



SN Muire Gan Smál (Uimhir Rolla 17198S)

Code of Behaviour

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Anti Bullying Policy and all other related school policies, as defined in Appendix 1.

Introductory Statement

This Code of Behaviour has been formulated, following a consultative process with the school's Board of Management, the Principal, the Teaching Staff, the Special Needs Assistants, Parents, Guardians, Pupils and the Educational Welfare Officer. It has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board. Our school has endeavoured to ensure that the Code of Behaviour complies with the requirements of relevant legislation.

The representative planning group who have overseen the development of this policy include the following:

Stephanie Keating, School Principal

Frank Gallagher, BOM Representative

Áine Bleahene, BOM Representative

Majella O' Rourke, Staff Representative

Ann Farrell, Staff Representative

Laura Gallagher, Staff Representative

Ann Lohan, Parents' Representative

Fidelma Mc Manus, Parents' Representative

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School

SN Muire Gan Smál aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all of our pupils. The Code of Behaviour endeavours to ensure that each individual pupil will be enabled to realise his/her full academic, intellectual, physical, moral, spiritual and personal development.

Rationale

To provide a safe, secure, happy and positive learning environment in our school.

Aims

- To provide a safe and welcoming environment for all those attending our school.
- To foster an environment for learning, both from an academic and social learning perspective.
- To foster respectful and caring attitudes to one another and towards the school environment.
- To provide guidance and support for pupils, staff and parents on behavioural expectations.
- To differentiate between the person and the behaviour.
- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others.
- To develop pupils' self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
- To enable the teachers to teach and the pupils to learn without unnecessary disruption.

Relationships

A positive school ethos is based on the quality of relationships, both the professional relationship among staff and the way in which staff and pupils treat each other. This positive ethos permeates all the school activities and helps to form a strong sense of social cohesion within the school and within the wider school community.

Content/Guidelines:

This Code of Behaviour is designed to give clear guidelines of expected behaviour of all members of our school community.

Staff are expected to:

- Act in a professional manner in accordance with the Teaching Council Guidelines on Code of Professional Conduct (2012)
- Act in the best interests of the pupils, treating children fairly, equally and with respect at all times.
- Maintain a high standard of behaviour and ensure that the school's Code of Behaviour is implemented.
- Meet annually and other times as necessary with parents/guardians to discuss their child's progress and to keep them informed of any concerns in relation to their child.
- Endeavour to provide a safe, secure and happy learning environment for the pupils in this school.

The Board of Management is expected to:

- Assume the overall responsibility for positive behaviour in the school.
- Provide a comfortable and safe environment.
- Ratify the Code of Behaviour.
- Initiate a periodic review of the Code of Behaviour.
- Treat all members of the school community with respect.
- Ensure the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Deal with serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour, which cannot be resolved within the school.
- Support the Principal and the Staff in decisions that are made in the best

interests of the pupils.

- Adhere to the guidelines in The Board of Management Handbook in relation to Parents' Complaints Procedures and Staff Grievance Procedures.
- Comply with all legislation and guidelines relevant to school life.

Parents/Guardians are expected to:

- Support the school in the decisions made in the best interest of the pupils.
- Promote the school's Code of Behaviour and reinforce its guidelines with their children.
- Foster a respect for school staff and avoid negative comments and/or discussion of staff in the presence of children and/or other parents.
- Ensure that their child attends school. A written explanation must be provided if their child is absent for all or part of a school day, as per the Education Welfare Act (2000)
- Ensure that homework is allocated due time and effort by their child.
- Keep the school informed of any concerns or difficulties, which may affect their child.
- Visit the school at a mutually appropriate time when requested to do so by the Principal or other teaching staff members. (By prior appointment)

The Principal is expected to:

- Take overall responsibility for discipline in the school on a day-to day basis.
- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure the Code of Behaviour is available to the whole school community.
- Ensure the Code of behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Arrange for a review of the Code of Behaviour periodically.
- Liaise with the school community, parents/guardians, Board of

Management, child professionals and outside agencies as required.

- . Foster and develop a sense of collective responsibility among staff and a sense of commitment to this school among pupils and their parents/ guardians.
- . Maintain a Serious Incidents Record Book, to be signed by the Principal, Parent/Guardian and Pupil following the recording of an incident. This record shall be kept for a period of **two years**.

