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Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school.

In Scoil Naomh Abbáin, we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school.

The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.

Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school.

Rationale

The Code was reviewed:

- To ensure an orderly climate for learning in the school
- As it is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23
- To ensure existing policy is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour. (Guidelines for schools, NEWB, 2008).*

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

Aims

Scoil Naomh Abbáin hopes to achieve the following aims, by the implementation of this policy:

- To improve the standards of behaviour so that there is a positive learning environment created in the school.
- To create a positive culture in the school for staff and students.
- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our school motto.
- 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 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.

Content

1. Expectations of behavior in the school

Each pupil in Scoil Naomh Abbáin should

- respect themselves and others.
- respect school and other people's property.
- show courtesy and good manners at all times.
- use appropriate ways of resolving difficulties and conflicts.
- contribute to creating a happy learning environment for all.

As per section 23 (4) of the Education Welfare Act 2000, prior to registering a pupil, the parents shall be provided with a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour. Registering a child confirms that the Code of Behaviour provided, is acceptable to parents and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the Code by their child.

Following implementation of the Code of Behaviour in February 2018, all parents of pupils already enrolled will be deemed to have accepted the Code of Behaviour.

2. WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH IN PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

All stakeholders in the education of the children in Scoil Naomh Abbain will work as a team towards the development and implementation of policies and practices that promote positive behaviour. The role of each stakeholder is outlined as followed:

Staff

- Provide effective teaching and classroom management
- Develop clear classroom rules in collaboration with the children
- Ensure fair and effective implementation of the Code of Behaviour, taking account of the complex needs of each individual
- Provide constant and consistent monitoring of all pupils during the school day
- Communicate with other staff and parents regarding positive and improved behaviour
- Recognise and reward good behaviour
- Endeavour to equip students with strategies for resolving conflict through the teaching of the SPHE programme

All new and temporary staff will be provided with a copy of the Code of Behaviour in the substitute folder in each classroom.

Board of Management

The Board of Management will be given a copy of the draft Code of Behaviour for their consideration and input. Communication where necessary, takes place between the BOM and the staff, through the Chairperson. In the case of serious breaches of behaviour, the Chairperson acting on behalf of the Board will support the staff in implementing the agreed procedures.

Parents

Regular and open communication with parents is facilitated.

Parents can support the school in the promotion of positive behaviour and the maintenance of high standards of behaviour by:

- ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually
- supporting the teachers in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour
- encouraging their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work
- making themselves aware of and cooperating with the school's rules and system of rewards and sanctions. Discussing the importance of the Code of Behaviour with their child
- attending meetings at the school if requested
- helping their children with homework and ensuring that it is completed
- ensuring their children have the necessary books and materials for school

3. Positive Strategies for Managing Behaviour

Classroom

At the beginning of each school year, class rules are devised in each classroom with the children, taking into consideration the age of the children. The class rules will be derived from the schools 'Expectations of behaviour (Refer to Section 1) and stated in positive terms. Pupils are regularly reminded of how they are expected to behave. Good behaviour is rewarded by each individual teacher in different ways. Sanctions are imposed in the same method depending on the severity of the misbehaviour. Materials used in the classrooms are relevant and age appropriate and a variety of methodologies are implemented to ensure the children are engaged and motivated. When departing the classroom children line up in an orderly manner and are accompanied by the class teacher outside the school.

Playground

Playground rules:

- Children must play in their designated yard and remain in the yard during break time
- Children must show consideration and tolerance of all others using the yard
- When the bell rings, children line up in classroom groups in an orderly fashion
- Children must play in their classroom on wet days.
- In fine weather, all children play in the yard and school field.

Outdoors Yard and Field

Adequate supervision the yard is provided by the teachers on duty. The SNA provides assistance with supervision. A note or phone call by the parent/guardian must be given for any child to remain indoors. (This should only occur in exceptional circumstances)

Any Incidents that happen on the yard are recorded on an 'Incident Report Form'. These are recorded by a teacher on duty and serious incidents are reported to the child's class teacher and to the Principal and the parents if deemed necessary.

