



Scoil Naomh Mhuire, Boher **Code of Behaviour and Discipline Policy 2024-25**

1. Introduction

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/ guardians, child and teaching staff and reflecting the vision and values of our school. In Scoil Naomh Mhuire, Boher we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/ guardians. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school. This is in keeping with the requirements of the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) and follows the guidelines of its publication “Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools” (2008).

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

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

2. Aims of the code:

- i. To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- ii. To promote self –esteem and positive relationships.
- iii. To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour.
- iv. To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others.
- v. To facilitate the education and development of every child.

- vi. To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
 - vii. To enable teachers to teach without disruption and pupils learn without disruption.
 - viii. To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through availability of policies and an ethos of open communication. To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.
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School Rules –

We aim to keep rules which function effectively and efficiently and are devised regarding health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community.

3. Expectations for pupils, staff and parents and how they will treat each other.

3.1 Pupils

Pupils can expect to

- Be treated fairly, consistently and with respect.
- To feel safe, respected, and secure.
- Have their individual differences recognised and acknowledged when and if possible.
- Have positive behaviour reaffirmed.
- Have misbehaviour dealt with appropriately.

Pupils are *expected* to:

- attend school regularly and punctually.
- wear a neat school uniform.
- work quietly and safely to the best of their ability always.
- respect the right of other pupils to learn.
- show respect for all members of the school community.
- respect school property, the property of others and their own belongings.
- keep the school environment clean and tidy.
- have the correct books and materials in school.
- follow class rules.
- move quietly and carefully around the school.
- line up in an orderly manner before and after break.

- stay on the premises and within designated areas during school times.
- do their homework to the best of their ability.

3.2 Staff

Staff can expect to

- be treated with respect
- teach in a well-maintained physical environment relatively free from disruption.
- get support and co-operation from colleagues and parents to achieve the school's aims and objectives.
- be listened to and participate in decision making which affects their own work and that of the school in general.
- work in an atmosphere that encourages professional development.
- get support and professional advice from the Board of Management, Department of Education and Skills, the national Education Welfare Board, the National Council for Special Education and the National Educational Psychological Services to help to cater for the psychological, emotional and physical needs of their pupils; have grievances dealt with according to agreed procedures as set out in the CPSMA handbook.

Staff is *expected* to:

- support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour.
- be cognisant of their duty of care.
- create a safe, welcoming atmosphere for their pupils.
- develop and nurture a sense of self-esteem in each pupil.
- praise desirable behaviour.
- facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential.
- recognise and provide for individual differences as far as is reasonable.
- be courteous, consistent, and fair.
- keep opportunities for disruption to a minimum.
- keep record of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- provide support for colleagues.

3.3 Parents

Parents can expect to:

- be treated with respect.
- have a safe and welcoming environment for their child.
- obtain recognition for individual differences among pupils having due regard for the resources that are available.
- have fair and consistent procedures applied to the school's dealings with pupils.
- receive progress reports in accordance with agreed school policy (P.T. meetings and end of year reports)
- receive information on school's policies and procedures.

Parents are *expected* to:

- **Treat staff with courtesy and respect in all communications.**
 - Ensure their children attend school regularly and on time and that they are collected from school on time.
 - encourage their children to follow the school's Code of Behaviour.
 - ensure their children wear the school uniform.
 - ensure their children have the correct books and materials.
 - have their children's belongings labelled.
 - read written communication received from the school and respond appropriately.
 - report to the office if calling to the school during the day for any reason.
 - make an appointment beforehand if they need to see a teacher.
 - to treat all member so the school community with respect.
 - to provide a letter for all absenteeism
 - inform class teacher of any change to collection procedure for their children.
 - help their children to learn and practise good behaviour and to have a positive attitude towards themselves, other people and towards the school.
 - co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulty to others.
 - communicate to the school problems which may affect their child's behaviour.
 - attend meetings at the school if requested.
 - help their children with their homework and ensure it is completed.
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4 School Rules

In order to achieve a happy, healthy and safe working environment, where a sense of mutual respect is fostered, every pupil is expected to keep the following rules.

4.1 Respect and Courtesy

All pupils are expected to treat staff and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy. Good manners are always expected –please, thank-you, excuse me etc.

Inappropriate behaviour i.e., rough play, bad language, fighting, personal remarks, pushing, kicking, and spitting will not be tolerated.

School property and the property of others should be respected. Proper use of facilities is obligatory (e.g.) toilets, taps etc.

Climbing is always forbidden.

4.2 Dress Code

Pupils are required to wear the **complete** uniform everyday apart from on the designated P.E. day. In special circumstances this may not apply.

