Code of Behaviour

SCOIL PHÁDRAIG NAOFA BUACHAILLÍ

Code of Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of *Scoil Phádraig Naofa Buachaillí* has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for its pupils, staff and parents.

The Code of Behaviour details:

1. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school
2. The whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour
3. The measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards
4. The procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned
5. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil
6. The school's Anti-Bullying Policy
7. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school

The Code of Behaviour of *Scoil Phádraig Naofa Buachaillí* has been developed in accordance with *'Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools', National Educational Welfare Board, 2008*.

POLICY FORMULATION

In formulating this policy the Board of Management completed the following steps:

i. Parents and Staff were informed that an initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was available and they were invited to make submissions on the content of the code within a specified timeframe.
ii. Class teachers were requested to discuss the topic of 'rules' with their classes and submit a list of pupils' suggestions to the Principal.
iii. The initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was reviewed and where appropriate amended in-line with the feedback received.
iv. The finalised draft of the policy was submitted for the Patron's approval.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THE CODE

The aims and objectives of the code are:

- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community
- To assist school staff, parents and pupils 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

WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

The Board of Management recognises the importance of creating consistent values, policies, practices and relationships that support the Code of Behaviour. Such an environment may only be formed by involving the entire school community and in this respect the Board acknowledges the importance of the roles played by the principal, teachers, ancillary staff and parents in the review and operation of the Code of Behaviour.

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

Pupils

General Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- Be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults
- Show respect for the property of the school, other children and their own belongings
- Attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual
- Do his best both in school and for homework
- Show kindness to others and be willing to help staff and fellow pupils

Classroom Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- Listen – to the teacher and other pupils when they are speaking
- Work – to the best of his ability
- Value – school property and the belongings of fellow pupils
- Follow – the direction of his teacher
- Obtain – his teachers permission to leave the classroom
- Respect – the teacher, other pupils and visitors to the classroom and school

Playground (Playing Pitches) Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- Play – safely avoiding any games or play that are rough or dangerous
- Follow – the directions of the playground supervisor(s)
- Remain – on school grounds at all times
- Obtain – permission before re-entering the school building during break periods
- Respect – the yard supervisor and fellow pupils
- Avoid – swearing, fighting or name calling

Behaviour in other School Areas

Each pupil is expected to:

- Walk – in the school corridors
- No talking – on the way in and out to the play areas
- Be courteous and have good manners at all times (excuse me, please, thank you)
- Knock on the door before entering a classroom

Behaviour during School Outings/Activities

Each pupil is expected to:

- Follow – his teacher's directions at all times
- Remain – with the teacher/supervisors and group of pupils at all times
- Behave – politely towards those they meet on such trips
- Observe – the rules of general good behaviour

Staff

It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure the school's Code of Behaviour is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils. However, each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school.

Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class. They will:

- Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in an age appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year
- Ensure the rules are displayed in the classroom
- Encourage self-discipline and positive behaviour
- Ensure there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times
- Implement the reward/sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner
- Keep a written record of all incidents of continued, serious or gross misconduct. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and the consequences of its repetition
- Inform pupils when instances of misbehaviour on their part are being recorded
- Report repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the Principal

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive behaviour in school. Parents/guardians can assist the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, encouraging punctuality and regular attendance and by ensuring that homework is given due time and effort.

Should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child's behaviour they are welcome to make an appointment to discuss their concerns.
In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour parents will be invited to participate in the intervention process.

GENERAL SCHOOL RULES (AS STATED IN THE PUPILS' HOMEWORK JOURNAL)

Respect for Self

- Be the best that you can be.
- Be on time.
- Be aware of personal cleanliness and take care of your body.
- Be honest and truthful.
- Use your talents and participate positively.
- Do your homework to the best of your ability.
- Eat healthily.
- Partake in school sports as best you can.
- Wear the correct school uniform neatly.
- Haircuts to be kept simple without any symbols, colour or decoration.

Respect for Others

- Be kind, and show respect to everyone.
- Display good manners.
- Take turns in learning and play.
- Behave well in class and show cooperation at all times.
- Bullying is not tolerated.
- Listen to others and speak with respect. Bad language is unacceptable.
- Play fairly and be gentle.
- Respect difference.