Children may be asked to take "time out" of play by standing by the wall for 5/10 minutes due to misbehavior.

Other areas in the school

The following strategies are implemented to prevent behavioural problems in corridors, halls, cloakrooms and toilets. These are taught and reinforced regularly in the classroom. Examples of these are as follows:

- Walk quietly
- No loitering in corridors or outside classrooms
- Regulations are in place regarding the number of children allowed to use the toilets at any one time

School related activities

The standards and rules contained in this Code of Behaviour apply in any situation where pupils are still the responsibility of the school – school tours, swimming, games, liturgies, and extracurricular activities and other school-linked events, etc.

4. Rewards and Sanctions for Behaviour

Incentives/Reward System

Our school aims to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and similarly that children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Our reward system seeks to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Stickers, stamps or small prizes
- Homework pass
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication
- 'Shining star' award or special mention at assembly.
- 'Foireann of the month' award at assembly along with "Foireann of the Term".

Field trips, annual school tours and any special events will be reserved for those who have consistently strived to behave well.

The 'Foireann system' operates as follows:

The whole school community, including staff have been divided in to four teams, Dearg, Glas, Buí agus Gorm. All staff will give points throughout the school. Whenever they encounter a pupil who is behaving particularly well, they may give the pupil a point. This is returned to the classroom tally sheet – Pointé Foirne, for each team. At the end of each month, the team with

the most points collected will receive the 'Foireann of the month' award and each pupil on the team will receive a homework pass or other suitable reward. The team with the most points at the end of each term may receive a special award/treat.

Examples of very good behaviour where points may be given:

- Excellent manners
- Helping other pupils
- Fair play
- Good listening
- Paying very good attention
- Walking quietly in the class line
- Tidying up
- Following instructions immediately
- Showing respect
- Trying your best
- Problem solving skills - These are examples and this is not an exhaustive list.
- Unacceptable Behaviour

While teachers and staff will place greater emphasis on positive rewards and strategies, there are times when pupils misbehave and sanctions are required.

Sanctions

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher, or the supervising teacher at break-times. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of **minor** misbehaviour include:

- Bringing electronic equipment or mobile-phones to school
- Not wearing appropriate uniform; bringing in chewing-gum
- Not following instructions
- Interrupting
- Being discourteous or unmannerly
- Not completing homework without good reason
- Running in the school building
- Leaving litter around school
- Not being in line when required
- Rough play/behaviour
- Using unacceptable language

Examples of **serious** misbehaviour include:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to school property
- Damaging other pupil's property
- Bringing dangerous equipment to school
- Leaving school/school activities without permission.
- Telling lies
- Stealing
- Using offensive language
- Deliberately injuring a fellow pupil/ endangering self or fellow pupils
- Truancy
- Copying work / cheating

Examples of **gross** misbehaviour include:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil
- Serious Theft
- Serious Damage to property
- Serious bullying
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes

It should be noted that these lists consist of examples only: It is not a totally comprehensive list of misdemeanours.

Bullying is repeated aggression – physical, verbal or emotional – conducted by an individual or group against another or others.

- **PHYSICAL:** includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping, etc.
- **VERBAL:** name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates.
- **EMOTIONAL:** threats or persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Threats to extort money or possessions. “Cyber/text” bullying.

The school takes particular care to intervene early in responding to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.

Issues in relation to bullying are explored continually during SPHE lessons and using Circle Time, Drama etc. Should a parent/guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed with a teacher, all staff members are more than willing to facilitate a meeting, made through the proper channels i.e. a phone call to the office, or a note to the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties. The first person to be informed should be the class teacher.

This arrangement ensures that all concerns are dealt with in a dignified, meaningful manner, without infringing on valuable teaching time.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying.

Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same manner as breaches of discipline – already outlined in our Code of Behaviour.

