

# **Code of Behaviour**

## **REVISED DRAFT FOR COMMENT**

### **1. Introductory Statement**

**Scoil Chroí Íosa is a community of children, teachers, ancillary staff and parents. Each member of that community must be treated with respect and tolerance. The dignity and individuality of each member must be respected.**

The purpose of this code is to achieve a safe, secure and well-ordered environment in which children can develop to their full potential. To achieve this aim, it is necessary to provide a framework, which promotes constructive behaviour and discourages disruptive and unacceptable behaviour. Every reasonable effort is made by staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school. This code offers such a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement can be utilised by teachers, staff, pupils, parents and guardians. This in the long run gives the best results.

The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences. School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard to the health, welfare and safety of all members of the school community.

In the belief that the most effective schools tend to be those with the best relationships with parents/guardians, every effort will be made to ensure that parents/guardians are well informed; that the school provides a welcoming atmosphere towards parents/guardians and that parents/guardians are told not only when their child has misbehaved but when they have behaved particularly well.

This Code of Behaviour will be implemented in such a manner as to reward good behaviour. As our school motto says- "Ar scáth a chéile a mhairimid"-We rely on each other and look after each other.

### **2. Auditing and Reviewing the Code of Behaviour**

Our Code of Behaviour underwent a full review in 2021. A draft was formulated by a working group. This draft was then circulated at a staff meeting, where staff were provided with opportunities to discuss it and make suggestions. The general parental body and the parents Association were also consulted. Further to input from all parties, the code was revised and updated. A draft of the revised code was made available to the school community via the school website for comment before being ratified by the Board of Management in September 2021.

The Code of Behaviour was prepared in accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 23(3) and the NEWB publication *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*. Consideration was given to the particular needs and circumstances of Scoil Chroí Íosa.

### **3. Policies that Support the Code of Behaviour**

The following school policies support our Code of Behaviour. These policies are available from the school office and many are also on our school website [www.scins.ie](http://www.scins.ie). They are regularly discussed at our staff meetings and meetings of the Board of Management to see how they impact on student behaviour. The list is not exhaustive.

- Admissions
- Health and Safety
- Child Safeguarding
- Anti-Bullying
- Special Educational Needs
- Acceptable Use of ICT
- School Tours and Outings
- SPHE plan

There are occasions where the Code of Behaviour and practices arising from the Code may be brought to the attention of the Board of Management to be reviewed and updated as a result of observations made at these discussions.

### **4. Aims of the Code of Behaviour**

- To ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated.
- To acknowledge the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.
- To develop self-discipline, respect and tolerance for others.
- To aid the efficient operation of the school and the structuring of in-class discipline.
- To maintain good order throughout the school and respect for the environment.
- To encourage good home/school communication.
- To foster a positive atmosphere in the school.

### **5. A Whole School Approach to the Code of Behaviour**

A high standard of behaviour is expected by everyone in our school community. This is achieved through a high level of co-operation among staff and also between staff, pupils, parents/guardians and the Board of Management.

With encouragement and guidance offered by all school staff the student will gain a better understanding of the rules concerning safety and respect for others.

The principal endeavours to get to know each pupil by greeting them throughout the school and also by visiting their classes. The principal promotes good behaviour in the school and highlights the importance of each student's role in promoting the whole school code of behaviour. This develops a sense of personal responsibility amongst the pupils.

Each class teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline amongst his/her pupils. Teachers share a common responsibility for good order throughout the school premises and with all school related activities. SNAs also support the whole school approach to good behaviour. If an S.N.A. is witness to a behaviour issue, he/she will report this to the class teacher or the teacher on supervision duty. If further intervention is

needed, the Principal is called upon. The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal and Board of Management.

### ***Staff of Scoil Chroí Íosa:***

Our staff works together, as a team, with a whole school approach to behaviour. The staff apply their professional expertise in understanding the links between behaviour and learning, their experience of what works to help pupils to behave well and their knowledge of the school and of the school community.

At whole staff meetings the issue of behaviour can be discussed and reflected on together. At school assemblies, staff address the issue of behaviour; commending particularly good behaviour and choosing an area where there might be room for improvement. The whole school can then work on this area together. The Principal often calls individually to the classes to promote positive behaviour.