Respect for Property

- Take care of your own property and the property of others.
- Take care of the school building and property.
- Keep our school clean and tidy.
- Ask before using something that does not belong to you and return it in the condition you received it.

School Rules for Health and Safety

- Chewing gum is not allowed in the school or grounds.
- Mobile Phones should not be brought to school. If a phone is confiscated by a teacher, it will have to be collected by a parent from the Principal.
- The wearing of jewellery, including chains, earrings, studs, bracelets, rings etc. is not allowed.
- At break times children must play safely in their designated areas and should not re-enter the school building without permission.
- Line up in an orderly manner on arrival at school, before and after breaks and at the end of the school day. Children should not enter the school building without permission.

PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

As a general rule the school will endeavor to create an environment where positive Behaviour is reinforced through praise and reward. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school, so that positive behaviour is instantly recognised and positively rewarded. Special attention will be paid to pupils who have previously been associated with poor behaviour so that not only good behaviour but also improvement in behaviour is acknowledged.

A reward scheme for promoting positive Behaviour will be used. Such rewards will include:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment, 'Congratulations' or 'Good News' in the pupil's homework journal
- A visit to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- A system of merit marks or stickers
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to the pupil's parent, written or verbal communication
- Special privileges
- Dalta na seachtaine cert from the Principal

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. The Code also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed.

Level One

Level 1: Behaviours

Level 1 behaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and common areas. Students learn through their mistakes. To this extent, responses to the daily behaviours, which occur in school, will be developmentally appropriate, instructive and positive. Children will be taught what is expected and how they should behave. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 1. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers
- Running in the hallways
- Disturbing the work or play of others
- Disrespectful language, tone or manner
- Ignoring staff requests
- **Covid-19 related:** Deliberately not abiding by social distancing rules, deliberate misuse of sanitiser, wipes, soap, hand towels etc. deliberately not following respiratory and cough etiquette, non-compliance with wearing face mask/cloth covering in third, fourth, fifth and sixth classes and where no reasonable medical explanation has been provided.

Level 1: Disciplinary Actions

Consequences for Level 1 behaviour are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Teachers will discipline students at level 1. Some examples of Level 1 responses are:

- Verbal reprimand/reminder(s)
- Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
- Prescribing additional work
- Loss of privileges
- Parent contact
- Behaviour contract (Appendix 1)

Level 1 Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

- Classroom-based interventions, such as Circle Time or class meetings, with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members)
- Discussion of behaviour with the child
- Informal notes regarding incident/intervention/date. This information would be useful should a problem persist

Level Two

Level 2: Behaviours

Level 2 behaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and well being of the students and staff. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 2. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Behaviour which is dangerous to self or others (e.g. shoving, pushing, hitting)
- Intentionally damaging school or personal property
- Stealing
- Cheating
- Use of profanity
- Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin
- Disrespectful language or behaviour toward an adult
- Possession or use of dangerous toys or sporting equipment (e.g. bow and arrows, any kind of knives, etc.)
- **Covid-19 related:** Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention

Level 2: Disciplinary Actions

The disciplining of students for Level 2 behaviour is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour and developmentally appropriate levels. The disciplinary actions at Level 2 are administered by the Principal and include the formal notification of parents with written documentation. Some examples of Level 2 responses are:

- In school supervised detention
- Report submitted to the Board of Management
- Meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Suspension from school of one to five days, depending on the severity of the behaviour
- Implementation of extensive behaviour management plan

Level 2: Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

- Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Deputy Principal or Principal
- Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education
- Referral of a child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent).

Level Three

Level 3: Behaviours

Level 3 behaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal well being of the pupils and staff of the school. They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment. Situations, which include illegal activity, may result in contact with the Garda Síochána after parental involvement. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 3. Please note that the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Setting fires
- Intentional possession or use of weapons
- Violent fighting or intentionally causing physical harm to others
- Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, physical condition, handicap, or ethnic origin
- **Covid-19 related:** repeated instances of level 1 and or 2 behaviour despite intervention

Level 3: Disciplinary Actions

Behaviour at Level 3 may involve suspension from school. The length of the suspension will depend upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension is contained in this document. Level 3 responses:

- **Suspension from school for one to five days:**
  This response will occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour or Level 2 behaviour of significant severity. The Principal following due process and procedure, can issue a suspension.

