of Behaviour

Standards of Behaviour in our school reflect

- ❖ Respect for ourselves and others
- ❖ Kindness and willingness to help others
- ❖ Courtesy and good manners

- ❖ Fairness
- ❖ Readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- ❖ Forgiveness

The standards describe the commitment that the school expects from its students. This commitment includes:

- ❖ Respecting staff
- ❖ Respecting oneself and others
- ❖ Regular and punctual attendance
- ❖ Doing one's best in class
- ❖ Taking responsibility for one's work and property
- ❖ Keeping the rules
- ❖ Helping to create a safe, positive and clean environment
- ❖ Participating in school activities.

Our standards are also a way of signalling to members of our school community that certain kinds of behaviour are not acceptable. For example:

- ❖ Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- ❖ Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- ❖ Threats or physical hurt to another person
- ❖ Damage to property
- ❖ Theft.

The standards of behaviour must be modelled by all adults in the school

- ❖ With other adults
- ❖ With parents and vice versa
- ❖ With pupils

Class teachers and specialist personnel (such as the Learning Support Teacher, Resource Teacher, Special Needs Assistant) should check that standards and rules are communicated in a way that students with special educational needs can understand.

Rules and sanctions may be modified at the discretion of teachers.

The following are the criteria which was used for developing the rules

We believe that school and classroom rules work best when they are:

- ❖ Kept to a minimum
- ❖ Written in clear, simple language and stated positively, telling students “what to do” as well as “what not to do”.
- ❖ Based on a clear rationale that is explained through consultation with students, parents and staff
- ❖ Communicated and referred to regularly.

School Rules

School rules pertain to the conduct of behaviour of its students both outside and inside the school.

Outside

1. Enter and leave quietly and on time
2. Be responsible for keeping our environment clean and healthy
3. Students will allow everyone to enjoy break time

Inside

4. Know when, where and how to talk and listen
5. Be responsible for my own property and have respect for the property of others

Outside

1. **Enter and leave quietly and on time**

- ❖ We will only enter the schoolyard through the open gates and the school through the assigned door.
- ❖ When the buzzer rings we will go to our lines and wait quietly for our teacher.
- ❖ We will walk in line on corridors and stairs by the left side quietly giving way to adults at all time.
- ❖ Quietness in toilets at all times. Classes upstairs will use outside toilets during breaks.
- ❖ Meeting place in shelters in front and back yards
- ❖ Children may not cycle on school grounds
- ❖ On arrival at school, pupils must remain on school premises unless collected by a parent or accompanied by a teacher. (Parent/Guardian must inform school in writing or in person before collecting pupil during school hours.

2. **We are all responsible for keeping our environment clean and healthy**

- ❖ We will dispose of our waste property properly
- ❖ Substance misuse is not permitted in school.

3. **Pupils will allow everyone enjoy their break time**

- ❖ We will have kind hands, feet and words
- ❖ We will not cross yellow lines
- ❖ We will go to the adult on the yard if we have a problem.

Inside

4. **Know when where and how to talk and listen.**

- ❖ We will put up a hand and wait for teacher's attention in our place.
- ❖ We will always listen to the speakers
- ❖ We will allow each other to work without interruption
- ❖ We will use respectful language at all times.

5. **I am responsible for my own property and I will respect the property of others.**

- ❖ We will have all we need for class each day and take home what we need for homework each night.
- ❖ We will wear our full uniform in school and non –slip footwear and we will label it and care for our belongings.
- ❖ We won't wear make up.
- ❖ We will respect and care for all property

School Disciplinary Structure

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1. Teacher or resource/learning support teacher
2. Other members of staff and the staff team
3. Principal
4. Board of Management.

Application of school rules and standards

The school code of behaviour applies during the following activities:

1. Tours
2. Choir
3. Others
 - Matches
 - Quizzes
 - Walks
 - Library Visits
 - Church Visits
 - Swimming

1. Tours

All school rules apply.

Pupils must respect place and supervisors.

Sanctions

A Student who misbehaves by breaking the school code of behaviour in a manner deemed serious by the school authorities may -

- Be excluded from school tours in the future.
- Be required to have one-to-one supervision when on tour.
- On return from tour have to report to the Principal and parents be notified.
- Be isolated from group for the remainder of the day.
- Be deprived of an activity later on tour day.