Pupils are expected to

- . Treat peers, staff and all members of the school community with respect at all times.
- . Treat school property and property of others with respect at all times.
- . Accept and co-operate with decisions made in their best interests.
- . Respect the rights of others to a safe and secure learning environment.
- . Ensure their behaviour does not infringe on the rights of others.
- . Work to the best of their ability.

Expected Uniform and Presentation

The required uniform is outlined to parents/guardians on the enrolment of their child.

The wearing of jewellery is confined to stud earrings and a wristwatch as outlined in the school's Health and Safety Policy.

Make up is not permitted.

In the interest of health and hygiene, pupils may on occasions (e.g during sports activities) be asked to tie their hair back.

The above shall apply to all pupils save where agreed by the Principal on a case-by-case basis.

The code of behaviour will apply as follows:

In school during school time, in the school playground, on the school bus, during school outings such as school tours, field trips and other such excursions; and while engaging in all school related activities both inside and outside school premises.

For the avoidance of doubt, breach of the outlined expectations in this Code of Behaviour and of rules associated with the following policies is a breach of the code of behavior.

- . **Anti bullying Policy**
- . **Mobile Phone Policy**
- . **Uniform Policy**

- . **Homework Policy**

- . **Healthy Eating Policy**
- . **Substance Misuse Policy**

These, and other policies, which are relevant to the school's Code of Behaviour, are cited in **Appendix 1**.

Affirming Positive Behaviour

The school places greater emphasis on praise/encouragement than on sanctions in the belief that this will give the best results. Every effort will be made to adopt a positive approach in implementing the school's Code of Behaviour.

Appendix 2 outlines procedures for How to Promote a Happy School.

Strategies and Incentives

The teacher is consistent, predictable and keeps promises.

Earned rewards cannot be withdrawn. Inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with separately through a consequence system.

Individual teachers will select age appropriate incentives from the following source:

Classroom Intervention Document 4; Setting Up Whole-Class and Group Rewards System; Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties-A continuum of Support NEPs 2007.

Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour

Supportive strategies put in place, based on the guidelines issued by NEPs (referenced above) to encourage more positive and acceptable behaviour.

This staged approach/strategy to be implemented for dealing with unacceptable behaviour is as follows:

- a) Reasoning with the pupil.
- b) Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
- c) Temporary separation from peers (eg. quiet working space within the classroom.)
- d) Loss of privileges (not a reward earned)
- e) Note from class teacher in homework journal, explaining the nature of the misbehaviour, to be signed by parents/guardians.
- f) Prescribing extra work/weekend work.
- g) Referral to Principal
- h) More formal communication with parents i.e. Meeting (initially with class teacher followed by a meeting with Principal if required.)

It is acknowledged that all stages may not be appropriate or applicable depending on the severity of the behaviour.

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular area, except on the grounds of Health/Safety. At all times the focus will be on the behaviour and not on the child. The pupil will always be afforded a fair hearing. Detention will not be used, unless a child has to be removed from the playground/ classroom during break time in the interest of Health and Safety.

- i) Involvement of the school's Board of Management
- j) Suspension
- k) Expulsion

Suspension and Expulsion

The entitlement to education is legally protected and open to appeal. Schools are required, under section 23(2) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, to include their procedures for suspension and expulsion in their Code of Behaviour.

Suspension or Expulsion must be a proportionate response to a student's behaviour.

SUSPENSION

For the purpose of this code, Suspension is requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.

Suspension may be considered for gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a staff member or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised and school staff will review the reasons why these have not worked. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as:

- 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 this time constitutes a threat to safety;
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

Responsibilities of the Board of Management:

- ensure that the school has a policy, on and procedures for the use of suspension, in line with procedures published from the National Educational Welfare Board;
- ensure that fair procedures are used and that all staff are aware of them;
- ensure that the Board of Management and the Principal are equipped for their roles in relation to the use of suspension;
- . ensure there are no undue delays in an investigation and in making decisions;
- . ensure that all these matters are dealt with in confidence.

Fair procedures

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend or expel a student which involve communication with parents which may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

Fair procedures will be accessible to all people including those with disabilities or those from different language or cultural backgrounds and include:

(1) The right to be heard means to know that the alleged misbehavior is being investigated and to know the details of the allegations being made. A student and

their parents are to be fully informed about an allegation and the processes that will be used to investigate and decide the matter and that they must be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation before a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed.

