



## **Code of Behaviour/School Rules**

All aspects of the Code of Behaviour will take into consideration best practice under Covid 19 Health & Safety protocols.

### **Rationale**

Scoil Ghobnatan is a community consisting of pupils, parents, staff, board of management and the wider community. Scoil Ghobnatan aims to achieve a happy secure environment where children can develop to their full potential. It is necessary to provide a framework which promotes positive behaviour and discourages unacceptable behaviour for the well-being of our school as a community. Our school rules are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of our school community. In devising this code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. The purpose of this code is to achieve a happy, safe, secure and well-ordered environment for the whole school community which is conducive to the academic, personal, social and emotional development of each pupil.

### **Aims:**

1. To provide a happy, safe, secure environment where each pupil can achieve his/her full potential in all areas of their development.
2. To foster in each pupil a sense of care and respect for himself/herself and others and an appreciation of and responsibility towards the dignity of every human being.
3. To enable each pupil to respect human and cultural diversity in the school.
4. It is hoped to foster a sense of pride in our school and our community.
5. To ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated, while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a safe, secure environment.
6. To encourage good home/school communication and to foster a positive atmosphere in the school.

### **Guidelines:**

Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to behaviour in the school. This code offers a framework within which positive techniques of motivation

and encouragement are utilised by all staff members. The school places greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions, in the belief that this will give the best results in the long term.

Children in our school are expected to:

- Take responsibility for their own work and actions.
- Take responsibility for their own property.
- Participate to the best of their ability in all school activities.
- Respect the school environment.
- Attend school daily and punctually.
- Present themselves in the full school uniform.
- Observe school rules as outlined in this Code.
- Pupils are expected to be respectful and courteous to each other, to staff and other adults with whom they come in contact.

**Methods of promoting positive behaviour will include the following strategies:**

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A visit to another member of staff or to the principal for commendation.
- A word of praise in front of a group, a class or the whole school.
- Delegating some special responsibilities or privilege.
- A mention to a parent by written or verbal communication (good news phone call)
- A star, sticker or a treat.
- Golden time.
- Pupil/ Group of the week.
- Emphasis on the positive (catching pupil when good)
- Various in-class strategies for promoting positive behaviour.

Provide opportunities for each pupil to redeem himself/ herself i.e. pupil starts every morning with a clean slate.

**Strategies:**

The nature of the misbehaviour will determine the strategy to be used. The list below is not exhaustive:

- The pupil is made aware of the fact that his/her behaviour is unacceptable.
- The teacher may discuss misbehaviour with pupil privately.
- The seating arrangement in class may be changed.
- A pupil may be temporarily separated from the class groupings.
- A pupil may lose minor privileges i.e. lose a "job".
- Incomplete homework may have to be completed.
- Poorly presented homework may have to be completed again.
- A pupil may be referred to the principal.
- A note or a comment may be written in a pupil's homework diary to be signed by parents/guardians or contact may be made by phone.

- A pupil may be given a written assignment, encouraging alternative good behaviour to be signed at home.
- If a pupil's behaviour is a source of danger/disruption to himself/herself or others, he/she may be removed from the activity in which the pupil is involved.
- If the misdemeanour occurs in the playground, the teacher on duty will deal with the issue. If it is deemed serious, the class teacher/ principal will be notified.
- On occasions, for reasons of health and safety, parents may be requested to collect a pupil from the school.

### **Procedures for dealing with challenging behaviour:**

The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross will be judged by the staff and principal on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/ frequency of such misdemeanours.

### **Examples of minor misdemeanours:**

- Being discourteous/ unmannerly.
- Talking out of turn.
- Running in the school building.
- Interrupting class work.
- Inattention in class.
- Eating and drinking in class at inappropriate times.
- Not wearing correct uniform.
- Not completing homework without good reason.
- Littering school environs.