### ***Parents/Guardians of Scoil Chroí Íosa***

Parents were invited to be involved in the formulation and review of our Code of Behaviour via the Parents' Association & website. Feedback was submitted to the working group. Parents' Nominees contribute to school policy at Board of Management Meetings.

Parents/guardians are emailed a PDF of the school's Code of Behaviour prior to accepting an Offer of Admission to our school. They are requested to read the code in full and sign their acceptance of it, as a condition of admission to our school. The code can be accessed on the school's website and hard copies are available from the school office on request.

### ***Behaviour of parents/guardians and other adults.***

The staff of our school are entitled to work in a safe environment free from abuse of any kind. School staff must be treated with respect at all times. Inappropriate or serious misbehaviour of parents/guardians or other adults is deemed unacceptable. This includes abusive phone calls or emails, threats or intimidation of any description, unrealistic demands for meetings at short notice, derogatory comments, verbal or physical assault etc.

Those engaging in such behaviour will be asked to leave the premises and the incident reported to the Board of Management and/or Gardaí as appropriate.

### ***Pupils of Scoil Chroí Íosa***

Our pupils are frequently made aware of what is expected of them in terms of behaviour and also what they can expect in terms of support and guidance from their teacher and the staff. Our 'School Rules for Good Behaviour' (see Section 7) are discussed regularly by pupils with their class teacher and parents/guardians. These rules are written in child friendly language and are also printed in the School Journal for reference. Our Student

Council encourages good behaviour. The older students are conscious of their responsibility as role models for the younger children.

## **6. Positive Strategies for Managing 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).*

In Scoil Chroí Íosa, positive strategies are used throughout the school to promote good behaviour and to prevent misbehaviour. We help pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and relationships. They are encouraged to be responsible for observing expected standards of behaviour and showing respect for themselves and others in the school.

### ***Classroom/School buildings etc.***

Teachers ensure that the pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave. The golden rules are discussed at each class level each September. Classroom management techniques ensure a variety of activities and methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation. Careful timetabling is an essential element of managing behaviour, particularly for pupils with additional needs.

Classroom rules/behavioural expectations as well as sanctions and reward systems are drawn up in consultation with the pupils of individual classes each September, at an age appropriate level. They are consistent with the ethos expressed in the Code of Behaviour and set a positive atmosphere for learning. Teachers are asked to display these rules in written form in their classroom.

During the first weeks of each school year, each child from First to Sixth Class read the Rules for Good Behaviour in school with their teacher and also at home with their parents/guardians. They are then required to sign their continued acceptance of the Code of Behaviour as printed in the front of their School Journal.

Where incidents of misbehaviour arise, the particular incident may be discussed sensitively with the pupils to see how things might have been diffused earlier and how pupils should act should a similar incident occur in the future.

### ***Playground***

Teachers supervise the playground with the assistance of SNAs.

Children with challenging behaviour are supported according to their needs.

Each class has their own zone within the playground. Simple playground games are taught and adapted to suit different class levels. In addition to this, some simple equipment can be provided occasionally to minimise behaviour problems.

On wet days, board games, jigsaws, colouring activities and age appropriate films or TV programmes are provided at the discretion of the class teacher.

Incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with by the supervising teacher. Serious incidents are reported to the class teacher. Sanctions may include time-out, withdrawal of privileges etc as set out in the Sanctions to Deal with Misbehaviour Section of this Code.

### ***School related activities***

Standards and rules contained in the code of behaviour apply in any situation where pupils are still the responsibility of the school. This includes during school tours, games and extracurricular activities and other school-linked events that are approved by the Principal and Board of Management.

### **Behaviour in School Uniform**

Students are expected to represent the school well while wearing their school uniform regardless of location/time.

## **7. School Rules for Good Behaviour**

The following rules apply to behaviour on the school premises, on school transport organised by the school, and at extra- curricular activities, both in school and outside of school. The rules are written in child friendly form for all to understand and are stated in positive terms.