(2) The right to impartiality means the right to an absence of bias in the decision-maker and the right to impartiality in the investigation and the decision-making. Freedom from bias entails ensuring that a person with an interest in the matter is not involved in the investigation or decision-making. An impartial process is one that allows a decision to be made based on an unbiased evaluation of information and evidence.

Where suspension is being considered procedures from the National Educational Welfare Board will be followed (Developing a Code of Behaviour Guidelines for schools Chapters 10 and 11 Pages 58 – 78)

Authority to suspend

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a student. This authority is delegated to the Principal and the Principal shall report all suspensions to the Board of Management

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person.

Procedures for Suspension

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school shall observe the following procedures:

- inform the student and their parents about the complaint
- give parents and student an opportunity to respond.
- Let the student and their parents know about the complaint, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension.

The period of suspension

A student shall not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed in order to achieve a particular objective.

If a suspension longer than three days is being proposed by the Principal, the matter shall be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes.

Appeals

The Board of Management should offer an opportunity to appeal the Principal's decision to suspend a student. [In the case of decisions to suspend made by the Board of Management an appeals process may be provided by the Patron].

Implementing the suspension

The Principal will notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm:

- the period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents.
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998, section 29).

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 Science directs that it be removed following an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Re-integrating the student

A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents about the suspension. If required, the school shall arrange for a member of staff to provide support to the student during the re-integration process.

Clean slate

When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a student shall be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. (Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed the school expects the same behaviour as of all other students.)

Records of investigation

Formal written records shall be kept of:

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

Review of use of suspension

The Board of Management shall review the use of suspension in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing

behaviour in the school and to ensure that use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

EXPULSION

As part of this code of behaviour, the Board of Management has a policy on, and procedures for expulsion which are in line with procedures set down by the National Educational Welfare Board.

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.

The grounds for expulsion

Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that shall only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour and cannot be delegated. The school should have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:

The policy and procedures followed by the school are similar to that for suspension but reflect the gravity of the behaviour in question and the seriousness of the sanction. These include but are not limited to:

- meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour;
- making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist;
- ensuring that all other possible options have been tried;
- seeking the assistance of support agencies.

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

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

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference is that, where expulsion is considered, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions, and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

Procedures in respect of expulsion

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, when proposing to expel a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps include:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

Where expulsion is being considered, procedures from the National Educational Welfare Board will be followed (Developing a Code of Behaviour Guidelines for schools Chapters 10 and 12 Pages 67-68 and 79 – 87).

The policy for Suspension and Expulsion shall be reviewed regularly as part of the Code of Behaviour

Implementation Date

This revised policy will come into effect and supersede the previous Code of Behaviour, with immediate effect, following ratification by the Board of Management.

Success Criteria

Observation of Behaviour

Review of Behaviour Record at whole school level.

Positive feedback from staff, parents, guardians and pupils.

Timetable for Review

September 2016. Amendments may be required as a result of legislative changes and/or new guidelines issued by the DES.

Ratification

This revised policy was ratified by the Board of Management on **28/01/2014**

Communication

Circulate revised Code of Behaviour to the school community.

Ensure the Code of Behaviour is available to download from the school website.

A translated version of this Code of Behaviour will be provided on request.

This Code of Behaviour will be given to all new applicants on enrolment.

Acceptance of the Code of Behaviour is implied by all students and their parents/ guardians on enrolment at SN Muire Gan Smál.

Signed: _____

Fr Declan Mc Inerney, Chairperson BOM.

Date: 28/01/2014

APPENDIX 1

School Policies which relate directly to the school's Code of Behaviour

- . Anti-bullying Policy
- . Mobile Phone Policy
- . Uniform Policy
- . Homework Policy

- . Data Protection Policy
- . Child Protection Policy
- . Policy on Equality of Opportunity
- . Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers
- . Home School Communications
- . School Policy for Processing Complaints
- . Substance Misuse Policy
- . SEN Policy
- . Positive Attendance Policy
- . Healthy Eating Policy
- . Use of School Premises by Community Groups Policy
- . Sexual Harassment Policy
- . Critical Incident Policy
- . Health and Safety Policy
- . Access to Records Policy

APPENDIX 2: How to Promote a Happy School

Please refer to subsequent pages.

