

SCOIL BHRÍDE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Position Statement:

If Scoil Bhríde is to achieve a happy, secure environment in which children can develop to their full potential, it is necessary to provide a framework, which promotes positive behaviour and discourages unacceptable behaviour. The policy places a greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions, and the ideal is that pupils will acquire self-discipline.

AIMS

- To help create a positive, stimulating, learning environment in which every pupil can achieve her potential.
- To help pupils become self-disciplined, and to encourage good standards of behaviour at home, at school and locally, based on respect and tolerance for others.
- To maintain good order throughout the school and respect for the school environment.

If a school is to function properly and efficiently, it is necessary that the rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and wisely. Our school "Mission Statement" also ensures this.

SCHOOL RULES & PROCEDURES

School officially opens at **9.20 a.m.** and closes at **3.00 p.m.** **Supervision officially commences at this time.** Children should arrive **no** later than this time. Punctuality is encouraged at all times.

School Visits:

- A note in the journal is the means of communication between teacher and parent/guardian. Sometimes it saves a trip to the school.
- Always try to give children their lunch in the morning. If this is not possible, please leave lunches in the office or with the school secretary.
- If you wish to see the teacher on **ANY** matter, please contact the principal or the school secretary to make an appointment.
- When sending money to school for books etc., please place in an envelope, sealed and labelled.

Permission Slips/Aladdin permission

A written note/note on Aladdin is compulsory for the following:

- To go home early
- All absences
- Appointments for doctors/clinics etc..
- To stay in for break or lunch.
- If your child has a particular medical problem.
- **Under no circumstances may children leave the school during school hours without written permission.**

Parents are requested to sign pupils out if collecting their child early.

Sickness:

If your child is sick in the morning, please do **not** send her in. In case of sudden illness/emergencies during school, please ensure that the school has 2 contact numbers: parents and 1 other person, in the case of emergencies.

Hygiene/Hair Care:

All long hair should be tied back to prevent the spread of head-lice. Head-lice is an ongoing problem in school. **It is the duty of every parent to ensure that their child's head is clean. Should we notice an obvious problem with hair, parents will be notified.**

School Uniform:

- In accordance with school policy pupils are expected to wear full uniform each day, i.e. as decided annually
- All school uniforms and belongings should be labelled. If not, **the school is not responsible for loss or damage**
- P.E. gear must be worn on P.E. days.
- In the interest of safety, jewellery is not allowed. Only stud earrings may be worn. Body piercing e.g. nose/eye is not permitted.

Lunches:

- A healthy eating policy is now in place in the school and pupils may also avail of free school lunches provided by the Department of Social Protection.

Green School:

- Scoil Bhríde is a Green School and a Green School Team and policy is in place for this.

Books:

A booklist is given to each student in June each year. All students **should have** their books on the first day of the school year. As we have a book rental scheme, pupils must care for the book on this scheme, otherwise it will be necessary for parents to replace books. See our **“Book Rental Policy”** on the school website.

Lunch/Break Times:

During break and lunchtime, children will at all times refer to the **teacher** on duty.

Phone Policy:

Pupils are not allowed to **TAKE** or **MAKE** personal calls during school hours. Urgent messages will be given to the children if parent/guardian contacts the office.

MOBILE PHONES ARE ONLY ALLOWED IN SCHOOL IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES WITH A PERMISSION SLIP FROM PARENTS. Phones will be turned off and kept in the teachers desk until 3pm, unless this is in place, phones will be confiscated. Please see our “Acceptable Use Policy” for further information.

D.F.L.-DISCIPLINE FOR LEARNING

In parallel with our school rules we have a discipline policy in place in our school since September 2006 called D.F.L.-Discipline For Learning. It is a system of positive discipline where emphasis is on **recognising** and **affirming** the children who behave well. The children learn 5 rules covering the themes of:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| ➤ Talk theme | Talk, whisper or be quiet, when you know the time is right |
| ➤ Movement theme | In the line, class & school, orderly walking is the rule |
| ➤ Time theme | When an adult you will meet, be polite, respect & greet |
| ➤ Pupil/adult theme | Respect, play fair, include and share |
| ➤ Pupil-pupil relationship theme | Use your block, watch the clock |

The school has a variety of ways of ensuring that all students know what is expected of them. Each child has a stamp book and it will be stamped for positive behaviour. There is a graded list of **rewards** and also of **sanctions** so that children know at all times the consequences of their behaviour. The challenge for each child is to be "**caught being good**". Since the implication of this policy discipline has improved **dramatically** in the school.

Anti Bullying Policy

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde has an anti-bullying policy. While the policy on Anti-Bullying is a separate one, it is dealt with within the framework of the schools overall code of behaviour.

EXAMPLES OF MISBEHAVIOUR

In Class:

Talking/disrupting others

Cheeky behaviour/distraction of others/untidy Work/poor effort at school/homework

In Playground:

Fighting/kicking/rough play/foul language/name calling/spitting/littering.

SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOUR:

Bullying/mitching/stealing/aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil/Deliberate damage to school property/leaving school grounds without permission.

PROCEDURES TO DEAL WITH MISBEHAVIOUR

- The class teacher deals with it using the structure of D.F.L.
- If the problem persists the teacher shall consult the principal or parents, with a view to helping the child & solving the problem.
- In the case of serious misbehaviour the principal, the teacher and the parents, will have ongoing discussions to monitor the situation.