### **Sanctions:**

- Discussion
- Apology
- Verbal reprimand
- Time out
- If incident occurs in the yard, it is dealt with there and/or referred to the class teacher/principal depending on the frequency of the incident.

### **Examples of serious misdemeanours:**

- Constantly disruptive in class.
- Telling lies.
- Writing inappropriate notes.
- Using unacceptable language.
- Back answering a teacher.
- Physical aggression.
- Hurting others.
- Spitting.
- Repeated refusal to comply with the school rules.

**Sanctions:**

- Name in incident report.
- Refer to principal.
- Parents phoned.
- Pupil sent home.

**Examples of gross misbehaviour:**

- Damaging school or another pupil's property.
- Stealing.
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour (physical or verbal) towards a pupil, teacher, S.N.A. or any member of the school community.

**Sanctions:**

- Refer to principal
- Parents notified
- Pupil sent home
- Parents meeting with principal.

**When a behavioural problem arises, the following procedure is followed:**

1. The class teacher/ teacher on duty deals with it and may impose a sanction.
2. If the problem is not solved, the class teacher shall consult the principal and/ or parents/ guardians of the pupil with a view to helping the pupil overcome the difficulty.
3. If the problem persists or in the case of serious misbehaviour it may be necessary to have on-going discussions between the parents/ guardians, teacher and principal to monitor the situation- always with the objective of helping the pupil. The school will endeavour to assist the parent in seeking the support of outside agencies to help if necessary.
4. In the case of repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, it may be necessary to introduce a reduced timetable. This may mean the pupil attending school until 12.00p.m. each day. This will be reviewed periodically.

5. Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour or in the case of gross misbehaviour, the Board of Management will be informed and the parents/guardians will be requested in writing to attend the school to meet with the chairperson and principal who will then suspend the pupil in accordance with Rule 130 (6) for National Schools.

## **Suspension and Expulsion Policy**

Suspension and expulsion will only be considered as a last resort, when all other avenues have been explored to deal with the misbehaviour.

In accordance with the Department of Education and Science guidelines and current legislation, the following general guidelines and procedures shall apply when a child is being considered for suspension/expulsion or is to be suspended/expelled from the school.

### **Suspensions**

(With reference to Chapters 10,11 and 12 of NEWB Guidelines)

All suspensions and expulsions will be carried out with reference to 'Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools NEWB 2008' and related documents.

#### **Authority: (Ref p70 NEWB Guidelines)**

While the Board of Management has the authority to suspend, they may delegate this authority to the principal for periods of up to three days.

#### **Grounds for Suspension (Ref p70-71 NEWB Guidelines)**

Suspensions will be a proportionate response to the behaviour causing concern. Usually other interventions will have been tried.

Grounds for suspension include:

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

### **Procedures in respect of Suspension (Ref p 77 NEWB Guidelines)**

The school will endeavour to ensure fair procedures, to include the right of all parties involved to be given a fair and impartial hearing.

The process will include the following stages:

- Investigation of the facts to confirm serious misbehaviour.
- Parents will be informed by phone or in writing about the incident.
- Parents will be given the opportunity to respond.

If suspension is still decided upon:

- The principal notifies parents/guardians in writing of the decision to suspend.

The letter should 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 student and the parents.
- The provisions for appeal to the Board of Management.
- Where the cumulative total of days reached is 6, the NEWB will be notified.

In exceptional circumstances an immediate suspension may be necessary. Fair procedure will still apply.

### **Period of Suspension: (Ref p 75 NEWB Guidelines)**

This shall not be for more than three days except in exceptional circumstances.

### **Records and Reports (Ref p78 NEWB Guidelines)**

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.

## **Expulsion (Ref p82 NEWB Guidelines)**

### **Authority:**

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

### **Grounds for Expulsion (Ref p70-71 NEWB Guidelines)**

Expulsion will be used in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will have taken other significant steps to address the misbehaviour except in exceptional circumstances.

