

Code of Behaviour
Scoil Mhuire, Horeswood



Title

Code of Behaviour : Scoil Mhuire Horeswood

Introductory Statement

The following Code of Behaviour was developed during the school year 2017/2018. The review and updating of the existing code was a collaborative process involving the pupils, teachers, Special Needs Assistants, Board of Management and parents of Scoil Mhuire. The process was guided by the NEWB publication *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*

School Vision:

We believe that the behaviour expected from pupils in our school should be good, respectful, mannerly and friendly. This behaviour should be shown through all dealings with other pupils and staff members, on school grounds and outside of school grounds. Through this behaviour we shall endeavour to include every child and form an intolerance for bad behaviour. (formulated by 6th Class 09).

In Scoil Mhuire we will aspire to respect all members of our school community and treat others as we ourselves would like to be treated.

Rationale

The school has undertaken a review of its Code of Behaviour at this time as an on-going updating of school policies. The publication of the NEWB *Developing a code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools* has also prompted and informed this review as the Board is aware of requirements under the Education Welfare Act ,2000. Section 23 (1) of this act which outlines the specific areas which need to be addressed in the school's Code of Behaviour.

- A. *The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;*
 - B. *The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;*
 - C. *The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;*
 - D. *The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and*
 - E. *The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.*
- 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.*

This plan endeavours to outline all of the above points in relation to Scoil Mhuire, Horeswood. It should also be read in conjunction with the school's anti-bullying policy.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

Our code of behaviour is an extension of our school motto "Learning for Life Together/ Ag foghlaim don saol le chéile". Part of our ethos statement is that the school is one "which provides a holistic education, leading to confident, cooperative, well-rounded pupils with respect for themselves and others". The code reflects and supports these aspirations.

As a Catholic school under the patronage of the Bishop of Ferns Scoil Mhuire promotes religious morals and values reflecting the example of the life of Jesus.

Aims

The code of behaviour seeks to realise the following aims

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement
- 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
- To work in partnership and collaboration with all members of the school community to realise a safe and happy environment for all to work and learn in.

Content of policy

1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school

All stakeholders in our school community have a responsibility in the overall effectiveness of its policy on behaviour. A whole school approach is vital to a successful code and all partners must be proactive in its implementation. The following section highlights the responsibilities of those involved in the school community

Board of Management's Responsibilities

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- Provide necessary finance for rewards or treats
- Contribute to the development of the policy
- Follow appropriate procedures in the event of suspension or expulsion
- Initiate a review committee, ratify the code and ensure ongoing review.

Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
- Where using school transport parents need to talk to their children about appropriate behaviour on buses
- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
- Oversee homework and ensure that it is completed
- 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 general progress/behaviour. Contact class teacher with initial concern/query.

- Provide notes for absences or when children need to stay in for minor illnesses (See relevant section towards end of code)
- Ensure that children wear proper school uniform at all times (except for occasional events such as Jersey Day)
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour, Supervision and other policies included in the school's Enrolment Pack and support their implementation.

Principal's Responsibilities

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Ensure that all staff have a copy of the code and that key responsibilities are highlighted
- Support the code by seeking funding from the Board of Management for rewards or professional development opportunities
- Arrange for review of the Code, as required.
- Agree and communicate small list of "rules" which are in place for safety reasons. These should be regularly reviewed at staff meetings and spoken about at assembly.
- Liaise with Resource teachers and SNAs to ensure that pupils with diagnosed behavioural difficulties are following a personalised behaviour plan (e.g. Webster-Stratton plan).

Teachers' Responsibilities

- Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- Recognise and affirm good work.
- Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal with misbehaviour in accordance with the code guidelines.
- Devise and operate a collaborative set of classroom rules based on code ethos.
- Teach appropriate conflict resolution skills as part of the SPHE programme*
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.
- Liaise with resource teachers to formulate a Behaviour Plan (Webster- Stratton) for children with diagnosed behavioural difficulties.

*SMARTS/S.A.L.T/Friends for Life /Zippy's Friends/ Incredible Years /RSE programmes as appropriate

S.N.A. Responsibilities

- Communicate poor behaviour to teacher/Principal
- Encourage children to be resilient and solve issues in accordance with school policy
- Keep a record of instances of poor behaviour if necessary.
- Be vigilant of poor behaviour at all times
- Intervene if behaviour is posing a Health and Safety risk to a pupil or group of pupils.

Pupils' Responsibilities

- 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.
- Follow the instructions of staff on yard duty and go directly to them in the event of an incident

2.General school rules

A small number of school rules are in place mostly for the health and safety of pupils and adults alike in school.

1. Walk on the corridors and crossing the Assembly Hall
2. Play in designated areas on the yard i.e. Junior and Senior yard delineated by bottom of steps down for juniors to 2nd and upper end for 3rd -6th .
3. When dry 6th class may use grass area adjacent to Hartley's wall and juniors may use the lower grass areas as far as the "secret garden" area.
4. Children should engage in "safe" play at all times and respect everyone else's "personal space" i.e. no piggy-backing, dragging etc.
5. Children may not climb on walls , gates, ditches, handrails or perimeter fencing.
6. At lunchtime on dry days pupils should be outside by the 12.40pm bell. Children with notes to stay in go to the central Hall with a book at this time. Infants may return to classroom to toilet without permission while other pupils should ask permission of a teacher on yard duty.(See supervision policy)
7. Children are expected to wear school uniform at all times (except for special occasions designated by the school e.g. Jersey day)
8. The following should be left at home: mobile phones, electronic devices or games (unless requested for Maths or particular lessons), catapults, sharp objects or offensive weapons.
9. Pupils should stay within the school grounds at all times (unless accompanied by an adult)
10. In the case of absence from school parents or guardians should inform the school in writing (in compliance with the Education Welfare Act 2000)

Before/After School

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before the time of 9.10 a.m. or after the official closing time of 2 p.m. (infants) 3 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 may assemble in the yard from 9.10am each morning. Schoolbags should be placed in the allocated white painted box. Pupils may not engage in chasing games in the morning while children are coming in from buses due the Health and Safety reasons. Pupils involved in extra curricular activities are expected to behave in accordance with school behaviour policy during these times.

3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour

Rewarding and management of good behaviour

“The most effective methodology that teachers develop in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place” (Managing Challenging Behaviour, Guidelines for teachers INTO 2004:5)

Children thrive on praise and reward for achievements across all aspects of school life. However good behaviour in itself should not always lead to a tangible reward such as stickers and prizes and children should be able to discern the benefits of

- attentiveness,
- politeness
- respect for others

Children should “feel” good as a result of being good and understand that it benefits their overall wellbeing as individuals and collectively as part of a group. As children progress through the school they should see behaviour in terms of choices they make and understanding the consequences of their choices.

Issues such as cyber bullying or negative text messages which may happen out of school will also be addressed in senior classes. Through the SPHE strand *Myself and Others* these themes will be developed (including Stay Safe programme). Websites such as www.webwise.ie will also be used to teach children about cyber safety.

Children with assessed behavioural difficulties (e.g. ADD/ADHD) have individual behaviour plans in place involving Resource teacher, SNA’s and the class teacher following the Webster-Stratton model. The nature of their condition may require a differentiated approach to the norm but the expected behaviour should be the same for all children. Any differentiated approach to behaviour will be communicated to all staff once agreed with parents.

As part of the development of this policy a list of incentives were identified by teachers as rewards for “being good”. Some or all of these may be used in individual classrooms and by the SET team and principal. This list may be added to as ideas arise.

1. Praise
2. Golden time
3. Stickers
4. Little prizes
5. Pupil of the Week
6. Class DoJo
7. Star reward system
8. Raffle tickets
9. Behaviour chart leading to reward
10. Bonus PE , Art or selected subject
11. Sit with a friend for the day
12. “Great behaviour” note home
13. “No Homework “ voucher
14. Certificates
15. School trips for the whole class

Each class should create its own collaborative set of Classroom Rules at the start of each year which compliments the overall code of the school.

SPHE lessons throughout the year also enable teachers and pupils to work together toward a common goal of good behaviour. The general tone set in the classroom should be extended to the playground and lessons held in the Assembly Hall or Indoor facility. Courtesy and attention should be extended to visiting teachers or coaches.

The same standard of behaviour will be expected on school trips, swimming lessons or games with other schools.

A clear system of acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and sanctions for misbehaviour should exist in each class at an age appropriate level. Teachers will look to classroom management techniques to ensure a variety of activities and methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation. Individual teachers will develop their own classroom reward system.

All staff should praise good behaviour in pupils and opportunities such as assembly should be used to highlight instances of good behaviour.

The playground has designated areas for junior and senior classes and a comprehensive supervision policy is in place (see supervision policy). Provision of skipping ropes for senior yard and marked playground games for juniors as well as seats around the grounds help give children focussed play areas. 6th class children operate a rota to bring in the junior lines from the playground and encourage their charges to be the “best” line. Junior class teachers might also have a yard “buddy” system in place.

4.Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour

While considering sanctions it is an overriding principle that it is the behaviour rather than the child which is the focus of any sanction. All negative behaviour has a positive intention. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to devise strategies for this. Predictability and consistency are two of the cornerstones of effective behaviour management. Teachers should make a brief record of a child’s misbehaviour. Teachers on yard duty should also record any serious incident and inform the class teacher. These can build up to a pattern of misbehaviour.

The following responses are listed in order of increasing misbehaviour with one being for a minor misbehaviour and ten for serious or gross misbehaviour.

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 or supervised area in the school
4. Removal from playground to Central Hall
5. Behaviour Reflection Sheet. This blue sheet will be given to pupils to reflect on their behaviour. Parents will have to sign
6. Prescribing extra work e.g. writing out the story of what happened/ letter of apology/supplementary class work
7. Loss of privileges
8. Detention during break for an extended period
9. Referral to principal
10. Communication with parent(s)
11. Principal communicating with parents
12. 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)

*In dealing with incidents teachers should try to use Restorative Questioning to find out what happened e.g.

A response to challenging behaviour

What happened?

What were you thinking at the time?
What have you thought about since?
Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
What do you need to do to make things right?
To help those harmed by other's actions
What happened?
What did you think when you realised what was happening?
What impact has this incident had on you? On others?
What has been the hardest thing for you?
What needs to happen now to make things right?

Sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour. Therefore a child who does not do his work in class or has not completed his/her homework may be kept in at break time to finish work. This will usually be the Hall where supervising staff can see the pupil. Unsafe play on the yard may lead to being sent into the Hall to the designated detention area.

Pupils will not be deprived of curricular activities unless it is deemed unsafe for other pupils. It will be important that pupils learn that if they "waste" teachers time in dealing with on-going behavioural issues their free time may also be eroded. Continuous minor misdemeanours will lead to intervention by the principal and communication with home. Particularly serious incidents may lead directly to immediate intervention by the principal rather than the steps listed above.

Teacher responsibilities

The success of a Code of Behaviour also rests with appropriate teacher behaviour and modelling of respect and fairness. Children pick up on adult attitudes and behaviours. Teachers should adhere to the same standards they expect from pupils (Section 3 above) and create a positive atmosphere in the classroom. The principal should display fairness in dealing with issues which occur in the school and highlight positive behaviour at assembly or on visits to classrooms. The Code also extends to inter-staff relations.

If a parent has issue with the behaviour of a teacher, they should arrange to speak to the teacher to voice their concern. If this does not resolve the situation the principal should be contacted and a formal meeting of all parties convened. The principal will endeavour to clarify the problem and identify a solution. If the complaint persists the principal will advise the parent to put their complaint in writing to the Chairperson of the Board of Management. The CPSMA has an agreed 5 stage Parental Complaints Procedure which will be made available to parents should the need arise.

Managing aggressive or violent behaviour

As already stated a number of children have diagnosed behavioural problems and these children have individual behaviour plans in place as part of their resource programme. This is a collaborative process and forms part of the child's IEP (Individual Education Programme). Where there is a question of a child showing emotional and /or behavioural problems parents will be contacted. There may be a need for referral to NEPS (National Educational Psychological Services). Following appropriate assessment the principal will apply to the Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) for recommended school supports in the form of resource hours or SNA.

Resource and support teachers are encouraged to attend courses organised by the Special Education Support Service (SESS), local Education Centres or other specialised courses

which become available. The Board of Management will cover costs of out of school courses under Professional Development.

As a general rule if a child displays serious disruptive behaviour on the yard or in the classroom they should be immediately sent to the principal's office. SNAs also have a role in monitoring patterns of behaviour on the yard and liaise with teachers on duty if they feel a disruptive incident is imminent. In the event of a violent outburst by a child staff may intervene by

- Removing the threat to other children
- Giving immediate support to other staff
- Finding a safe place for the child

When all other interventions have been exhausted and a danger still remains physical intervention or restraint may be required. Parents should be contacted immediately and a record of events should be written down.

All staff members are encouraged to record behavioural incidents as they may be needed in follow-up investigations.

Following a serious incident teachers will find an appropriate time and place to speak to pupil (s) to

- Explain why the behaviour is unacceptable
- Invite pupil(s) to reply
- Acknowledge the pupil's feelings but refer back to "RIGHT AFFECTED" by the pupil's behaviour
- Discuss how the situation might be better managed next time

In the event of a parent confronting a teacher in an aggressive manner the teacher should immediately look for the principal or another adult to be present. If possible the teacher should arrange for a meeting with the parent at a more suitable time with the principal present if necessary. Should a parent continue to behave in an aggressive and threatening way An Garda Siochana will be called immediately.

As a general rule parents should make an appointment to see a teacher or the principal. Respectful communication between teachers and parents is expected at all times.

5. Management of suspension or expulsion

Suspension/Expulsion

Authority to suspend or expel is reserved for the Board of Management and may not be delegated to another party. This authority has been delegated to the school Principal. The Principal teacher may suspend a pupil for a minimum of one and maximum of three school days.

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

Suspension

Suspension is defined as *requiring the student to absent himself/ herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days* (NEWB Guidelines)

Suspension may be considered for gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil by another pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour. A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

The following factors will be considered before suspending a student:

Nature and seriousness of the behaviour

- The precise description of the behaviour

- The persistence of the unacceptable behaviour
- Escalation, if any, of the behaviour, in spite of the interventions tried

Context of the behaviour

- Circumstances of the incidents of serious behaviour (e.g. in class, in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in a group)
- Factors which may have triggered incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)
- Age, stage of development and cognitive ability of the student

The impact of the behaviour

- How other students and staff are affected by the student's behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class
- Whether or not the behaviour has a particular or greater impact on some students or teachers
- Whether or not the student understands the impact of their behaviour on others

The interventions tried to date

- The interventions that have been tried, and over what period
- How the interventions have been recorded and monitored
- The result of those interventions
- How the parents have been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour
- Whether or not the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling has been sought, where appropriate
- Whether or not any other interventions such as peer mediation, restorative justice approaches or family conferencing were available
- Whether or not the student or parent was involved with any support service and how this agency or support service has been asked for help in solving this problem
- Whether or not any other agency been asked for assistance (e.g. Child Guidance Clinic, Child and Adolescent services)

Whether suspension is a proportionate response

- Whether or not the student's behaviour warrant suspension
- Whether or not the standard being applied to judging the behaviour is the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student

The possible impact of suspension

- Suspension gives the opportunity to allow additional or alternative interventions to be made
- Suspension gives the opportunity to help the student to change the inappropriate behaviour
- Suspension gives the opportunity to help teachers or other students affected by the behaviour
- Whether or not the suspension will exacerbate any educational vulnerability of the student

Procedures in implementing suspension

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 - Parents will be informed in writing and by phone.
- Give parents and student an opportunity to respond - Parents and student will be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed. If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled

meeting and, failing that, 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.

- Where suspension is deemed warranted it will be for no 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. In such instances the matter will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval. No suspension should be open-ended.
- In implementing the suspension written notification will be sent to parents/ guardians confirming the reason for suspension, dates and period of suspension, arrangements for returning to school and notification of right to Section 29 appeal. The Local Welfare Education Officer (TUSLA) will also be advised by the Principal of the suspension under section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

Immediate suspension

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 by consistent documented breaking of school rules.

Procedures in relation to immediate suspension

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. Parents will be notified by phone and in writing, and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected. In no circumstances will a student be sent home from school without first notifying parents.

Due process and fair procedures will be applied at all times. This means that the Board will inform the student and their parents about the complaint/incident and will afford parents and students an opportunity to respond. The formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. All of the conditions for suspension apply to immediate suspension and will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

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. The pupil is considered to have a "clean slate" on return to school.

Formal written records will be kept of (a) the investigation, including notes of interviews held (b) the decision making process, (c) the decision and the rationale for the decision and (d) the duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

The principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management with the reasons and duration of each suspension. The principal is also required to report suspensions to the NEWB under section 21 (4a) Education Welfare Act.

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension in the school at regular intervals annually 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 the use of suspension is appropriate and effective. This will be done in tandem with the annual update of enrolment details (normally the December Board meeting).

Expulsion

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. It will be used as a proportionate response to a student's behaviour and one that will only be taken in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. It will only be considered when all other procedures and sanctions have failed to have an effect.

Before expelling a pupil, the Board will seek assistance of supporting agencies such as the Local Welfare Education Officer and NEPS. The following are considered grounds for expulsion

- A pupil's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- The continued presence of a pupil constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- Pupil(s) responsible for serious damage to school property

The Board of Management can impose automatic expulsion for the following prescribed behaviours on a first offence

- Sexual assault
- Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
- Actual violence or physical assault resulting in injury to a pupil or staff member.
- Serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff

The following factors will be considered before proposing to expel a student

Nature and seriousness of the behaviour

- The precise description of the behaviour
- The persistence of the unacceptable behaviour
- Escalation, if any, of the behaviour, in spite of the interventions tried

Context of the behaviour

- Circumstances of the incidents of serious behaviour (e.g. in class, in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in a group)
- Factors which may have triggered incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)
- Age, stage of development and cognitive ability of the student

The impact of the behaviour

- How other students and staff are affected by the student's behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class
- Whether or not the behaviour has a particular or greater impact on some students or teachers
- Whether or not the student understands the impact of their behaviour on others

The interventions tried to date

- The interventions that have been tried, and over what period
- How the interventions have been recorded and monitored
- The result of those interventions

- How the parents have been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour
- Whether or not the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling has been sought, where appropriate
- Whether or not any other interventions such as peer mediation, restorative justice approaches or family conferencing were available
- Whether or not the student or parent was involved with any support service and how this agency or support service has been asked for help in solving this problem
- Whether or not any other agency been asked for assistance (e.g. Child Guidance Clinic, Child and Adolescent services)
- Whether or not the Board is satisfied that no other intervention can be tried or is likely to help the student to change their behaviour

Whether expulsion is a proportionate response

- Whether or not the student's behaviour warrants expulsion
- Whether or not the standard being applied to judging the behaviour is the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student

The possible impact of expulsion

- The extent to which the expulsion of the student may exacerbate any social or educational vulnerability
- Whether or not the student will be able to take part in and benefit from education with their peers
- The implications of expulsions in the case of a student who is in care

Procedures in respect of expulsion

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

Refer to pg.83 – 86 of the NEWB guidelines for schools on developing a code of behaviour for elaboration on each of these steps.

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. When parents are being formally notified of an expulsion, they will be informed of their right to appeal. Parents will be given a copy of Circular 22/02 and related forms.

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.

Where the school is required to prepare a response if and when an appeal is being investigated by the Dept. of Education and Science, this will be prepared by the BOM and principal.

As with suspension the Board of Management will review the use and impact of expulsion on a yearly basis.

Record keeping

Incidents which lead to teacher intervention or continuous patterns of misbehaviour should be noted by teachers in their incident books. Teachers on yard supervision will similarly note serious or repeated incidents and refer on to the class teacher. The principal will take notes when children are sent to the office and will follow the outlined procedures for suspension and expulsion if such a situation arises.

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. This notice can be by phone but should be followed up by a short written note (from 1st -6th class our school Journal has a section for absences). This is to facilitate the proper absence recording done electronically through School Return.ie by the principal at designated reporting times throughout the year. Children with 20 or more absences are recorded on the online returns to TUSLA.

The school will do its utmost to foster good attendance by

- Creating a stimulating and attractive school environment
- Acknowledging and rewarding full attendance with a Certificate at the end of the school year.
- When appropriate adapting curriculum content and methodologies to maximise relevance to pupils
- Where appropriate adapting the class and school timetables to make it more attractive to attend and to be on time i.e. trips on Monday or Friday
- Making parents aware of the terms of the Education Welfare Act and its implications.

Reference to other policies

This code should be read in conjunction with the school's Supervision, Enrolment and anti-Bullying policies. The SPHE school programme is also the main curricular area through which the topic of behaviour is explored.

Success Criteria

The success of this code of behaviour will be measured by

- The observation of positive behaviour in classrooms, on the playground , throughout the school
- Good behaviour observed when representing the school at events / schools tours and mini-trips organised by the school
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils

Conclusion

While for legal reasons a disproportionate amount of this Code of Behaviour is focussed on procedures for dealing with inappropriate behaviour the over-riding aim is to work towards

a positive school environment where our children can learn in a fair and caring setting. Promoting good behaviour at every possible opportunity will be main ambition of this Code of Behaviour. All partners in the Scoil Mhuire community, namely parents, Board of Management, staff and pupils will work together to achieve this end.

Ratification

This updated policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire at a meeting on 6th March 2018. It is part of the enrolment pack for new entrants to the school.

