



# Code of Behaviour Our Lady of Good Counsel GNS Johnstown

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2025

*"Promoting positive behaviour can only occur in a mutually responsive learning environment that offers whole learning to a child within a whole school..."*

## Contents

1. Introduction
  - 1.1 Introductory Statement
  - 1.2 Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School
  - 1.3 Aims
  - 1.4 Principles
  - 1.5 Essential Features of an Effective Whole School Code of Behaviour
2. Roles and Responsibilities
  - 2.1 Patron/Board of Management
  - 2.2 Principal
  - 2.3 Staff
  - 2.4 Pupils
  - 2.5 Parents/Guardians
3. Promoting and Affirming Positive Behaviour
  - 3.1 Positive Approach
  - 3.2 Whole School Strategies to promote Good Practice
  - 3.3 Clear Expectations of School Community
  - 3.4 Teaching the Rules
  - 3.5 Restorative Justice
  - 3.6 Student Council
4. Home and School
  - 4.1 Absence from School
  - 4.2 Communication
5. School Practices and Procedures
  - 5.1 Special Needs
  - 5.2 General School Rules
  - 5.3 Opening and Closing Times
  - 5.4 School tours and Outside School Activities
6. Steps towards Resolution.
7. Sanctions
  - 7.1 Sanctions
  - 7.2 Suspension and Expulsion
  - 7.3 Suspension Procedures
  - 7.4 Expulsion Procedures

### 1.1 Introductory Statement

A Code of Behaviour “expresses the vision, mission and values of the school and its Patron. It translates the expectations of staff, parents and students into practical arrangements that will help to ensure continuity of instruction to all students. It helps to foster an orderly, harmonious school, where high standards of behaviour are expected and supported”. (Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for schools 2008)

This revised Code of Behaviour has been drawn up in compliance with the *Education Act (1998)*, the *Education Welfare Act (2000)* and the National Education Welfare Board’s publication “*Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*” (2008), through a process of consultation with staff, Members of the Board of Management and the general parent body. Consultation with the pupils was conducted at Tíonól (assembly), in classroom discussion and also through the Student Council.

The above Act provides that the Code of Behaviour shall specify:

- The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school.
- The measures that may be taken when a student fails to observe those standards.
- The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school.
- The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student.
- The procedures to be followed in relation to a child’s absence from school.

*(Ed. Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1 / 2))*

This Code of Behaviour cannot be seen as a stand-alone document. The Bí Cinéalta Policy (2025) forms part of this code, and the Health and Safety Statement and Admissions and Participation Policy are also relevant here. (See School Policies) This code is the set of practices and procedures that together form the school’s plan for helping students in the school to behave well and to learn well. It translates the expectations of the staff, parents and pupils into practical arrangements that will help

to ensure continuity of instruction to all pupils. The Deputy Principal in consultation with the Principal will ensure the implementation of this policy.

## **1.2 Relationship to The Characteristic Spirit of The School**

The ethos of our school is to establish and support a strong sense of community within the school, between the school's Boards of Management and the Parents / Guardians based on a mutual relationship of respect. This policy reflects our schools' ethos and philosophy, which aims to foster the values of respect, honesty, courtesy, responsibility, tolerance and consideration of others. Our Motto is "Every individual in our school should feel valued, respected and safe." All members of the school community are at the centre of this initiative.

*(App. 1: School Mission Statement)*

## **1.3 Aims**

- To create a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- To create a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning
- To encourage students to take personal responsibility for their learning and their behaviour
- To help young people to mature into responsible and participating citizens
- To build positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support among students, staff and parents
- To ensure that the school's high expectations for the behaviour of all the members of the school community are widely known and understood.

## **1.4 Principles**

We believe that the following principles underpin an effective code:

- Clarity
- Affirmation that every person's behaviour matters
- Promotion of good behaviour

- Balancing needs
- Relationships are key
- Personal Responsibility
- Fairness and Equity
- Promotion of equality
- Recognition of educational vulnerability
- Attending to Student Welfare
- Promoting safety and freedom from threat

(NEWB doc. Chapter 3)

### **1.5 Essential Features of an Effective Whole School Code of Behaviour**

We believe that this code is an effective one for our school.

- It is unique to OUR school.
- It is proactive rather than reactive.
- It has been developed in consultation with the whole school community.
- It is for the whole school and addresses the rights and responsibilities of pupils, parents and teachers.
- It is integrated into the whole school development plan and linked to other policies and the curriculum.
- It is open to review and should be regularly updated.

In dealing with all allegations of misbehaviour and the investigation which follows, all staff will at all times follow fair procedures. Both sides of the story will always be heard, perceived bias will be avoided, and staff will then come to as fair and reasonable a conclusion as possible.

## **2 Roles and Responsibilities**

### **2.1 Responsibility of the Patron / Board of Management**

- To ensure that policies and procedures are published in place in this area according to relevant legislation.
- To ratify the Code of Behaviour, the BÍ Cinéalta policy and related policies.

