

# Code of Behaviour

SCOIL NAOMH IOSEF, DROMCOLLOGHER

## INTRODUCTION

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of *Scoil Naomh Iosef* 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; and
7. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

The Code of Behaviour of *Scoil Naomh Iosef* 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 ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.
- 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.

## LINKAGE TO OTHER POLICIES

All policies need to be read in conjunction with this Code of Behaviour with particular reference to: Anti-Bullying Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, School Tours Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, Health & Safety Policy, Child Protection Policy and School Attendance Policy

## STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

### **Responsibility of Adults:**

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other as their example is an important influence on the children.

## **Pupils**

### *General Behaviour*

Each pupil is expected to:

- be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults
- show respect for other's property
- show respect for the property of, the school, other children and their own belongings
- Follow directions from staff
- Show courtesy and good manners
- attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual
- do his/her best both in school and for homework.
- Use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict

### ***Classroom Behaviour***

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will discuss class rules with the children. Such rules should be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard to for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community.

Each pupil is expected to:

- listen – to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking
- work – to the best of his/her ability
- value – school property and the belongings of fellow pupils.
- follow – the direction of his/her teacher
- obtain – his/her teachers permission to leave the classroom
- respect – the teacher, other pupils and visitors to the classroom
- show – kindness and willingness to help others

### ***Playground (Playing Pitches) Behaviour***

Each pupil is expected to:

- observe -the rules of general good behaviour
- 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
- walk – to assembly point and form an orderly line when the bell rings

### ***Behaviour in other School Areas***

Each pupil is expected to:

- walk – quietly in the school corridor in single file
- obtain – the teacher's permission to go to the toilet
- form – an orderly line prior to admission
- respect – school mates , adults, the school building and property

### ***Behaviour during School Outings/Activities***

Each pupil is expected to:

- follow – his/her 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 and systems of rewards and sanctions, 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, by contacting the Secretary or writing a note which will be shown by the pupil to the class teacher.

In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour parents will be invited to participate in the intervention process.

It is expected of parents/guardians that their approach to staff at all times is calm, cooperative and polite, and that all concerns are communicated in a positive manner.

## School Yard Rules

While in the yard....

- I respect all yard users
- I play fairly and safely
- I stay in my own play area
- I ask permission to re-enter the school building
- When the bell rings, I stop playing and I walk into my line

## Classroom Rules

At the start of September, each class teacher will devise the classroom rules in consultation with the pupils. These rules will be displayed in the classroom and discussed regularly.

## 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/gesture to show approval
- A word of praise in front of group/class
- A mention at Assembly
- Use of stars and stickers
- Use of treats
- Awarding special privileges

## 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.

### Minor (Level 1)

Definition:

Those misbehaviours which 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 classed as Minor. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Failure to prepare for class as defined by individual teachers
- Disobedience
- Ignoring Staff requests
- Talking in class
- Minor class disruption
- Misbehaviour in the playground, classroom, corridor, toilets or any other area of the school or on outings
- Careless attitude to homework or tests e.g. not completing it properly or copying
- Running in the corridor
- Offensive language
- Breach of mobile phones/electronic gadgets policy

## **Disciplinary Actions for Minor Misbehaviour**

Consequences for minor misbehavior are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the behavior. Teachers will discipline students by:

- Verbal reprimand
- Reinforcement of alternative positive behavior
- Temporary separation from peers , friends or others
- Loss of privileges
- Detention during break for 15 minutes / All break for re-offenders.
- Behaviour contract

## **Supportive Interventions**

Listed Below are some examples of supportive actions

- Discussion of behavior with child
- Informal notes regarding incident/ intervention / date.
- Informal consultation with Parents / Guardian

## **Serious (Level 2)**

Serious 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 the Serious category. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Disrespectful language, tone, behavior or manner towards an adult
- Repeated incidents of minor misbehavior which have not been modified by intervention
- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment , discrimination , name calling and victimization)
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Behaviour which is dangerous to self and others e.g. fighting , hitting etc.
- Dangerous play or activity
- Persistent use of offensive language
- Offensive language directed at another person
- Derogatory reference to another person, race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability or ethnic origin
- Spitting
- Theft
- Deliberate damage to school or personal property
- Intimidation
- Stealing
- Sneering at achievers
- Malicious lying
- Leaving school premises without permission
- Intentional shoving, pushing, hitting etc. which is dangerous to self and others
- Breach of mobile phones/electronic gadgets policy

## **Disciplinary Actions for Serious misbehavior**

The disciplining of students serious behavior is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behavior and developmentally appropriate levels. For the most part the strategies outlined below adopted from “Working Together for Positive Behaviour” (Mary Immaculate College, CDU) will be utilized:

1. Verbal Warning

2. Loss of Privilege
3. In-Class Time Out
4. Out of Class Time Out
5. Parents called to school immediately, student asked to explain behavior to parent.
6. (Severe disruption during out of class time-out may result in student being sent home)

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of Health and Safety.

### **Supportive Interventions**

- Team Conference – class teacher, other staff involved , deputy principal and principal
- Team Conference with parents
- Allocation of support teaching – specific teaching of school procedures, activities to develop empathy, building positive relationships with adults etc. (“Working Together for Positive Behaviour” (Mary Immaculate College, CDU)
- Request for assistance from the National Educational Psychological Services, the National Behaviour Support service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education
- Referral of a child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment with parent(s)/guardian(s) consent.

## **Gross (Level 3)**

Gross misbehaviours 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 Gross. Please note that the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated or serious instances of serious misbehavior which have not been modified by intervention
- Defiance of a teacher
- Violent/threatening/intimidating behaviour towards students or staff
- Assault on a staff or student
- Substance possession or misuse within the school premises
- Setting fires
- Possession of dangerous weapons
- Malicious serious damage to property
- Any other behaviour likely to endanger personal well-being or property or to cause disruption of school activities
- Breach of mobile phones/electronic gadgets policy

### **Disciplinary Actions for Gross Misbehaviour**

These actions 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 suspension is contained in this document:

- Internal Suspension – Internal suspension is when a pupil is removed from their own class and is placed in another class for up to three school days. (The Principal following due process and procedure, can issue this suspension)
- Immediate Suspension – Child sent home from school immediately
- Suspension for one to five days
- Suspension for five to ten days (repeated incidence of gross misbehavior or a severe expression of behavior)

## Children with Special Needs

All children are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However, the school recognizes that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behavior plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning support/ resource teacher, and or Principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive Development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable.

## 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:*

In the case of serious misbehaviours which have not resolved following implementation of the interventions outlined and/or gross misbehavior, the Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Iosef formally and in writing authorizes the Principal to sanction an **Immediate Suspension**, pending discussion with the parents/guardians. 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 gross 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 Naomh Iosef*, 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;

- Violent/threatening/intimidating behaviour towards students or staff
- Substance possession or misuse within the school premises
- Possession of dangerous weapons
- Malicious serious damage to 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/her 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) and a written apology in his/her own writing. The apology will be addressed to all parties involved in the given incident.

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 Naomh Iosef* 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 gross misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management of *Scoil Naomh Iosef* 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 Naomh Iosef* 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 Science 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

### *Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:*

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms gross 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 **10 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 Science under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of **Scoil Naomh Iosef** 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.

## RECORDS

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

- Incidents of misbehavior
- Interventions used to improve behavior, including contact with parents/guardians and / or other agencies
- Evidence of improved behavior
- Any sanctions imposed and the reason they were imposed

Pupils will be notified when a record of their behavior is being made, 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.

The code will be reviewed at regular intervals.

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