Firm-soled footwear to be always worn and runners to be worn for P.E. sessions. No jewellery should be worn on P.E. day as outlined by Health and Safety. It is preferable that jewellery be kept to a minimum: one ring, one watch and one pair of earrings.

4.3 Healthy Lunches

Healthy eating is encouraged at Scoil Naomh Mhuire, Boher.

An optional healthy school dinner is provided daily to all pupils.

All wrappers and leftover food must be taken home. Pupils are expected to abide by our Healthy Eating Policy.

4.4 Homework

Homework is **expected to be done to the highest standard possible.**

Checking and signing by parents/guardians daily is recommended.

Incomplete homework must be explained by a parent/guardian.

See homework policy

4.5 Attendance

Each child in Junior and Senior Infants is expected to be in school at 9:00 a.m. – 1:40 p.m.

Each child in first class upwards is expected to be in school at 9:00 a.m. – 2:40 p.m.

Pupils are expected to be present every day.

A written note is expected to explain all absences.

No child is allowed to leave the school without the consent of his/her parents, the consent of the teacher and the Principal.

Pupils leaving school early should be taken during a break period where possible.

The school **must**, by law, report absences of 20 days or more to the National Educational Welfare Board (N.E.W.B).

4.6 Movement throughout the school/ school grounds

Entering and leaving the school must be done in an orderly manner and footpaths should be always used.

Running is strictly forbidden in classrooms and on corridors.

Pupils who use bicycles are asked to alight at the school gate.

Pupils should always ask permission to cross the school boundaries to retrieve a ball etc

4.7 Break-times

- Classroom/corridor/yard supervisors are to be always obeyed.
- No re-entering the school building during the breaks without permission of teacher.
- When the bell rings to signal the end of break-time, pupils are to line up quietly and stand in an orderly manner until sent inside by the supervising teacher.
- During inclement weather pupils remain indoors in their classrooms and may play with the games provided. 6th Class students will be distributed to classes throughout the school to assist with break time activities and report any issues to the supervising teacher.
- No kicking of footballs is permitted in the hard area of the yard.
- Pupils will not be permitted to play at the front of the school.

4.8 Mobile Phones

Mobile phones, smart watches and internet enabled devices are always forbidden. *See AUP for the schools procedures regarding device and internet use.*

4.9 Health and Safety

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are asked that teachers be made aware of any special needs which a child may have.

Parent(s)/guardians(s) are asked to make an appointment for parent/teacher meetings.

Requests to remain indoors during break times must be made in writing and signed by parent/guardian.

All parents/guardians and visitors are required to report to the office.

Children who are ill should not be in school.

4.10 Golden Rules

Our overall school rule is

Kind hand, hand feet, kind words that's sweet. This is taught to Junior Infants each year and reinforced throughout the school.

6 Golden Rules

1. We listen. We don't interrupt.
2. We are gentle. We don't hurt others.
3. We tell the truth.
4. We are kind.
5. We work hard. We don't waste time.
6. We look after property. We don't damage things.

Rules apply during school-time and during all school related activities on and off the premises.

Bí Cineálta: The school has recently developed a new 'Anti-Bullying policy,' in April 2025 based on Bí Cineálta procedures.

4.11 Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children, based closely on “Golden Rules”. Class rules will be kept to a minimum and are devised for health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community.

5. Incentives/ reward system

Good behaviour is praised in several ways. Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline. The school will place greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions.

For Individuals, good behaviour may be acknowledged as follows:

1. A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
2. A word of praise in front of group/class
3. Student of the week
4. Class of the week
5. A mention to the principal.
6. A comment in the exercise book.
7. A mention to parents (verbal or written);
8. A treat e.g., if terms of a behaviour contract are fulfilled.
9. Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
10. ‘Bualadh Bos’ in class or special mention at assembly.

Assembly:

Assemblies will be used to create a sense of community, celebrate birthdays, achievements of pupils and staff and to further reinforce positive behaviour. The ‘Student Council,’ will be active in acknowledging good behaviour through weekly awards.

- Superhero Friends
- Healthy Eating Award
- Sportsperson of the week.

In Alternate terms, teachers will present awards at assembly for ‘Kindness,’ and ‘Good Effort.’

The principal will further recognise good behaviour at class level with a weekly ‘Class of the Week,’ award.

Student Voice: Students will be given opportunities to have a positive impact on school life through participation in our 3 student councils.

- **Student Council**
- **Green School committee**
- **Active School Committee**

Website: The school website will be used to mark the achievements of pupils throughout the school year.

6. Children with Special Needs

All children are expected to comply with the code of behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning support/ resources teacher, and or principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be always considered. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable if available.

