



POLICY DOCUMENT ON CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of Scoil Sheanáin Naofa has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for Pupils, Staff and Parents.

The Code of Behaviour of Scoil Sheanáin Naofa has been developed in accordance with "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools", National Education Welfare Board, 2008.

Policy Formulation:

In formulating this Policy the Board of Management completed the following steps;

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 time frame.

Teachers discussed the topic of "rules" with their classes and were invited to submit a list of suggestions made.

The initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was reviewed and where appropriate, amended.

The finalised draft of the Policy was submitted for the Patron's approval.

The Aims of the Code of Behaviour of Scoil Sheanáin Naofa are:

- To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
- To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
- To develop pupils' self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.

Implementation

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Rules will be kept to a minimum, emphasising positive behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour

1. Pupils are expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable
2. Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
3. Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.
4. Pupils are expected to obey a teacher's instructions, to work to the best of their ability, to present assignments neatly and to co-operate with auxiliary staff.
5. Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing (completed absence note in diary/absence note sheet)

Affirming Positive Behaviour

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions.

Strategies/Incentives

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment on a child's exercise book/Homework Journal.
- A visit to the Deputy Principal / Principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group.
- Individual class merit awards, points awards or award stamps.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Written or verbal communication with parent(s)/guardian(s).

Discouraging Misbehaviour

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development. These may include (in no particular order)

- Reasoning with pupil.
- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class and/or removal of class.
- Prescribing extra work.
- Loss of privileges.
- Detention during break under supervision.
- Teacher communicating with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Referral to Deputy Principal.

- Deputy Principal communicating with parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Deputy Principal/Teacher communicating with Principal.
- Principal communicating with parent(s)/guardian(s)/appropriate adult.
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).

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

Bullying

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (persons) and which is repeated over time. Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to co-operate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

Level One Behaviours

Level 1 behaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom and common areas.

Level One behaviours may include but are not confined to the following types of behaviour:

- Failure to prepare for class
- Running in the corridors/classroom
- Disturbing the work or play of others
- Disrespectful language, tone, manner
- Use of profanity
- Ignoring staff requests
- Behaviour which is antisocial, excludes others and is disrespectful to others

Disciplinary Actions may include (in no particular order):

- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class and/or removal of class.
- Prescribing extra work.
- Loss of privileges.
- Communication with parent(s)/guardian(s).

Supportive Interventions may include:

- Reasoning with pupil.
- Communication with parent(s)/guardian(s)

Level Two 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.

Level Two behaviours may include but are not confined to the following types of behaviour:

- Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour where intervention and corrective measures have not been successful.
- Behaviour which is dangerous to self or others (e.g. shoving, pushing, hitting)
- Intentionally damaging school or personal property
- Stealing
- Cheating
- Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin.
- Disrespectful language or behaviour towards an adult
- Possession or use of dangerous toys or sporting equipment (e.g. bow and arrows, any kind of knives etc.)
- Leaving the school without permission during the school day or leaving the care of school staff during school outings.

Disciplinary Actions may include (in no particular order):

- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class and/or removal of class.
- Prescribing extra work.
- Loss of privileges.
- Teacher communicating with parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Detention during break under supervision.
- Referral to Deputy Principal.
- Deputy Principal communicating with parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Deputy Principal/Teacher communicating with Principal.
- Principal communicating with parent(s)/guardian(s)/appropriate adult.
- Report submitted to the B.O.M.
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).

Supportive Interventions may include:

- Reasoning with pupil.
- Communication with parent(s)/guardian(s)

- Team conference to include class teacher/other involved staff/Deputy Principal/Principal.
- Request for assistance from external agencies such as N.E.P.S./H.S.E./C.A.M.H.S./N.C.S.E.
- Referral of a child displaying behaviour problems for psychological assessment (with the parents(s)/guardian(s) consent).

Level Three 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 Gardaí after parental involvement.

Level Three behaviours may include but are not confined to the following types of behaviour:

- Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 behaviour where intervention and corrective measures have not been successful.
- 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.
- Supplying/attempting to supply illegal drugs or substances to others in the school
- Interference with/Violation of the Person

Disciplinary Actions may include:

- Principal communicating with parent(s)/guardian(s)/appropriate adult.
- **Suspension from school for one to five days:**
This response may occur with the first incidence of Level Three Behaviour. 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 Three 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 Three Behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled.

***Instances of Level Three Behaviours may warrant immediate exclusion from school**

Exclusion (Suspension/Expulsion)

Definition of Suspension:

“requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days”

Authority to Suspend:

The Board of Management of Scoil Sheanáin Naofa 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 Sheanáin Naofa*, 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.

Before serious sanctions such as detention, exclusion [suspension or expulsion] are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be utilized. Communication with parents may be verbal or written, depending on the circumstances.

Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of Level Three Behaviour/Level Two Behaviour of sufficient severity, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board has authorised the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days. This authorisation is in writing and limits the proposed suspension to three days.

Procedure for Suspension:

Fair procedures are observed when proposing to suspend a pupil. These procedures include the right to be heard and the right to impartiality. In the case where preliminary assessment of the facts confirms misbehavior of a level that could warrant suspension, the school will inform the parents by phone or in writing and request that the parents collect their child at the earliest possible time.