### **We are kind and helpful**

- we treat staff, their fellow pupils and visitors with courtesy, consideration, respect and tolerance at all times
- we perform acts of kindness whenever we can
- we speak using pleasant tones of voice and good manners
- we do not use foul language or back chat
- we treat others as we would like to be treated ourselves

### **We are gentle**

- we walk quietly around the school
- pupils line up in a quiet and orderly manner
- pupils play in a gentle, fair and inclusive manner
- bullying is not tolerated in our school and pupils, parents/guardians and staff work together to ensure that any bullying is reported and dealt with
- we do not hurt others physically or with words
- we keep our hands to ourselves

### **We look after property**

- pupils look after their own belongings carefully and ensure that they have their books, pencil case, lunchbox organised and with them as necessary
- we show respect for property of the school (furniture, equipment, toys, plants etc)
- we show respect for the belongings of others
- pupils' belongings are labelled clearly with their name
- our school is a litter free zone
- we leave the toilets clean and litter free after use

### **We are honest**

- we tell the truth
- we admit when we have done something wrong and try to make it better
- we stand up for what is right
- we speak up if we have information that will help to solve a problem

### **We listen**

- pupils listen attentively to staff, classmates and visitors when they speak
- pupils pay attention in class and ask for clarification or help if they do not understand
- we show that we are listening using the 5 finger rule: eyes are looking, ears are listening, lips are closed, hands are still, feet are quiet
- pupils raise their hand to speak in class

### **We work hard**

- pupils attend school every day they can
- we are punctual
- pupils complete their homework daily
- pupils do their best work at all times both in school and for homework
- We take pride in producing a good quality of work

### **We follow school policies**

- Pupils wear their school uniform or tracksuit in accordance with the Uniform and Appearance Policy unless there is a special event for which permission has been granted
- We bring healthy lunches to school in accordance with the school Food Policy. Teachers on occasion may give a treat.
- Pupils do not use personal devices at school or on school outings in accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy.
- Alcohol, solvents, smoking and drugs are strictly prohibited in accordance with our Substance Abuse Policy.
- Prescribed medication will be administered strictly subject to our school's Administration of Medication policy and only on the written request of a parent/guardian.

## **8. Rewards and Incentives to Affirm Positive Behaviour**

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

At class level, each teacher operates their own system of rewards. This can include some or all of the following:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment on a child's exercise book, copy or journal
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation
- Praise in front of the class group from teacher or Principal
- Individual class merit awards, stickers or stamps
- Golden Time

- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- Positive written communication with parent/guardian
- Whole school initiatives promoting positive behaviour- names on noticeboard

## 9. Levels of Intervention

Three levels at which intervention may take place are outlined below. At each level, parental and family support will be sought.

<b>Levels of Intervention (in line with the Continuum of Support)</b>	
<b>Support for all</b>	Most pupils behave appropriately, with the help of consistent and clear rules and routines in class and in school. Occasional, minor misbehaviour will be attended to routinely and effectively through the skill of the classroom teacher (using rewards and sanctions - some of which are detailed in this code).
<b>Additional support for some pupils</b>	Some pupils need more active intervention to help them to manage their behaviour. Without additional help, they may not reach their full potential; behaviourally, socially and educationally. Additional inputs or interventions might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Referral to another teacher or SNA who can work with the pupil</li> <li>● Setting targets for behaviour and monitoring them with the pupil in a supportive way through a Support Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Specialised support for a small minority of pupils</b>	A small minority of pupils may show particularly persistent challenging behaviour. They may have great difficulty in learning new behaviour and may not respond to low-level interventions. These pupils will need a sustained and systematic response involving the important adults in their lives, in school and at home.  The Principal and staff will build mutually supportive relationships with the parents/guardians. Subsequently they will build good links with local support services that may be able to assist in responding to the needs of a pupil with behavioural difficulties. Sources of support may include the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), HSE Community Psychology Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

## 10. Sanctions

It is acknowledged that despite the best efforts of schools, inappropriate behaviour happens, and that even minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour can be disruptive, particularly if they are persistent. The Board of Management, with the school community, intervenes early when pupil behaviour does not meet the standards expected in the school. The early involvement of parents/guardians is prioritised. Sanctions will be applied

according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to the age of the child and their emotional development. The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour.