- To ensure that all members of the school community are involved in the development of the code.
- To ensure that the Principal and BOM are competent in dealing with the procedures of this code.
- To support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- To ensure confidentiality in all areas relating to this code.

## 2.2 Responsibility of the Principal

Section 23 of the Education Act states that:

“ The principal of a recognised school shall, before registering a child as a student at that school in accordance with [HYPERLINK](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2000/en/act/pub/0022/sec0020.html) ["http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2000/en/act/pub/0022/sec0020.html"section 20](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2000/en/act/pub/0022/sec0020.html) [HYPERLINK](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2000/en/act/pub/0022/sec0020.html) ["http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2000/en/act/pub/0022/sec0020.html"](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2000/en/act/pub/0022/sec0020.html) [HYPERLINK](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2000/en/act/pub/0022/sec0020.html) ["http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2000/en/act/pub/0022/sec0020.html"](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2000/en/act/pub/0022/sec0020.html), provide the parents of such child with a copy of the code of behaviour in respect of the school and may, as a condition of so registering such child, require his or her parents to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour so provided is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child.”

The principal of a recognised school shall, on a request being made by a student registered at the school or a parent of such a student, provide the student or parent, as the case may be, with a copy of the code of behaviour in respect of the school concerned.”

- To promote a positive climate in the school.
- To ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- To arrange for review of the Code annually.

- To distribute responsibility to the Deputy Principal and the School Management Team

### **2.3 Responsibility of the Staff**

- To support and implement the school Code of Behaviour in a fair and consistent manner.
- To create a safe working environment for each individual pupil, which helps to establish the link between behaviour and learning.
- To keep a record of positive/challenging behaviour using our confidential system.
- To provide support for staff colleagues.
- To communicate with parents when necessary.

### **2.4 Responsibility of the Pupil**

- To share ownership of the code by involvement in its development.
- To show respect for all members of the school community.
- To experience being part of a collective effort to make sure the school is a good place to teach and learn.
- To be inclusive in class and in the yard by learning the essential skills of listening negotiating and managing differences. (Use of S.A.L.T. programme and Restorative Practice)
- To have their experience, insights and expectations recognised and used.

### **2.5 Responsibility of Parents/Guardians**

- To equip children with consistent messages of the link between learning and behaviour that is conducive to a happy school environment.
- To encourage the children to have a sense of respect for themselves and others.
- To share a strong sense of pride in the school and ownership of its work.
- To ensure children attend regularly and punctually.
- To be familiar with the school Code of Behaviour and support implementation of same.

- To communicate and co-operate with the school in instances of challenging behaviour.

### **3. Promoting And Affirming Positive Behaviour.**

“Promoting positive behaviour can only occur in a mutually responsive learning environment that offers whole learning to a whole child within a whole school....”.

#### **3.1 Positive Approach**

Children learn and function best when there is a “goodness of fit” i.e. compatibility between the environment and the child’s temperament ( Thomas and Chess, 1977), between their personality needs and the environment. Classroom Management in our school will take into account all the techniques and strategies to establish and maintain an effective learning environment. Building a positive classroom and school climate promotes positive behaviour, increases pupil achievement and reduces the likelihood of behaviour problems. Positive interactions with a diversity of pupils, establishing clear expectations throughout the school community, and teaching in a way which is accepting of all pupil ideas contribute to good relationships and positive behaviour. We believe that modelling and promoting co-operative relationships through democratic practices helps to develop a sense of community. This will be done in many different ways.

#### **3.2 Whole School Strategies to Promote Good Practice.**

Agreed ways of describing behaviour.

- Arrangements for recording behaviour in classroom, yard, sports, school trips etc.
- A ladder of intervention to indicate actions and procedures to be followed to include the school’s First Steps.
- Provision of direct instruction in social skills
- Social Behaviour Training



- Conflict Resolution (Restorative Practice)  
Reflection, Restorative Justice.
- Classroom Contracts/Rules formed in a consultative process between teacher and pupils, displayed in the classroom and signed by all pupils and teacher.
- Golden Time in Classrooms
- ARKs i.e. Acts of random kindness encouraged.

In the interest of adopting a positive approach, emphasis will be placed on the promotion of good behaviour. Teachers will be constantly aware of good pupil response and behaviour, and should acknowledge it as a matter of course, both individually and collectively. It is just as desirable that parents / guardians are told when their children have performed or behaved well as when there is a problem. Ultimately, we, as a school believe that discipline is about motivating children to do what is in their own best interest. This can only be achieved when the ethos and the atmosphere in the school and more particularly in the classroom, is benevolent and caring and is recognisable as such by the children. This will be evident in classrooms where there is -

- A Structured Classroom environment
- Pupil ideas are valued
- Praise is earned and given
- Class Meetings and Circle Time are regular
- Co-operative Learning and Peer Tutoring are in use

### **3.3. Clear Expectations of School Community**

Holding and communicating high expectations for student learning and behaviour has been identified as critical to promoting positive behaviour and achievement. A large body of evidence shows that students tend to live up or down to our expectations of them. (*e.g. Mortimore et al., 1988*). When pupils are involved in devising guidelines for classroom behaviour, they will clearly understand what is expected of them. Clear expectations of all members of the school community will to be communicated in order to be understood.