- **Suspension from school for five to ten days:**
  This response will occur with the repeated incidence of Level 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this behaviour. A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management.

- **Expulsion:**
  Repeated incidents of Level 3 behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled.

PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSIONS & EXPULSIONS

Suspension

Definition of Suspension:

'Requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days'

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

Authority to Suspend:

The Board of Management of *Scoil Phádraig Noafa Buachaillí* has formally and in writing delegated the authority to impose an 'Immediate Suspension' to the Principal Teacher. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour. In exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally and in writing delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an 'Automatic Suspension' for named behaviours detailed in this policy. An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour. In exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

The Board retains its authority to suspend a student in all other cases/circumstances.

Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension

An 'Immediate Suspension' will be deemed to be necessary where after a preliminary investigation the Principal reaches the determination that the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety and wellbeing of pupils or staff of the school. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour. In exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

An 'Automatic Suspension' is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of *Scoil Phádraig Naofa Buachaillí*, having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by Health & Safety Legislation, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur 'Automatic Suspension' as a sanction:

- Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff

or

- Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension by telephone and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected. In no circumstance will a student be sent home from school prior to his parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will issue in due course, but no later than 2 school days after the imposition of the suspension. Such a notification will detail:

- The duration 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 parent(s)/guardian(s)

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be completed no later than 2 school days after the incident the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss:

- The circumstances surrounding the suspension
- Interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct

The Board of Management of *Scoil Phádraig Naofa Buachaillí* acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given:

i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.

Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions:

In cases other than those of Immediate or Automatic Suspension the following procedures will apply:

Where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management of *Scoil Phádraig Naofa Buachaillí* will initiate a formal investigation of the matter.

The following procedures will be observed;

A written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s);

i. Details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
ii. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.

The Board of Management of *Scoil Phádraig Naofa Buachaillí* acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given:

ii. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
iii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Where a decision to suspend has been made the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision. The letter will confirm:

- The duration 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 parent(s)/guardian(s)
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.

Expulsion

Definition of Expulsion:

'A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.'

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

Authority to Suspend:

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will apply:

a) A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required)

As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s):

iii. Details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
iv. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond

b) The Principal (or BoM Nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management

Where the Principal (or nominee) forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal (or nominee) makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

In this event the Principal (or nominee) will:

i. Inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
ii. Ensure that parent(s)/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
iii. Provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)

c) Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's (or BOM's Nominee) Recommendations & the Holding of a Hearing

If, having considered the Principal's report, the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student a hearing will be scheduled.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing -

i. As to the date, location and time of the hearing
ii. Of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
iii. That they may if they so choose be accompanied at the hearing

The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that:

i. The meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
ii. The Principal (or BoM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other's presence
iii. Each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party
iv. The parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose

d) Board of Management Deliberations & Actions following the Hearing

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 -

i. Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion.
ii. Will not expel the student before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification
iii. Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
iv. Will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer
v. Will suspend the student if it is deemed likely 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 pupils or staff

e) 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 will formally confirm the decision to expel.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing that the expulsion will now proceed. They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of Scoil Phádraig Naofa Buachaillí acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given:

i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
ii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

NOTIFICATION OF A CHILD'S ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should adhere to the following procedures when notifying the school of a pupil's absence:

- The school should be notified of the absence on the first day the pupil returns to school
- The reason for the absence should be notified to the class teacher
- The absence should be notified in writing by letter or using the school journal
- Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided
- Significant absences cause by ill health (i.e. absences longer than 10 school days) should be certified

The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more, where the child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular and when the pupil is removed from the school register.

RECORDS

A standardised record system will be used to track an individual pupil's behaviour. Such records will contain:

- Incidents of misbehaviour
- Interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
- Evidence of improved behaviour
- Any sanctions imposed and the reasons they were imposed

Pupils will be told when a record is being made about their behaviour and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained.

All records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003.

POLICY RATIFICATION

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of *Scoil Phádraig Naofa Buachaillí* at its meeting held on _____

Signed: _____ Chairperson, Board of Management

PATRON'S APPROVAL

This policy has been ratified by St. Senan's Education Office, acting on behalf of the Patron.

Official Stamp