In the case where a parent reports a bullying incident, the school reserves the right to inform the relevant parties of the identity of the person making the complaint, when this is deemed necessary. For further information please consult the school's Anti Bullying Policy.

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour
- signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
- keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the circumstances involved. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupil devise strategies for this.

1. Reasoning with pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class

4. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened
5. Loss of privileges
6. Detention during break
7. Communication with parents
8. Referral to Principal
9. Principal communicating with parents
10. 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)

This is not an exhaustive list of sanctions. Usually sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

Card system

In our school the system of white cards, yellow cards and red cards will be used. A white card will be given to a pupil in the case of a serious misbehaviour or continuous minor misbehaviours. A list of misbehaviours is printed on the card and the relevant one will be marked by the teacher. An account of what happened may also be written on the card. This card will be signed by the teacher and parent and will then be retained in the school. An example of a whit card can be found at appendix 1.

The following procedure applies:

1. If a pupil has received 3 white cards they will then receive a yellow card. A meeting will be arranged between parent(s) and the classroom teacher to discuss the child's behaviour. The parent(s) will be asked for their co-operation in helping the pupil to improve their behaviour at school.
2. If a pupil receives a further 3 white cards they will then receive a second yellow card. A meeting will be arranged between the parent(s), class teacher and the principal. Again the parent(s) will be informed that the pupil is in breach of the school code of behaviour. They will be informed that the next step will involve the chairperson of the Board of Management.
3. If a pupil receives a further 3 white cards they will then receive a third yellow card. A meeting will be arranged between the parent(s), class teacher, principal and also the chairperson of the Board of Management.
4. If a pupil receives a further 3 white cards they will at this stage receive a red card. The pupil may then be suspended for 3 days under Rule 130 (5) for national schools.
5. If a pupil receives a further 3 white cards, they will receive a second red card. The pupil may then be suspended for 10 days with written permission for the Board of Management.

The benefit of the card system is that because the card must be signed by the parent(s), they are informed as soon as there is an issue with their child's behaviour. While every effort will be made to follow the steps in the above order; in cases of serious misconduct, the school may begin sanctions on a higher step e.g. a yellow card or red card may be imposed for an incident of the teacher/principal feels it is warranted.

Class teachers will keep a written record of instances of misbehaviour and also a record of improvement in the behaviour of pupils. Every pupil will begin with a clean slate at the beginning of each school year.

Suspension and Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents. However, a Board of Management may wish to authorise the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance concerning such suspensions.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Our school will follow the NEWB Guidelines in the case of expulsion.

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 will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

Children with Special Needs

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour 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.

Communicating with Parents

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life (in the past or present), which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following methods of communication are to be used within the school:

- Informal/formal parent/teacher meetings or phone calls
- Through children's homework journal (infants do not have a homework journal, please check bags for notes)
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- Aladdin notifications/School notice board/Newsletters/school web-site

Managing aggressive or violent misbehaviour

Serious emotional and behavioural problems...

- Children who are in need of emotional support will be referred for psychological assessment with parents consent.
- Through the Special Educational Needs Organiser, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Service Executive, NEPS, ...etc.

Strategies used in the school...

- Open dialogue, on a daily basis, is used to inform, clarify and review
- Mentoring of newly qualified teachers is in place
- SNA's can inform teachers of concerns regarding behaviour

In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing risk to the safety of the pupil himself/herself or the safety of other pupils and staff.

- The teacher's first priority is to keep the children not involved safe.
- An attempt to separate and calm the involved parties is made, if deemed safe.
- Adult assistance is sought at the earliest possible time
- A record of the incident is kept on file
- Parents are contacted as soon as possible
- The BOM is informed of the event

5. Suspension or Expulsion

Suspension

Suspension is defined as *requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days*. The Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Abbáin, has the authority to suspend a student.