7. Consequences of unacceptable behaviour

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

Example of **minor** misbehaviour

- Not following instructions.
- Not waiting your turn.

- Using loud voices.
- Running on the corridor.

Examples of **serious** misbehaviour include:

- Behaviour that is hurtful.
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning.
- Threats or physical hurt to another person.
- Damage to property.
- Bringing dangerous equipment to school.
- Leaving school/ school activities without permission.
- Bringing a mobile phone to school.

Examples of **gross misbehaviour** include:

- Physical aggression towards teacher/ member of staff or pupil
- Theft
- Serious damage to property
- Bullying.

7.1

COVID 19 update

Children will take some time to learn the new COVID 19 routines and procedures surrounding handwashing, coughing, sneezing etiquette etc. Verbal reminders and praise and encouragement will be paramount in developing these skills in school. Following a settling in period breaking of these procedures will be viewed as a minor misbehaviour and will be dealt with as such. However, anyone deliberately spitting/coughing in another person's face will face more serious sanctions.

8. Sanctions:

To make a positive behaviour policy work and to run an effective school we must have sanction.

These are necessary to make the child aware of the school/teachers disapproved of unacceptable behaviour and to bring about a change in behaviour.

Sanctions are also necessary to protect the authority of teachers should that authority be threatened.

Sanctions in Scoil Naomh Mhuire School should:

- Be constructive
- Be age appropriate
- Be applied with sensitivity flexibility and discrimination
- Where possible be related to the 'offence'
- Be specific to the 'offender' and not the whole group/class

The purpose of a sanction is:

- Helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- Helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others.
- Helping students understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have a consequence.

A sanction may also:

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

Sanctions may be needed to:

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

The following measures will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. This list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the circumstances involved.

Sanctions may include:

From the class teacher:

- A look of disapproval
- Reprimand and reasoning - Verbal checking of misbehaviour
- A minor penalty, relevant to the offence e.g. an apology

- Withdrawal from group – “**thinking time**” out from the rest of the class
- Repeated or **extra work** where the presentation or content of work is clearly below the pupil’s potential
- Prescribing extra work/ writing out story of what happened- **behaviour reflection** form.
- A **note or phone call** informing parents of misbehaviour/poor work habits
- In collaboration with the **SET** team an **intervention** appropriate to the misbehaviour may be implemented.
- Referral to the **principal** for official recording and verbal warning
- **Loss of play** at break time and /or lunch time. (loss of any yard time will be appropriate to age and the offending behaviour)
- **Loss of privileges** e.g. extracurricular activities, membership of school teams.
- In certain circumstances a specific behaviour plan may be drawn up in collaboration with parents.

From the Principal:

If after several verbal warnings by the class teacher, unacceptable behaviour or poor work habits persist the matter will be discussed with the Principal, the class teacher and pupil. The Principal will note the incidents and action to be taken.

After the **second** serious breach of positive behaviour parents will be contacted which may lead to “**placing on report**” by the Principal, possibly weekly or daily, where a report is sent to parents, either by phone or in written form.

If there is still no improvement the Principal will invite parents in again and sanctions may have to be imposed e.g. detention or suspension.

Incidents considered to be bullying behaviour will be reported to and investigated initially. The principal will become involved if the problem persists and if no improvements in behaviours are seen. *Please refer to our **Bí Cineálta policy 2025.***

Procedures for suspension -

For **gross misbehaviour** or repeated instances of serious/ongoing misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed, and the parents will be requested in writing to attend the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period.

Scoil Naomh Mhuire, Boher will follow the procedures as outlined in the N.E.W.B. Guidelines in accordance with the Rules of National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

10. Removal of Suspension.

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.

11. Procedures for Expulsion

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

10.1 Policy on Expulsion

The Board of Management has a statutory obligation to provide a safe place of work therefore the expulsion process is in place to enable us to deal with a threat to health and safety of staff and pupils. Expulsion may follow once all other possibilities have been exhausted.

However, automatic expulsion will follow:

Behaviours e.g., serious threat of violence, sexual assault, acts of violence towards staff or pupils.

Staff and children are entitled to feel safe and pupils are entitled to an education

NEWB Guidelines will be followed:

A hearing will take place in line with the Education Welfare Act and other relevant legislation.

Parents will be advised that they may wish to be accompanied to the hearing.

Parents will be notified of their right to appeal under section 29 and the form will be provided.

12. When and where will behaviour be subjected to the Code of Behaviour?

Standards and rules in the Code of Behaviour will apply to all situations where the pupils are the responsibility of the school. This includes activities not within the school grounds.

13. Ratification and Communication

This policy was adapted and ratified officially by the Board of Management in June 2024.

Signed and Ratified

Date