Due process and fair procedure will apply in all circumstances.

### **Procedures in respect of Expulsion (Ref p 83-86 NEWB Guidelines)**

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
- Inform parents in writing of alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- Give parents and students the opportunity to respond before a decision is made.
- A recommendation to the BOM by the Principal (See p 84 of NEWB Guidelines)
- Consideration by the BOM of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing (See p84 of NEWB Guidelines).
- BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing (p85 NEWB Guidelines)

If the BOM is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. The intention to expel a student does not take effect until twenty school days have elapsed after NEWB have received written notification. The NEWB should be notified using a Notice of Intention to Expel form.

- Consultations arranged by the EWO.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

### **Appeals:**

Parents will be informed of their legal right to appeal.

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the DES(Education Act 1998, Section 29)

### **Records and Reports (Ref p78 NEWB Guidelines)**

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- The investigation ( including notes of all interviews held)
- The decision-making process.
- The decision and rationale for the decision.

## **Anti-Bullying and Cyber-Bullying Policies**

See separate Anti-Bullying and Cyber-Bullying Policies which should be read and understood in the context of this Code of Behaviour.

### **Review Framework**

This policy will be reviewed in the school year 2021/2022 or at an earlier date should a problem arise or if there is a change in the Rules for National Schools or the Welfare Act 2000.

We hope that you, the parents/ guardians of our pupils, will support us and trust that you will take on board our school's code of discipline and accept our decision in dealing with incidents both in the classroom and in the school yard. You are welcome to discuss any concerns you may have by making an appointment with your child's teacher in the first instance/ the principal in relation to classroom or playground issues.

### **Ratification and communication**

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Ghobnatan in April 2021. This policy will become part of our enrolment for all pupils to the school and can be viewed on our website and a copy will be available in all classrooms. New pupils will be requested to sign the rules stating that they have viewed and accepted them. Parents of all children will be asked to sign a copy of the school rules as part of the enrolment procedures.

### School Rules:

1. School gates are open at 8.30 am and classes will commence at 8.50am. All pupils should be present and will be supervised at all times.
2. The full school uniform must be worn at all times
3. Students are required to speak and behave in an orderly manner while on the school premises and to obey staff members at all times. Rough play, foul or offensive language and spitting are not tolerated. There is zero tolerance of all forms of bullying, either verbal/emotional/physical.
4. Pupils should be attentive in class and complete all assignments to the best of their ability. All pupils should have homework checked and signed by parents/ guardians each night. All pupils should have basic items in their schoolbags each day.
5. Pupils need permission to leave school early. Parents/guardians will be required to collect their child/children and sign at reception. All absences have to be accounted for and the reason for absences given on a dated note, email or Aladdin connect message on return to school. Any pupil absent for more than 20 days will be reported to the National Educational Welfare Board as required under current legislation. **In the interests of your child's safety, in the infant classes it is important to notify the school if your child is being collected by someone other than a parent/guardian.**
6. At assembly and break times, when the bell rings, pupils must stop playing and walk quietly to their lines as each class is called, in turn, by the teacher on duty. At home time each teacher conveys his/her class to the appropriate exit. In the event of their being nobody to meet a pupil who is normally collected, the pupil must report back to the class teacher or office/ reception area.
7. It is in everyone's interest that a high standard of personal hygiene be maintained by all. Paper towels and hand sanitizers are provided for all pupils.
8. As a Health Promoting School we implement a healthy eating policy and encourage healthy food options. Our school is a "Nut Free Zone". Glass bottles are dangerous and therefore are forbidden.
9. All pupils are expected to co-operate in keeping the school and its environs litter free.
10. Under no circumstances can mobile phones be powered on during school time.
11. In the case of gross misbehaviour, parents will be contacted and asked to remove their child from the school. On return, both parent and pupil must report to the principal's office.

Parents/Guardians of \_\_\_\_\_ (child's name)

Parents/Guardians signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_