The decision to suspend a student requires **serious** grounds such as that:

- 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.
- **A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.**

Factors that the BOM / Principal/ Deputy Principal will consider before SUSPENSION of a student

A. The nature and seriousness of the behaviour

- What is the precise description of the behaviour
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been?
- Has the problem behaviour escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

B. The context of the behaviour

- What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious behaviour (e.g. in class, in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in a group)?
- What factors may have triggered incidents of serious behaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)?
- What is the age, stage of development and cognitive ability of the student?
- Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (e.g. particular home circumstances, special educational needs)?

C. The impact of the behaviour

- How are other students and staff affected by the student's behaviour?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?
- Does the behaviour have a particular or greater impact on some students or teachers
- Does the student understand the impact of their behaviour on others?

D. The interventions tried to date

- What interventions have been tried? Over what period?
- How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?
- What has been the result of those interventions?
- Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?
- Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or behaviour been sought, where appropriate?
- Are any other interventions such as peer mediation, restorative justice approaches or family conferencing available?
- Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?
- Has any other agency been asked for assistance (e.g. Child Guidance Clinic, Child and Adolescent services)?

E. Whether suspension is a proportionate response

- Does the student's behaviour warrant suspension?
- Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student?

F. The possible impact of suspension

- Will suspension allow additional or alternative interventions to be made?
- Will suspension help the student to change the inappropriate behaviour?
- How will suspension help teachers or other students affected by the behaviour?
- Will suspension exacerbate any educational vulnerability of the student?

Suspension as part of a behaviour management plan

Suspension will be part of an agreed plan to address the student's behaviour. The suspension should:

- enable the school to set behavioural goals with the student and their parents
- give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions
- impress on a student and their parents the seriousness of the misbehaviour.

Immediate suspension In exceptional circumstances, the Principal in consultation with the Chairperson where possible, 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. Fair procedures must still be applied.

'Automatic' suspension The Board of Management has decided, that deliberate physical violence towards any member of staff or person working in a position of authority with the children during school hours, will incur suspension as a sanction. The decision to impose this type of suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures in each case.

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

- inform the student and their parents about the complaint
- give parents and student an opportunity to respond.

Procedures in respect of suspension

The school will let the student and their parents know about the incident:

- How it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension.

- Parents may be informed by phone or in writing. Parents and student will be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed.
- A meeting with the parents (and pupil if deemed helpful by either party), the Chairperson and Principal will take place at the school, at an appointed time.
- The purpose of the meeting is to consider all sides and reach a decision and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour.
- If the parents fail to attend the meeting, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting.
- Failing attendance at the re-scheduled meeting, it is then the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour.
- The school will record the invitations made to parents and their response.

Procedures in relation to immediate suspension

Where an immediate suspension has occurred for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others, the formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. All of the conditions for any suspension apply to immediate suspension. (as above) No suspension, including an immediate suspension, should be open-ended. In the case of an immediate suspension, parents must be notified, and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected.

Period of suspension

The suspension period may be of 1, 2, or 3 days duration. If a suspension longer than three days is being proposed by the Principal, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management and/or Chairperson for consideration and approval. The Board of Management should normally place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. The Board should formally review any proposal to suspend a student, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*.

Appeals

The Board of Management will offer an opportunity to appeal a 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.

Section 29 Appeal

Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents, may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*, as amended by the *Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007*.

At the time when parents are being formally notified of a suspension, they will be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*, and should be given information about how to appeal.

Implementing the suspension

Written notification

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

- the period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents (for example, parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the Code of Behaviour)

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*.

Clean slate

When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a student will 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 will expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

Records and reports

Formal written Records should 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 should report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

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

Expulsion

The Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Abbáin has the authority to expel a student. Expulsion will only be considered in the most extreme cases at the full and entire discretion of the BOM.

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, or
- the student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety, or
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

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. The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the code could include:

- a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- actual violence or physical assault
- supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
- sexual assault.

Factors that will be considered before proposing to EXPEL a student

A The nature and seriousness of the behaviour

- What is the precise description of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been and over what period of time?
- Has the problem behaviour escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

B The context of the behaviour

- What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. in class, in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in a group)?