2. Choir

- Any pupil not wearing the school uniform when required may be told not to perform on that occasion.
- After a performance children are to be collected on time or are the responsibility of their parents/guardians for the remaining duration of the occasion/nig

3. Other

- Pupils breaking the code of behaviour may be excluded from further

participation in events.

- When walking in public areas pupils should walk in an orderly, respectful manner (for health and safety reasons)
- Pupils should give way to adults.

Related School Policies

We recommend that the policy be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Scoil Mhuire Health and Safety Policy

Scoil Mhuire Anti-Bullying Policy

Scoil Mhuire Mobile- Phone Policy

Scoil Mhuire Homework Policy

Rewards and Sanctions

In compiling this list we considered the following:

1. Sanctions are a part of a plan to change behaviour.
2. The sanctions should be used consistently.
3. Parents and students know what sanctions are used in the school.
4. Sanctions are proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the behaviour.
5. Sanctions are appropriate to the age and developmental stage of the student and take account of the cultural background of the student.
6. Duty of care to the student is maintained.
7. The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour.

Rewards

- Star charts
- Pupil of the week
- Treats
- Points system
- Golden time

- Visit to playground

Other rewards as decided by teacher and pupils appropriate to class level.

Sanctions

1. Verbal reasoning.
2. Verbal warning.
3. Temporary separation from peers in class/yard and /or temporary removal to another class.
4. Loss of privileges.
5. Detention during break
6. Communication with parents
7. Referral to Principal
8. Child on report
9. Principal communicating with parents.
10. Suspension/exclusion from school in accordance with Rules 130 of rules for primary schools.
11. Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a curriculum area except on grounds of health and safety.
12. Community Service: picking up litter etc.
13. Letters of Apology
14. Behavioural Contract

- In the case of incidents of bullying, racism and other serious misbehaviours, sanctions 1-4 do not apply.
- Once a child has been put on report if there is a recurrence of serious misbehaviour the child will be suspended. The child remains on report for the rest of the school year.

Classification of Serious Offences

The following offences will be considered to be 'serious offences'

- ❖ Failure to follow directions of an adult
- ❖ Violent verbal or physical behaviour
- ❖ Threatening behaviour towards adults and/or children
- ❖ Bullying/Intimidatory behaviour/Racism

- ❖ Telling lies
- ❖ Physical harm or intent to harm another child or adult
- ❖ Stealing
- ❖ Substance use or abuse
- ❖ Defacement of property e.g. graffiti, chewing gum.

Record Keeping of Misbehaviour

A record of all serious incidents will be recorded by the relevant teacher/SNA in the 'Serious Incident Book' which will be kept in a secure, central location in the school. The class teacher must be informed of all recorded incidents. This "Serious Incident Book will only record serious incidents. A new serious incident book will be opened on an annual basis.

The information in this book shall:

- ❖ Be accurate
- ❖ Be used in a manner consistent with its purpose
- ❖ Not be kept longer than is necessary
- ❖ Be kept securely

The class teacher will also keep her/his own record of serious/recurring misbehaviour.

Suspension

Suspension shall be defined as: 'requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days'

The board of management has the authority to suspend a student. In this school, this authority has been formally delegated to the Principal.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension. Generally, however, other interventions, as outlined above, will have been tried.

Grounds for suspension:

The decision to suspend a student will be taken on such grounds as the following:

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

The school management is aware of the risks associated with suspension, such as an increased sense of alienation from school which could lead to a cycle of behavioural and academic problems. School management has been, and will continue to be proactive in avoidance of suspension of any student.

Whilst suspended, the student shall continue to retain a place in the school.

Suspension Procedures:

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that warrants a suspension, the school shall:

Inform the student and their Parent(s) about the complaint. Parents may be informed by phone or in written format. The obvious advantage of the written format is that it presents a formal and permanent record. Written notification will include:

- ❖ The period of suspension and the beginning and end date of suspension.
- ❖ The reasons for the suspension
- ❖ Arrangements for return to the school (parents will be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)
- ❖ The provision of an appeal to the Board of Management
- ❖ The right to appeal to the secretary general of the Department of Education and Science.

Allow Parents and child the opportunity to respond. A meeting shall be arranged with the Parents. Should the Parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal shall write, advising of the gravity of the matter and the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour. These invitations shall be recorded

In case of immediate suspension, parents will be immediately notified, and arrangements will be made with them regarding collection of the child. The school will always have regard to its duty of care for the child.

The period of suspension

A suspension will last one, two or three days. A student will not be suspended in excess of three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a longer suspension is needed, in order to achieve a particular objective. This will require Board of Management approval.