The Principal shall notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm the reasons for the suspension, the dates on which the suspension will begin and end and the arrangements for returning school, including any undertakings or commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parents (i.e. parents and pupil will be asked to re-affirm in writing their commitment to the code of behaviour). The parent will be informed of their right to appeal this suspension to the Board of Management. Particular care is taken in communicating with parents who may have reading difficulties or whose first language is not the vernacular language of the school.

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 misbehavior of a level that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management of Scoil Sheanáin Naofa 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 Sheanáin Naofa 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.

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.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and may re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

Procedures in Respect of Expulsion

Definition of Expulsion:

“a student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him/her from the school having complied with the provisions of Section 24 of the Education(Welfare) Act 2000”

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

The school will follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 when proposing to expel a pupil. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms misbehaviour of a level that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

(1) A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.

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

(2) A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal

Where the Principal 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)

(3) Consideration by the Board of management of the Principal's recommendation and 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

(4) Board of Management deliberations and 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.

(5) 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 of the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management may decide 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 of Management hearing.

Appeals Against Expulsion

A parent may appeal a decision to expel a pupil to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007.

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 Skills)

Review of Use of Expulsion

The Board of Management will periodically review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school and to ensure that expulsion is used appropriately.

School Rules

School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly.

Rules for Pupils

1. School Timetable:

9.15am.....	Classes Commence
11:00 am-11:15 am	Sos
12.45pm – 1.15pm.....	Lunch Break
1.55pm	Dismissal (Jun & Sen. Infants)
2.55pm	Dismissal (All other Classes)

[Please note that no responsibility can be taken for pupils who arrive at school before 9.00am or who remain on the school premises after 3.00pm.]

2. It is essential to be punctual for classes at all times.
3. When the bell rings (9.15am, 11.15am and 1.15pm) pupils should form a line according to class at the designated door and quietly return to their classroom with their teacher.
4. Pupils shall show respect for all staff members and auxiliary staff members.
5. Pupils shall show respect for themselves and for each other.
6. Bullying, in any form, is not tolerated.
7. Pupil's must adhere to our healthy lunch policy and food allergy restrictions.

8. Pupils are not allowed into the school building before 9.15am, during breaks, lunch time without permission from a teacher.
9. Pupils shall not leave the school grounds during the school day without proper authorisation of parent(s)/guardian(s). Pupils who have to leave the school during the school days must be collected by their parent/authorised representative and the **signed out** in the designated register at reception.
10. Pupils must wear school uniform at all times.
11. On PE days, pupils must wear PE uniform.
12. Hanging jewellery e.g. earrings, necklaces/bracelets must not be worn. Make-up is not allowed.
13. The use of mobile phones/cameras by pupils during school hours is strictly prohibited. If a pupil has to bring a mobile phone to school it must be switched off at all times during school hours. Parents/pupils may be contacted via the school phone at reception.
14. Pupils must stay in their designated yards at break-times.
15. Pupils are prohibited from climbing external steps leading to the gym.
16. Pupils are prohibited from entering adjoining areas outside school bounds.
17. Chewing gum is strictly forbidden.
18. Pupils are prohibited from bringing glass bottles to school.
19. Homework assignments must be completed consistently and with care.
20. Pupils who cycle to school must walk with their bicycles through the schoolyard.
The school is not liable for any loss, damage or injury caused/sustained from pupils' bicycles. Pupils who bring bicycles to school do so at their own risk.
21. Litter control: pupils take turns to ensure that the areas designated to their care are litter free.
22. For safety reasons Pupils are not allowed to bring dogs into the school yard at any time. The Dog Warden will be notified of any dogs within the school precinct.
23. Pupils shall obey Fire Drill instructions.
24. Pupils should behave in an exemplary manner on the way to/from school.
25. Pupils are expected to observe the rules of general good behaviour during all School Outings/Activities.
26. The BOM has declared the **school premises and grounds** off limits outside of school hours. Any unauthorised person(s) on school grounds outside of these hours is deemed to be trespassing. Exceptions to this rule are authorised/bona fide members of clubs/societies/organisations under supervised coaching staff. Such units shall indemnify the BOM in writing through their own Insurance Policies.

Before / After School

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before 9.00a.m. and after 2.05 p.m. (infants) and 3.05 p.m. (other classes) except where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management. Pupils involved in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with the school behaviour policy during these times.

Board of Management's Responsibilities

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- Ratify the code.
- The E.W.O will be informed in writing where a child is suspended or expelled for six days or more, where the child has missed twenty or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular and when the pupil is removed from the school register.

Principal's Responsibilities

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Arrange for review of the Code, as required.

Teachers' Responsibilities

Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.

- Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- Recognise and affirm good work.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

Pupils' Responsibilities include but are not confined to:

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow school and class rules.

Parent(s)/guardian(s)' Responsibilities

Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.

- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- Give written explanation of your child's absence(ref. pupil's diary)
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation.

- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/ behaviour.

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

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management

***Revised in October 2014**