- What factors may have triggered or provoked incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)?
- Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (e.g. particular home circumstances, special educational needs)?

C The impact of the behaviour

- How are other students and staff affected by the student's behaviour?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class.

D The interventions tried to date

- What interventions have been tried? Over what period?
- How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?
- What has been the result of these interventions?
- Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?
- Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought, where appropriate?
- Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?
- Is the Board satisfied that no other intervention can be tried or is likely to help the student to change their behaviour?

E Whether expulsion is a proportionate response to the misbehaviour

- Is the student's behaviour sufficiently serious to warrant expulsion?
- Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student?

F The possible impact of expulsion

- To what extent may expulsion exacerbate any social or educational vulnerability of the student?
- Will the student be able to take part in, and benefit from, education with their peers?
- In the case of a student who is in care, what might be the implications of expulsion for the care arrangements?

The following procedural steps as per NEWB guidelines will apply: (refer to pg. 83-86)

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.

Appeals

A parent 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.

6. Keeping Records

Class level

Each class teacher keeps a record of individual children's misbehaviour and detention record. This is recorded on a standard form for each child. When behaviour is considered serious or involves children outside of the specific class, this behaviour is reported to the Principal or class teacher of child concerned.

The end of year report includes a reference to behaviour. Parents are kept up to date during the year regarding behaviour issues through the homework journal, informal meetings and phone calls.

Playground

Incidents of misbehaviour on the yard are recorded on 'Incident report Forms.'

School records

The school will retain on file only records of *serious* misbehaviour where suspension has occurred. (These will be filed and will be retained for 2 years after the child has left the Primary school.)

7. Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (2) (e) states that the Code of Behaviour must specify, “*the procedures to be followed in relation to a child’s absence from school.*” Section 18 stipulates that parents must notify the school of a student’s absence and the reason for this absence.

The following strategies are used to encourage school attendance:

- Creating a stimulating and attractive school environment.
- System for acknowledging and rewarding full attendance. (End of term and year presentations.)
- Adapting curriculum content and methodologies to maximize relevance to pupils
- Making parents aware of the terms of the Education Welfare Act and its implications.

Parents/Guardians are required to send in a note informing teachers in writing of their child’s absence from school and the reason for this absence. This is recorded in the homework journal or letters are retained in the pupil’s individual file. Notes must be signed and dated and are kept until the end of the school year. The school uses the standard forms to report on pupil absences to the National Education Welfare Board.

Success Criteria

The success of this policy will be indicated by

- Observation of positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment.
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by all parties.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.
- A reduction in the necessity for the use of suspension and expulsion.

Roles and Responsibility

- The role of the BOM is to familiarize themselves with the policy and to support the school in the implementation of the policy.
- Staff, parents and BOM have responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- The Principal will co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of this policy.
- Pupils have responsibility to act in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.

Timetable for Review

This policy will be reviewed every 1 – 2 years.

Communication

Parents are welcome to contact the school by appointment only if they have concerns regarding their child's welfare within the school.

Ratification

This Policy was amended in April 2021. It was ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Abbáin, Adamstown on 16th April 2021.

Chairperson: _____

Fr. Robert Nolan

Principal: _____

Claire Kickham

Appendix 1:

WHITE CARD

- Repeatedly not following instructions
 - Repeatedly interrupting
 - Repeatedly being discourteous or unmannerly
 - Repeatedly not completing homework without good reason
 - Repeatedly not wearing the correct uniform without a note
 - Repeatedly running in the school building
 - Repeatedly engaging in rough play/behaviour
 - Repeatedly using unacceptable language
-
- Behaviour that is hurtful (bullying, harassment, discrimination)
 - Using intimidating body language
 - Threats or physical hurt to another person
 - Damage to school property or another pupil's property
 - Bringing dangerous equipment to school
 - Leaving school/school activities without permission.
 - Stealing
 - Using *offensive* language
 - Deliberately injuring/ endangering self or fellow pupils
 - Truancy

Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Parent: _____