Below is a suggested list of sanctions. They may be used in any order. Where there are repeated incidences of misbehaviour or more serious breach of rules, the teacher/Principal may invoke a more appropriate sanction. The list is not exhaustive:

- Verbal reminder of expected behaviour
- Reasoning with the pupil
- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
- Temporary separation from peers/friends within the class or playground
- Temporary exclusion from classroom activities or playground activities e.g. Time Out
- Temporary removal to another classroom
- Loss of privileges
- Supervised detention during break – pupil remains inside and completes assigned work under supervision.
- Prescribing extra written work. This may include a reflective essay or project work, completing a Behaviour Reflection Form, or an apology note.
- Teacher communicating with parents/guardians – by phonecall, in person, by note or email. A note in a child's journal should be signed by the child's parent or guardian. Emails should be acknowledged.
- Referral to Principal
- Principal communicating with parents/guardians
- Parents/guardians may be asked to take child home
- A Behaviour Reflection Form can be completed by the pupil and discussed with parents and teacher
- Referral to the Board of Management
- Temporary suspension (in serious circumstances).
- Expulsion

## **11. Serious Misbehaviour**

*Examples of serious negative behaviour*

- Disrespect for staff, e.g. use of tone, language
- Swearing and/or use of foul language
- Incidents of serious defiance
- Threat to the safety of self or others
- Engaging in any behaviour that has a detrimental effect on teaching and learning
- Bullying, harassment, discrimination, victimisation
- Inappropriate sexual references

Acts of deliberate aggression, confrontational, threatening or violent behaviour towards another pupil, teacher or other member of staff will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

## **12. Recording Incidents of Misbehaviour**

Incidences of misbehaviour are recorded in teachers' personal notes/class diary. These notes are added to the pupil's file at the end of each school year.

Constant and repeated incidences of misbehaviour or challenging behaviours are recorded on an agreed template provided by the SEN team. The record will go towards the formulation of a Behaviour Support Plan for the pupil in question, in consultation with the child's parents/guardians.

A phone call may be made or an email/note written to the pupil's parents/guardians, at the discretion of the teacher/principal, informing them of the facts of the incident of misbehaviour. All meetings/phone conversations between parent/guardians and staff members are noted and these memos are kept on the pupil's personal files.

For more serious incidents of misbehaviour, a Yellow Card may be sent home as a further means of informing the parents/guardians of the incident. This card should be signed by the parents/guardians and returned to the school the following day. When returned, the note/card is photocopied and placed in the pupil's file.

### **13. Pupils with Additional Needs**

Class teachers and specialist personnel such as the Special Education Teachers (SETs) and Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) will check that standards and rules are communicated in a way that pupils with additional needs can understand. It will be helpful to check for this understanding from time to time, especially where a pupil with additional needs is acting in a way that would usually be seen as being in breach of the rules.

Teachers may need support in understanding how best to help a pupil with additional needs to conform to the behavioural standards and expectations of the school. Specific behavioural targets are set out in their Support Plan and are developed collaboratively between pupil, parents/guardians and teachers (and SNAs where appropriate).

School staff including class teachers, SETs and SNAs work collaboratively to put in place an appropriate system of incentives and rewards for good behaviour. These incentives and rewards are tailored around each individual child. Some children have a simplified version of the school rules.

A very small minority of pupils with additional needs may exhibit behaviours that seriously challenge the ability of the school to respond. These behaviours include actions that seriously disrupt the work of the classroom on a sustained basis. Such behaviours may include, but are not limited to;

- Aggression towards other pupils and staff that is often violent
- Sustained and offensive verbal assault
- Refusal to take part in classroom activities
- Shouting, persistent use of inappropriate and/or offensive language and/or gestures, bullying and disrupting the classroom in a manner that does not respond to repeated efforts on the school's part to control such behaviour
- Making serious threats to others verbally and through gestures
- Throwing items – school requisites, books, chairs, desks etc
- Leaving classroom/yard/school premises without permission
- Consistently destroying their own work and the work of others

- Kicking, punching, biting, choking others

Pupils displaying such behaviours will require a high level of intervention as set out in Section 9 of this code. Behavioural targets in line with the Continuum of Support will be reviewed and a clear system of rewards and sanctions will be put in place in consultation with the pupil themselves and their parents/guardians. The support of external agencies such as NEPS, CAMHS, the NCSE, Tusla, HSE etc will be sought. The school recognises that this can be extremely difficult for parents/guardians but their support is both necessary and expected to achieve the best possible outcome for their child. In some cases this may include exploring a more specialised school setting that would provide increased support and better meet the needs of their child.

Temporarily removing a pupil who displays seriously challenging behaviours from the classroom to a supervised location may be appropriate in the interests of classroom management. This is in order to ensure the learning of other students and to help the individual student to recognise and learn about the impact and consequences of their behaviour.

In such an instance the Principal will be alerted and a decision made as to the next course of action which may include asking the parent/guardian to take the child home.

If a child must be taken home, a Behaviour Reflection Form may need to be completed by parents and child before the child returns to school.

A reduced day may be considered in line with Circular 47/2021.

It is acknowledged that a certain degree of flexibility is necessary when dealing with pupils with additional needs. However, where serious incidences of misbehaviour occur and where the safety of other pupils or staff is at risk, this Code of Behaviour takes precedence.

#### **14. Suspension**

This is defined as requiring the pupil to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days. Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. A proposal to exclude a pupil through suspension or expulsion is a serious step, warranted only by very serious misbehaviour.

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

- The pupil's behaviour has had a serious detrimental effect on the education of other pupils
- The pupil's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.

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

All investigations of alleged misbehaviour will be carried out in confidence, bearing in mind fair procedures based on the principles of natural justice: the right to be heard and the right to impartiality (Developing a Code of Behaviour Section 10 p.67-68).

Where allegations of criminal behaviour are made about a pupil, these will usually be referred to the Gardaí, who have responsibility for investigating criminal matters.

### ***Procedures in Respect of Suspension***

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

- Inform the pupil and their parents/guardians about the complaint
- Give parents and pupil an opportunity to respond.

### ***Inform the pupil and their parents/guardians about the complaint***

The pupil and parents will be informed about the complaint, how it will be investigated and that it could result in suspension.

Parents/guardians may be informed by phone or in writing, depending on the seriousness of the matter. Informing parents/guardians in writing has the benefit of ensuring that there is a formal and permanent record of having let parents/guardians know. It also ensures that parents/guardians are clear about what their child is alleged to have done. It serves the important function of underlining to parents/guardians the seriousness with which the school views the alleged misbehaviour.

### ***Give an opportunity to respond***

Parents/guardians and pupil will be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed.

Parents/guardians (and the pupil, where appropriate) will be invited to a meeting with the relevant staff member and/or the class teacher and the Principal. The Chairperson of the Board of Management may also attend. This provides an opportunity for them to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts. It may also be an opportunity for parents/guardians to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with them how best to address the pupil's behaviour.

If a pupil and their parents/guardians 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 to parents/guardians and their response.

### ***Procedures in relation to immediate suspension***

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the pupil, other pupils, staff or others, a preliminary investigation will be conducted for the imposition of the suspension. The formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. All of the conditions for suspension apply to immediate suspension. No suspension, including an immediate suspension will be open ended.

In the case of immediate suspension, parents will be notified, and arrangements made with them for the pupil to be collected.

### ***The period of suspension***

A pupil will not be suspended for 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. If a suspension longer than three days is being proposed by the Principal, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes.

However, the Board of Management has authorized 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.

The Board of Management will normally place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it.

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

### ***Implementing the suspension***

The Principal will notify the parents/guardians and pupil in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will 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 in to by the pupil and parents
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of education (Education Act 1998, Section 29)

Should a pupil report for school even though he/she has been suspended the parents/guardians will be contacted and asked to collect their child. The pupil will not be admitted to class but will remain in another room where supervision will be arranged. The pupil will be given school work to do while they wait to be collected.

Where a satisfactory resolution of a problem is achieved, a suspension may be removed and the pupil re-admitted to school within a suspension period at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Board and Principal.

### ***Re-integrating the student***

Before returning to school, a Behaviour Reflection Form will need to be completed by the pupil which will be handed to the principal on the pupil's return to school.

When a period of suspension ends, the pupil will be re-admitted to class by the Principal. Where possible, the school may arrange for a member of staff to provide support for the pupil during the reintegration process.

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 pupil as that of all other pupils.

### ***Records and reports***

Formal written records, in line with data protection legislation, 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

The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

## **15. Expulsion**

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

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

- 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 safety.
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degrees of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference is that, where expulsion is considered, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions, and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing a pupil's behaviour.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for 'automatic' expulsion. Examples of the kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel based on a single breach of the code could include:

- A serious threat of violence against another student or staff member
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
- Sexual assault

Where allegations of criminal behaviour are made about a student, these will usually be referred to the Gardaí, who have responsibility for investigating criminal matters.

### ***Procedures in respect of expulsion***

As with suspensions, all investigations of alleged misbehaviour will be carried out in confidence, bearing in mind fair procedures based on the principles of natural justice: the right to be heard and the right to impartiality. 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

Details of the process of each of the above steps are set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools* p.83-85.

### ***Appeals in respect of expulsion***

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education (Education Act 1998 section 29). An appeal may also be brought by Tusla on behalf of a pupil.

## **16. Bullying**

Bullying is dealt with in full in our Anti-Bullying Policy which is available on our school website or on request from the school office.

### ***Types of Bullying Behaviour***

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying
- cyber-bullying and
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

It is important to note that isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour.

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour.

This definition includes a wide range of behaviour, whether verbal or written, whether physical or social, whether targeting person or property, whether carried out directly or indirectly or through any electronic or other medium, which could harm a pupil or undermine her/his self-esteem or self-confidence.

It should be noted that many of the social networking sites are NOT age appropriate for children attending our school (4 to 12 year olds). Children spending time on such sites at home / outside of school hours are under their parent/guardian's supervision and are their responsibility. As such, the school will not deal with incidents that arise online outside of school hours on sites that our pupils should not frequent. Only when online misbehaviour begins to impact/spill over into school life will the school intervene.

***Preventing bullying:*** Please refer to Anti-Bullying Policy

***Procedures should bullying occur:*** Please refer to Anti-Bullying Policy

### **17. Absences from School**

By law, every child must attend school regularly up to sixteen years of age or complete at least three years post primary, whichever comes later. It is mandatory for the school to report all absences in excess of 20 days to TUSLA - the Child and Family Agency. The Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 18 stipulates that parents must notify the school of a student's absence and the reason for this absence.

#### ***Procedures for Notification of a Pupil's Absence from School***

All absences from school must be explained in writing via Aladdin Connect App.

A text to parents is automatically generated by Aladdin when a child has reached 12 and 16 days absent. When a child has been absent 20 days the parents/guardians receive a letter from the school. Where the school is concerned about excessive unexplained/not credible absences, TUSLA will be informed of its concern outside of quarterly return dates.

Parents are advised to avoid planning family holidays during school time. A school calendar is published in Term 3 of each year for the following school year. This is circulated to parents and made available on the school website.

### **18. COVID-19**

To ensure the safety of the entire school community during this particular time, any breaches of discipline related to the COVID-19 Response Plan will be taken very seriously as such conduct threatens the health and safety of the entire school community.

Deliberate coughing or spitting at any person will be treated as a serious breach of discipline and may result in parents/guardians being asked to collect their child from school pending serious sanctions. Other breaches of the regulations will be dealt with appropriate to the behaviour risk.

### **19. Success criteria on which this Code of Behaviour will be judged**

- Atmosphere of discipline and co-operation within the school
- Children are aware of school rules at an age appropriate level
- Staff are applying the school rules effectively
- Growth in self discipline
- Cooperation between parents, teachers and pupils in maintaining the code.
- Comments or compliments on behaviour.
- Children working to the best of their ability
- Classes working to the best of their ability
- Improvements in behaviour

### **20. Review**

Our Code of Behaviour will be fully reviewed every three years. However, the Board of Management may, at its discretion, review the Code at any time if necessary.

### **21. Endorsement**

This Code of Behaviour was compiled with the cooperation and assistance of pupils, parents, teachers and members of the Board of Management. After careful consideration, it was approved, ratified and adopted by the Board of Management at its meeting .....

**Signed:**  
**Chairperson of Board of Management**  
**Date:**

**Signed:**  
**Principal**