SANCTIONS

The following sanctions will be used for instances of consistent misbehaviour:

1. First Offence - Oral warning/Visual warning
2. Reduction of Golden Time
3. Use of restorative practices and questioning
4. Consultation with Deputy Principal/Principal
5. Parents informed if behaviour persists
6. Support of SEN team
7. Meeting with parents
8. Referral to Principal
9. Detention
10. Formal report to BOM
11. Suspension
12. Expulsion

Although incidents of misbehaviour are recorded, the emphasis is on encouraging children to behave well and praise is given for commendable behaviour. Parents will be informed at an early stage if problems occur and not simply at the point where a crisis has arisen. At times, it has been suggested by some parents that matters to which their attention is being drawn, are of a trivial nature, and that there was no necessity to have informed them that their child has misbehaved. The response to this is that, while the misbehaviour may appear to be of a trivial nature, it is the cumulative effect of such breaches of the rules, which is important as it undermines the ethos of school.

SUSPENSION

Access to education shapes the life chances of children and young people in a fundamental way. For this reason, a proposal to exclude a student, through suspension or expulsion, is a serious step, warranted only by very serious misbehaviour.

The Legal Context:

The entitlement to education is protected in a range of constitutional and legal provisions and in human rights Conventions. These legal protections for the individual student's right to education mean that decisions to suspend or expel a student are open to appeal and may be subject to judicial review by the High Court.

Time and Timeless:

The Board of Management and Principal have a duty to ensure that there are no undue delays in an investigation and in making decisions about the imposition of suspension or expulsion

Confidentiality:

Great care will be taken to ensure that all matters to do with an investigation of alleged misbehaviour are dealt with in confidence

Factors to consider before suspending:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour.
- The triggers of the behaviour will be scrutinised
- The impact of the behaviour

- Interventions
 - (a) Involvement of parents
 - (b) Assessment
 - (c) Mediation
 - (d) Support Services
- While every effort will be made to maintain a standard behaviour certain mitigating factors, will be taken into account
- Suspension should be part of an agreed plan to address the student's behaviour
-

Formal of suspension:

Refer to N.E.W.B Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for School Pg 66-87.

- Immediate Suspension
- Automatic Suspension
- Rolling Suspension
- Informal or Unacknowledged suspension:
- Open-ended suspension:

FAIR PROCEDURES BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF NATURAL JUSTICE:

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend or expel a student. The requirement for fair procedures derives from the Constitution of Ireland, international Conventions and case law.

Fair procedures have two essential parts:

- **the right to be heard**
- **the right to impartiality**

Applying fair procedures in school

In a school, fair procedures apply to:

- the **investigation** of alleged misbehaviour
- the process of **decision-making**

Procedures in respect of suspension

The school will then observe the following procedures

- inform the student & parent
- give an opportunity to respond

Procedures in relation to immediate suspension:

In relation to an immediate suspension a preliminary investigation will be conducted followed by a formal investigation.

The period of suspension

A student will not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than 3 days is warranted. If a suspension longer than 3 days is proposed by the Principal, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval.

Appeals:

The Board of Management will offer an opportunity to appeal a Principal's decision to suspend a student.

Implementing the suspension:

- The principal will notify the parents and the student in *writing* of the decision to suspend. Details will be contained in the letter.

Engaging with students and parents:

- The Principal or another staff member will meet with the parents.
- Where parents do not agree to meet with the Principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.

Grounding 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*.

After the suspension ends:

- A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents about the suspension.

Re-integrating the student:

- The school should have a plan to help the student to take responsibility for catching up on work missed.

Clean slate:

- When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a student will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start.

Records and reports:

Records of investigation and decision making

Formal written records will 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

Report to the Board of Management:

The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management.

Report to the NEWB:

The Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines (Education Welfare) Act 2000, section 21 (4) (a).

Review use of suspension if used regularly:

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies.

EXPULSION

Authority to expel:

The Board of Management of a recognised school has authority to expel a student.

Expulsion will be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour:

The grounds for expulsion:

Prior to expulsion the school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour.

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

Automatic expulsion:

A Board of Management may decide, as part of the school's policy on sanctions, and following the consultation process with the Principal, parents, teachers and students, that particular named behaviours incur expulsion as a sanction.

Expulsion for a first offence:

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence. A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff.

Factors to consider before proposing to expel a student:

The nature and seriousness of the behaviour

Procedures in respect of expulsion:

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

- a detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
- a recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal
- consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing
- Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing
- consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer
- confirmation of the decision to expel

These procedures assume that the Board of Management is the decision-making body in relation to expulsions.

It is a matter for each Board of Management to decided which of the tasks involved in these procedural steps requires separate meetings and which tasks can be accomplished

together in a single meeting, consistent with giving parents due notice of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for a Board hearing.

Appeals:

A parent/guardian may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 section 29). An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a student.

The appeals process:

The appeals process under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 begins with the provision of mediation by a mediator nominated by the Appeals Committee (Department of Education and Science). For further details about the Appeals process, including requirements for documentation, and the steps in the process, refer to current DES guidance.

Review of use of expulsion if used regularly:

The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies.

This policy was reviewed and passed by the Board of Management at a meeting on 28/09/2022

Signed: _____

Date: _____