**Students**

Students/pupils are more likely to benefit from their education and to be happy in a structured, caring environment where high standards of behaviour are expected and adhered to.

*The school expects that you:*

- You have respect for self and others, which includes respecting staff and respecting other students and their learning.
- You have respect for all school property.
- You show courtesy and good manners.
- You avoid swearing, fighting or name calling.
- You Take responsibility for ones work.
- You show a readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict.
- You are aware of sanctions and use of same.
- You attend school regularly and not miss days without good reason.
- You arrive on time.
- You do not leave during the day without permission (Sign In/Sign Out).
- Wear the appropriate school uniform (track suits on designated days only).
- You participate to the best of your ability in school activities.
- You move quietly around the school and avoid causing disturbance.
- You keep the school tidy and litter free.

**The adults in our school expect you to:**

- Show him/her courtesy and respect.
- Accept his/her authority and responsibility and his/her right to teach and impose sanctions to those who behave badly.
- Come to school on time and have all the necessary materials
- Do your homework carefully and completely.
- Listen when others are talking.

- Avoid distracting behaviour.
- Participate in all class activities
- Follow the rules drawn up by your class.

**Your fellow students expect that you:**

- Show them respect and kindness
- Show them a willingness to help each other.
- Not bully them.
- Show acceptance and respect for their differing personalities
- Never insult or belittle them because of differences.
- Respect their property.
- Listen to them and acknowledge them.
- Share equipment and resources with them.
- Allow them to be part of a group and not isolate anyone.
- Speak to them with courtesy and respect.

**School**

**Children expect that school will be:**

- Safe
- Happy
- Suited to their learning style
- Encouraging and supportive.
- Affirming of children of all abilities

*Parents / Guardians expect that there will be:*

- A safe and happy environment for their child.
- Recognition and provision for the individual differences of pupils
- Support for children who need it.
- Fairness and consistency in the way children are dealt with.

- No labelling of their child.
- An atmosphere of support and inclusion rather than criticism.
- Contact at appropriate stage to inform them of any problems
- A willingness to listen to their viewpoint.
- Suggestions and support about problems in school.
- That school standards are clear, consistent and widely understood

**School staff expect that there will be:**

- Mutual support and encouragement.
- Co-operation to achieve the schools aims and objectives.
- A fair and consistent implementation of the school discipline policy
- A consistent approach to handling troubled children.
- Contact at an early stage to inform them of any problems at home
- An atmosphere that encourages professional development and a willingness to learn and change.

**Parents / Guardians**

**Expectations of Parents / Guardians:**

The school expects that you will:

- Be familiar with the various policies and codes of the school and the expectation of pupil available on the school website.
- Show support for teachers in their implementation of the school's behaviour policy.
- Support your child in his/her schoolwork.
- Ensure the punctuality and regular attendance of your child.
- Ensure he/she has the necessary materials
- Ensure your child has a positive attitude to and abides by the school and class rules.
- Never undermine the authority of the school or teachers.
- Promote respect for teachers and other school personnel.
- Give a contact number where you can be reached in an emergency.

- Be available to discuss a problem.
- Be aware of the importance of letting the school know of the child's absence for any reason

Your child expects that you will:

- Look after his/her basic needs
- Be interested in, support, praise and encourage his/her work in school.
- Show fairness.

Other parents expect that you will:

- Support the school in implementing its code of behaviour.
- Exert firm discipline in cases where your child's behaviour is having a negative impact on the behaviour of others.

### **3.4 Teaching the Rules.**

The code as developed by the all the partners should be communicated to the pupils by discussing with them the standard of behaviour required. It is imperative that pupils get an opportunity for consultation on the classroom rules and understand the rationale behind them. This will be done at the start of the year / term / and as often as required. Frank discussion or role-play may bring the class to a consensus about the rules to ensure a positive classroom environment. Pupils should understand that some rules are not negotiable. Pupils should understand the consequences of not upholding the school rules. The staff models and sets the values, attitudes, and tone for the pupils. Therefore, messages regarding behaviour should be fair, consistent, and positive. ( *See Class Contract Samples*)

### 3.5 Restorative Practice

We believe in “*Restorative Approaches*” inspired by the philosophy and practices of restorative justice, which puts repairing harm done to relationships and people over and above the need for assigning blame and dispensing punishment. The key values in this type of approach create an ethos of respect, inclusion, accountability and taking responsibility, commitment to relationships, impartiality, being non-judgemental, collaboration, empowerment and emotional articulacy. The restorative approach is based on the belief that the people best placed to resolve a conflict, or a problem are the people directly involved, and that imposed solutions are less effective, less educative and possibly less likely to be honoured. In order to engage in this whole approach across the school, a school programme of training in this area is undertaken to develop the key skills needed for this approach to be successful. The ultimate aim of this training and of the project is to build a strong, mutually respectful, safe and inclusive school community in which everyone feels valued and heard. