

St. Mary's N.S., Orilia Tce., Cobh, Co.Cork

Code of Behaviour- Reviewed August 2020

Introduction

Our school aims to provide a safe, positive, friendly, caring and encouraging environment where children can develop and learn to their full potential. This Code provides a framework which promotes constructive behaviour and discourages unacceptable behaviour. Since a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of co-operation within the school community, this Code was developed in consultation with Board of Management, staff, parents/guardians and pupils.

Rationale

For our school to achieve a happy, secure environment in which children can develop to their full potential, it is necessary to provide a framework which promotes constructive behaviour and discourages unacceptable behaviour. Our aim is to ensure the right of each child to an education in a relatively undistruptive environment. Our Code of Discipline places a greater emphasis on rewards rather than sanctions and the ideal is that pupils will acquire self-discipline. There may be times however when it will be necessary to impose sanctions in order to maintain good order and to discourage unacceptable behaviour.

Under Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management is required to prepare and make available a code of behaviour for its pupils in accordance with the Guidelines issued by National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) published in June 2008. The policy is designed:

- to ensure that the policy reflects the principles and values of the religious and educational philosophy of St. Mary's;
- to maintain an ordered and orderly environment; to clarify expectations of behaviour;
- to outline rewards and sanctions;
- to make parents/guardians and pupils aware of the procedures for dealing with misconduct and infringement of the school rules;
- to make parents/guardians and pupils aware of procedures for suspension and expulsions;
- to outline the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil;
- to outline the procedures to be followed in relation to a pupil's absence from school

Scope

This Code of Behaviour applies to all pupils enrolled in St. Mary's N.S. and relates to all school activities both during and outside of normal school hours; it applies both on and off site. For avoidance of doubt any reference to Principal is to be construed as meaning Acting Principal or Deputy Principal in the absence of the Principal.

Supporting Measures

In St. Mary's N.S. pupils are encouraged to uphold the Code of Behaviour by the following:

- Parental co-operation is considered fundamental to implementation of the school's code.
- The Code of Behaviour is published online.
- At the start of each academic year the Code is discussed in class and any changes highlighted.
- School rules and reasons for them are discussed as part of SPHE/RSE/Circle Time/Religion. The concepts of tolerance, self-control, fairness and the principles of natural justice are also discussed as part of the Grow in Love Programme.

Policy Content

St. Mary's N.S. aims to promote and develop high standards of behaviour among all pupils thus creating an orderly atmosphere for learning in the school. We encourage self-discipline and co-operation in learning.

General School Rules

- Pupils are expected to treat staff, fellow pupils and visitors with respect and courtesy at all times.
- Older pupils are expected to show the best possible example of behaviour to the younger pupils.
- The instructions of all staff are to be obeyed at all times.
- School property and property of staff and fellow pupils is to be respected.
- Pupils are to be truthful and honest.
- All pupils are to help to keep the school clean and litter free.
- Children are to enter and exit the school in an orderly manner. In the interest of safety, pupils are to obey traffic warden instructions on entering and leaving the school.
- All pupils have the right to come to school, be in school and return home without interference from any other pupil. Any behaviour which causes upset, hurt or injury to others will not be tolerated in the school. Bullying or being a party to bullying will not be tolerated under any circumstances. (*cf Anti-Bullying Policy.*)
- Pupils may not leave the classroom, school premises and/or school grounds without permission. Pupils who leave early for dental appointments etc should be collected in the school by parents.
- All absences must be reported in writing giving reason for the absence. If a pupil arrives late or wishes to leave school early, a written note must be given to class teacher. Absences of 20 days or more will be reported to the National Education Welfare Board.
- Full school uniform is to be worn every day. The official school tracksuit should be worn on PE days or when advised by the teacher. The wearing of make-up and excessive jewellery is prohibited and long hair should be neatly tied back.
- Pupils' property (coats, bags, books etc) should be clearly labelled.
- Each pupil should bring a small towel and soap for personal use.
- Pupils are not permitted to bring electronic entertainment items to school or on school-related activities.
- Pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones on school grounds or on school-related activities.
- Pupils are required to abide by the school's *Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy*.
- Bullying is never acceptable. Pupils are required to abide by the school's *Anti-Bullying Policy*.
- Pupils eat nourishing food for lunch. Healthy eating is encouraged and home support is valued in this. (*cf Health Promotion Policy/ Green School Recommendations*)
- All visitors, including parents/guardians, must report to the school office during class times. At breaktime and lunchtime, visitors, including parents/guardians, must not approach a child without first reporting to the break supervisor.
- All members of the school community are expected to adhere strictly to Covid-19 protocols and policies that are in place as per the Covid-19 Response Plan e.g. adhering to coughing etiquette etc.
- Parents/Guardians must not, under any circumstance approach any member of staff.

School Outings/Tours, Out of School Activities etc.

It should be noted that when children are taking part in organised school-related activities, they are required to abide by the School Rules and Code of Behaviour.

- The teacher/supervisor/instructor/ bus driver must be obeyed at all times.
- When travelling on buses or in cars children must be seated and belted at all times.
- Rules and safety points of relevant venue, activity centre, swimming pool etc are to be obeyed.
- Pupils who misbehave frequently may not be allowed to participate in school outings for their own safety and that of other pupils

School Rules and Children with Special Needs

Our school rules apply to every pupil including those with special needs.

Sanctions for students with special educational needs

- Sanctions may be needed to help a student with special educational needs to learn about appropriate behaviour and skills, as in the case of any student
- Teachers should take particular care that they help the student with special needs to understand clearly the purpose of the sanction and the reason why their behaviour is unacceptable
- The school and classroom practices that support good learning behaviour are valid for all students including those with identified special educational needs

Positive Reinforcements used in St. Mary's N.S.

Rewarding good behaviour is a very important part of our school's Code of Behaviour.

The following strategies may be used to reward good behaviour:

- Positive verbal/written feedback
- Stickers/stars/certificates
- Pupils sent to the Principal/Deputy Principal or another class for praise;
- Golden Time (Reward Time for Good Behaviour);
- Display of work in classroom/corridors;
- Homework Vouchers;
- Opportunity to do jobs around the school.
- Extra privileges/treats at teacher's discretion
- Student of the Week
- Class Dojo

Staff development

- Whenever opportunities arise, up-skilling of staff will be facilitated and teachers will be encouraged to attend courses and training on Behaviour Management. These skills will then be shared with other staff.
- New programmes and innovations will be welcomed and shared with the staff and individual teachers own personal pursuit of training will be encouraged and their skills appreciated and utilised.
- Opportunities will be provided to discuss matters of staff development at staff meetings and informally.

Parental Involvement

- Communicating with parents/guardians is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents/Guardians 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 are designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents/guardians have been established and are being reviewed regularly.
- In light of Covid-19, parents/guardians must not, under any circumstance approach any member of staff. Instead, parents/guardians should communicate with staff via email.
- As outlined above, parents/guardians are required to adhere to all Covid-19 protocols and policies in place as per the Covid-19 Response Plan. This includes adhering to HSE guidance

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regarding quarantining for the required duration upon return from holidays abroad. The onus is on Parents/Guardians to keep up to date with and follow the latest HSE advice.

- Parents/Guardians 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.

- Aladdin Connect
- Emails
- Phone calls
- Through children's homework diary.
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school.
- School website
- Text messages.

It is of paramount importance that Parents/Guardians are contactable by the school at all times throughout the duration of the school day.

St. Mary's N.S. welcomes parental involvement. Teachers are encouraged to develop a very positive/open relationship with parents/guardians and to enable them to help their child as much as possible. We hope this philosophy will have a positive effect on pupil behaviour in school.

Keeping Records

In line with the school's policy on record keeping and data protection legislation the following records are kept in relation to pupils' behaviour.

Class level

- Each teacher is provided with a journal annually in which records of more serious incidents may be recorded.
- End of Year reports include a reference to behaviour. There is a consistent understanding among staff of what constitutes excellent – poor behaviour.
- Parents are kept up to date during the year regarding behaviour issues.

Playground

- Where appropriate, the teacher on duty who witnessed the incident or who investigated the misbehaviour makes the record in the playground diary provided. The class teacher is informed at the end of the break time. There is consistency in the application and interpretation of the rules by all teachers.

School records

- Serious incidents are recorded factually.
- The Principal, members of the In School Management Team, parents/guardians of the pupil and the class teacher will have access to the pupil's file.
- The teacher's individual journal entries are stored in the student's file. Playground logs are collected at the end of each school year and stored in a locked cupboard.

Procedures for Notification of Pupil Absences from School

Parents/guardians are required to let the school know if their child is absent and the reason why. It is school policy that reasons must be given in writing. If a child is absent from school, a note should be forwarded to the class teacher, following the child's return to school, outlining the reason for the absence.

- If a pupil who has been marked present leaves the school before the conclusion of the school day, his/her attendance may be cancelled unless he/she has a dental/doctor/clinic appointment.

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Appointment cards for dentist or other must be submitted so a copy can be retained by the school. In the interest of safety, pupils to be collected for appointments must have a note from parents or guardians stating who will be collecting the child. The parent or person nominated to collect the child must report to the Secretary and sign the child out in the 'Signing Out Record'.

- The school will notify the Child & Family Agency, TUSLA if a child is absent for 20 days or more or where the absence gives rise to concern.
- If a child is sick or is absent for other good reasons, no action will be taken by TUSLA. However, if there is concern about a child's attendance at school or about the reasons given, parents or guardians may be visited by an Educational Welfare Officer who will discuss the child's education. The Officer will work with the parents/guardians and take full account of the circumstances of the child and the family before deciding what further action is necessary to ensure that the child receives his/her entitlement to an education.
- The Principal and or/Deputy Principal are informed by the class teachers of non-attendees or frequent absentees.
- The class teachers complete the quarterly attendance record, which is collected by the principal and details are submitted to TUSLA at the reporting times during the year.
- Absences are monitored and where a pattern or significant number of absences exists, the Principal shall contact the parents by letter and/or the Education Welfare Officer.
- The calendar for the school year is communicated to parents and also posted on the school website.
- Punctuality is required at all times. Late arrivals are recorded.

Absences due to Covid-19 Illness/Restrictions

If your child is in one of the following categories, **they should not attend school**

- Children who are generally unwell
- Children who are displaying symptoms of Covid-19
- Children who have a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
- Children who have been diagnosed with Covid-19
- Children with underlying health conditions who have been directed by a medical professional not to attend school
- Children who have returned home after travelling abroad and must self-isolate for a period of 14 days
- Children who have been in contact with a person who is displaying symptoms of Covid-19
- Children who have been in contact with a person who has a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
- Children who have been in close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with Covid-19

Parents/Guardians are required to contact the school in relation to any travel abroad taken by a close contact of the child/the child themselves, regarding the child's return to school.

Roles and Responsibilities

Our school acknowledges the contribution of all members of our school community. Each member has responsibility for the promotion of good behaviour.

The Role of the Class Teacher

- It is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that the school rules are enforced in his/her class, and that his/her class behaves in a responsible manner during lesson times playtimes, access and egress from the school and on out of school activities. The class teachers in St. Mary's have high expectations of the pupils in terms of their behaviour, and they strive to ensure that all pupils work to the best of their ability. The class teacher treats each child fairly and enforces the classroom rules consistently. The class teacher treats all pupils in his/her class with respect and understanding.
- The class teacher discusses the school and class rules with his/her class at the beginning of each school year and further discussion at the commencement of each term and when deemed necessary.
- If a pupil misbehaves repeatedly in class, the class teacher keeps a record of all such incidents. In the first instance, the class teacher deals with the incidents himself/herself in the normal manner. However, if misbehaviour continues, the class teacher seeks help and advice from Special Education Teachers, In School Management Staff, Deputy Principal, Principal.
- The class teacher reports to parents about the progress of each pupil in his/her class, in line with the whole-school policy. The class teacher may also contact a parent if there are concerns about the behaviour or welfare of a pupil. The Principal will be informed of such contact being made.
- The class teacher liaises with SEN staff, the Principal, the SENO, the NEPS psychologist and external agencies, as necessary, to support and guide the progress of the each pupil. The class teacher may, for example discuss the needs of a pupil with National Educational Psychological Services or Special Educational Support Services.
- The Class Teacher follows and therefore models the adherence to all school protocols in relation to Covid-19, as per the Covid-19 Response Plan. When a pupil is in breach of Covid-19 regulations, the teacher reports this breach immediately to the LWR.

The Role of the Principal

- It is the responsibility of the Principal, under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 to implement the Code of Behaviour consistently throughout the school and to report to the Board of Management, on the effectiveness of the policy. The Principal also makes recommendations to the Board of Management for further improvements.
- It is also the responsibility of the Principal to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all pupils in the school.
- The Principal keeps records of all reported serious incidents of misbehaviour and communicates with parents if appropriate.
- The Principal records those incidents where a pupil is sent to her on account of bad behaviour.
- The Principal will ensure that serious offences are recorded on the pupil's file and the sanctions imposed.

The Role of All Non-Teaching Staff

St. Mary's National School acknowledges the contribution of all our staff in the day to day running of the school. They too have a part to play in the successful implementation of our code of behaviour. In particular, they have a responsibility to:

- report incidents of misbehaviour;
- praise examples of positive behaviour
- model adherence to Covid-19 protocols

The Role of the Pupil

- To attend school regularly and punctually, independently entering and exiting via the appropriate locations
- To listen to teachers and staff members and act on instructions and or advice.
- To show respect for all members of the school community.
- To respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- To avoid behaving in any way which may endanger other pupils.
- To avoid nasty remarks, swearing and name calling.
- To include others in games and activities.
- To bring the correct materials and books to school.
- To follow school and class rules at all times
- To adhere strictly to all Covid-19 protocols, as outlined in the School Covid-19 Response Plan

The Role of Parents/Guardians

- To encourage their child/children to show respect to others.
- To ensure that their child/children attend regularly and punctually.
- To be interested in, support and encourage their child's/children's school work.
- To be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and support its implementation.
- To co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing a difficulty for others.
- To communicate with the school, using the appropriate channels as specified above, in relation to any problem.
- To respect school property and encourage their child/children to do the same.
- Supervise vigilantly their children's use of technology at home in order to ensure that they are not engaging in or becoming a victim of online inappropriate behaviour.
- To be aware that posting of derogatory comments or endorsing such comments on social networking websites are seen as inappropriate behaviour.
- To supervise their young child/children on school premises and/or at the school gate when collecting other pupils or visiting the school.
- To refrain from entering the school grounds, in light of Covid-19 restrictions
- To not, under any circumstance, approach a member of staff
- To refrain from bringing family pets/dogs into the school grounds even if on a lead.
- To show courtesy towards staff and pupils at all times.
- To equip their child/children with appropriate school materials, a sufficient healthy lunch and full uniform.
- As the Board of Management is responsible for the Health & Safety of all staff and pupils, parents are requested not to approach or reprimand another person's child on the school premises.
- To drive carefully in and around the school environment.
- To inform the school re travel abroad, as specified above

Categories of Misbehaviour

While our aim is to be as positive as possible, occasionally children do misbehave.

The school acknowledges all the efforts and achievements of pupils both in and out of school. To discourage misbehaviour it is sometimes necessary to use sanctions. Sanctions are a valuable and effective means of helping pupils to reach a high level of self-discipline. They teach the pupil that his/her actions have consequences and that when she behaves in an unacceptable way she must accept responsibility for her own behaviour by accepting the consequences. The sanction should always be

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appropriate to the misbehaviour; it should positively encourage the pupil to reflect on the behaviour and improve. Sanctions should relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

In seeking to address the inappropriate behaviour of any pupil, a teacher may use a variety of sanctions based on the age of the child and the seriousness and frequency of the misbehaviour.

Teachers must keep a written record of serious misbehaviour in their classroom. Teachers on duty in the playground fill out an incidence record in the yard book if something occurs during their duty.

When these incidents (classroom and playground) are repeated by a child, it is reported to the Principal. They will be noted and the Principal will speak to the child to let them know that they are aware of the need to improve their behaviour.

The safety of the pupils is paramount in all situations. If a pupil's behaviour endangers the safety of herself or that of others, the class teacher will cease the activity/lesson and prohibit the pupil from taking part.

In light of the current global pandemic, the understanding of 'safe behaviour' has expanded to include appropriate practices which prevent/limit virus transmission. Failure to behave safely in light of Covid-19 will result in immediate sanction. Safety recommendations listed below are available in the School Covid-19 Response Plan.

I. Minor Misbehaviours

Examples

- No homework.
- Not following instructions.
- Interruptions.
- Overactive indoor play.
- Breaking classroom rules.
- Not wearing proper uniform.

Sanctions

Any of the following may be used in any order depending on the behaviour.

- Verbal warning,
- Reminder of school rules.
- Appeal to child – reason with them.
- Phone call/email to Parents/Guardians

Adults Involved

- Relevant Teacher
- Parent/Guardian

II. Serious Misbehaviours

Examples

- Any minor misbehaviour which is persistent & repeated
- Constantly disruptive in class
- Telling lies
- Stealing
- Damaging other pupil's/school property

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- Speaking inappropriately or in a challenging manner to teachers, SNAs or other school personnel
- Oppositional Behaviour e.g. refusing to complete work/participate in class
- Deliberately injuring a fellow pupil e.g. hitting, kicking (isolated incidents)
- Name-calling
- Using foul/inappropriate language
- Misbehaviour in school toilets
- Vandalism
- Deliberately not lining up correctly, as per Class Bubbles/Pods
- Deliberately entering or exiting the school through the incorrect doors

- Speaking to any member of the school community in a derogatory form regarding Covid-19 e.g. scaremongering, threatening, hypothesising, insulting etc.
- Deliberate failure to adhere to hand hygiene

Sanctions

Any of the following may be used in any order depending on the behaviour.

- Gesture warning
- Verbal warning, including advice on how to improve.
- Time out/Temporary separation from peers in class or on the playground
- Note in homework journal
- Loss of privileges
- Extra written work
- Principal informed - principal speaks to class regarding what is good behaviour
- Principal informed - pupil spoken to individually.
- Principal informed - parents/guardians are requested to attend meeting.

If the child is engaging in repeated more serious misbehaviours, the child will not be taken on a class outing/school tour or any event outside of the school grounds.

Adults Involved

- Teacher
- Parent/Guardian
- Principal

III. Gross Misbehaviours

Examples

- Attendance at school in defiance of Covid-19 protocols e.g. children returning from holidays abroad who should quarantine for 14 days
- Deliberate failure to adhere to social distancing as outlined by a teacher, SNA or other member of school personnel
- Deliberate failure to adhere to coughing etiquette
- Spitting at, coughing at, biting or choking a fellow pupil (isolated incidents)
- Persistent aggressive/violent/threatening behaviour towards teacher/pupil
- Any serious misbehaviour which is persistent
- Posting or endorsing a derogatory comment online about any member of the school community.
- Sending group text messages or group private messages which are hurtful about any member of the school community.
- Leaving school without permission.

Sanctions

- All sanctions from above.
- Withdraw child to principal, inform the parent.
- If behaviour is not modified despite interventions and measures put in place by the school, we will follow the NEWB Guidelines.
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Adults Involved

- Class teacher
- Parent
- Principal
- BOM
- Outside Agencies: e.g. CAMHS, NEPS, AON Team, Educational Psychologist

No child can disrupt the learning environment to the point of impinging on their own teaching and learning or the teaching and learning of other students. If this happens the child will be removed from their classroom and if behaviour does not desist the Board will be left with no choice, NEWB guidelines in relation to Suspension and Expulsion will be followed.

Suspension

Before resorting to serious sanctions e.g. suspension, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Parents will be informed at an early stage and behaviour intervention strategies will be implemented.

A decision to suspend a pupil can be made on the following grounds:

- The pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of others pupils
- The pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the teaching process
- The pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the welfare of the teacher
- The pupil's continued presence at the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property
- The pupil is constantly insubordinate and totally disrespectful to staff members
- A single incident of serious misconduct may be considered sufficient grounds for suspension

The Suspension Process

The Board of Management of the school has the authority to suspend a pupil. The Board of Management has deferred responsibility to the principal to impose an initial suspension for a period of up to three days.

Immediate Suspension

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary.

When an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal, she must first inform the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

- A formal investigation should follow the imposition of the suspension
- Parents must be notified and arrangements made with them for the pupil to be collected
- A pupil will not normally be suspended for more than 3 days
- In exceptional circumstances, a pupil may be suspended for more than 3 days. Such a suspension is to be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and

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approval. However, the Board of Management may wish to authorize the Principal with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board to impose a suspension of up to 5 days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened.

- A pupil may be automatically suspended if the grounds for suspension comply with those as set out in this policy.

Non- immediate suspension:

The following procedures will be observed:

- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of the following: Details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
- An invitation to a meeting, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.
- 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 reason for the suspension;
 - The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and parent(s)/guardian(s). Where appropriate, this letter may also include some or all of the following:
 - Expectations of the pupil while on suspension;
 - Reference to the importance of parental assistance in resolving the matter causing the suspension;
 - A statement that the pupil is under the care and responsibility of the parents/guardians while suspended;
 - Information of the appeal rights and procedures regarding the suspension where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to 20 days or more; (see section on Suspension Removal & Appeals)
 - Requirements to be met for the pupil's return to school.

Suspension Removal

An appeal of a suspension decision may also be made under Section 29 Education Act 1998 where a pupil has been suspended for 20 days or more in any school year. Information regarding the right of appeal will be provided with the formal notification of the suspension, if applicable.

Following success in such appeals, a suspension may be rescinded in the following circumstances:

- New circumstances come to light after the suspension has been applied that would have mitigated the sanction had they been known beforehand.
- Other mitigating factors come to light consistent with the application of the Principles of Natural Justice.

Suspension Completed

Upon completion of a suspension, the following procedures may apply for the formal re- introduction of the pupil into the school -

- Parents may be requested to attend with the pupil upon her return to school;
- An opportunity will be provided for the pupil to talk to one of the Special Education Teachers, if relevant;
- A written or verbal apology may be required from the pupil for her misbehaviour;

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- The pupil may be required to enter into a contract of good behaviour or other conditions that may be specified before returning to school.

When suspension is completed the pupil will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and the sanction has been completed the same behaviour is expected of this pupil as of all other pupils.

Records and Reports

Formal written records will be kept of:

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

Expulsion

A Student maybe expelled from this school when the Board of Management makes a formal decision to permanently exclude her from the school (Welfare Act 200). The sanction of expulsion will only be used in exceptional circumstances when all other avenues have been exhausted.

Expulsion of a pupil will only be considered in the most extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour and/or only after all other sanctions, including intervention strategies have been exhausted. Expulsion of a pupil from the school is a function of the Board of Management. Given the severity of the potential sanction, the Board of Management, in accordance with the principles of Natural Justice, will investigate extreme indiscipline cases thoroughly in advance of any hearing that could result in an exclusion of a pupil.

Grounds for Expulsion

- The pupil's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- The pupil's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to the safety of fellow pupils or staff e.g. Serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.
- Supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
- Sexual assault
- Actual violence or physical assault

Procedures for Expulsion

- Detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
- Recommendations by the Principal to a specially convened meeting of the Board of Management.
- If, having considered the Principal's report the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a pupil, a hearing shall be scheduled.
- Notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the date, time and location of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing.
- Advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management.
- Advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) that they may be accompanied at the hearing.

The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that the parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

Hearing

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In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that:

- The meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures;
- The Principal or nominee of the Board and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board of Management in each other's presence;
- Each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party;
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose;
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) and Principal or nominee of the Board, are not present for the Board's deliberations.

Board of Management Deliberations & Actions

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 of Management shall:

- Notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reason for the opinion;
- Not expel the pupil before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Education Welfare Officer receives this written notification;
- Notify in writing the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that Education Welfare Officer is being contacted;
- Be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Education Welfare Officer;
- Suspend the pupil, if it is deemed likely that the continued presence of the pupil during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils or staff

Confirmation of Decision to Expel

Where the 20 day period following notification to the Education Welfare Officer has elapsed and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the pupil should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel. Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall 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 & Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with the information of the submission of such an appeal. A formal record will be made of the decision to expel.

Appeals

- Under Section 29 Education Act 1998 parents are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of DES against decisions of the Board of Management including permanent exclusion from school and/or suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 days or longer in any one school year. Accordingly, the Board of Management will advise parents of this right of appeal and associated timeframe.
- Permanent exclusion may be appealed by a parent/guardian or by the NEWB. Any such appeal must be lodged within 42 calendar days of the decision of the Board of Management.

Success Criteria

The success of this policy will be measured by:

- Observation of Safety Protocols in place in relation to Covid-19
- Teaching and learning proceeding unhindered by unacceptable behaviour.
- Observation of behaviour throughout the school.
- The level of positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.

Implementation and Review

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.

The revised policy will be reviewed within two school years keeping in mind changing legislation following consultation with staff, Parent Association Committee, and pupils.

The Board of Management may, however, review this policy earlier than this, if Department of Education & Skills introduces new regulations, or if the Board of Management receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

Any amendments will be communicated in writing to all members of the school community outlining the rationale for the change.

Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management ratified this revised policy at its meeting on 19th August, 2020.

Copies of the policy will be available in the office and it will also be published online on the school website and communicated to all members of the staff, parents and guardians.