The Board of Management will place a ceiling of ten days on any one suspension, in these exceptional circumstances.

Section 29 appeal

Where the total number of days, for which the student is suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days, the parents may appeal the decision under section 29 their right to appeal, and will be given information about how to appeal.

Suspension as part of a behaviour management plan

It is envisaged that suspension be part of an agreed plan to address the students behaviour. Suspension shall allow:

- ❖ The school to set behavioural goals for the students.
- ❖ The school staff to plan for interventions.
- ❖ The school to impress upon parents and student the seriousness of their behaviour.

Grounds for removing a suspension

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

Reintegrating the student

A member of staff will be appointed to provide support to the student during the reintegration process.

Expulsion

The Board of Management reserves the authority to expel a student.

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

- ❖ Meeting the parents and the student to try to find ways to help the student to change their behaviour.
- ❖ Making sure that the student understands the consequences of their behaviour if it should persist.
- ❖ Ensuring that all other options have been tried.
- ❖ Seeking the assistance of support agencies e.g. N.E.P.S., N.C.S.E., H.S.E. community services N.B.S.S.

Grounds for expulsion

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

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

Expulsion for a first offence

In extraordinary circumstances, the Board of Management may form the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence. The following such behaviour may warrant this sanction:

- ❖ A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- ❖ Actual violence or physical assault
- ❖ Supply of illegal drugs to another student or students
- ❖ Sexual assault

Procedure in respect of expulsion

The following steps will preface any expulsion.

1. Preliminary assessment of the facts.
2. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.

In investigating an incident, the Principal shall

- inform the Parents and student about the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion. This shall be in written format.
- give parents and the student the opportunity to respond to the complaint.

Where expulsion may result from the investigation a meeting with the student and parents is essential. If they refuse to attend a meeting, the principal shall write to them advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a rescheduled meeting and failing that, the duty of school authorities to make a decision to respond to this inappropriate behaviour. The school will record the invitation to parents and their response.

3. A recommendation by the Principal to the Board of Management.

Where the Principal forms a view, based on investigation of the alleged misbehaviour that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal shall make a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The Principal shall:

- ❖ Inform the Parents that the Board of Management has been asked to consider expulsion.
- ❖ Ensure that the Parents have records of the allegations against the student, the investigation, and written notice of the grounds on which the Board is being asked to consider expulsion
- ❖ Provide the Board of Management with the records as listed above
- ❖ Notify the Parents of the date of the hearing and invite them to that hearing.

- ❖ Advise the Parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management.

- ❖ Ensure that the Parents have sufficient notice of the hearing.

3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principals recommendation and holding of a hearing.

The board shall review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was conducted in line with fair procedures. The Board shall undertake its own review of all documentation and circumstances of the case. No party with direct involvement in the circumstances of the case shall be part of the Boards deliberations.

The Board, if satisfied as outlined above, shall hold a hearing. At the hearing, both Principal and parents shall put their case in each others presence. The board shall be and shall be seen to be, impartial. Parents may wish to be accompanied to this meeting. The Board shall facilitate this.

4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.

Having heard from both parities, the Board shall decide whether expulsion is the appropriate sanction. Where the Board decides that expulsion is the appropriate sanction, the Board shall notify the Educational welfare officer in writing, giving

reasons for its opinion. The student shall not be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO receives this notification, in line with the Education Welfare Act 2000,s24(1)

5. Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer

The Education officer must:

- ❖ Make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents and the student, and anyone else who may be of assistance.

- ❖ Convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend.

The purpose of these consultations is to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education. Pending these consultations, the board of Management may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of students is secured, in accordance with Educational Welfare Act 2000,s24(5). The board may consider it appropriate to suspend the student during this time. Suspension shall be considered where there is a likelihood that the continued

Presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other students or staff.

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 these student be expelled, the Board of Management shall formally confirm the decision to expel. Parents shall be notified immediately. Parents shall be informed of the right to an appeal and be supplied with a standard form on which to lodge this appeal. A formal record shall be kept of the decision to expel the student.

Appeals

The Board of Management recognises that a Parent may appeal a decision to expel the student to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science. (Education Act 1998, section 290) An appeal may also be brought on behalf of the student by the Education Welfare Officer.

Ratified by: Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date: 03/02/2011

Revised by staff in December 2012

Reviewed by Parents Association in January 2013

Re-ratified by: Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date: 31st January 2013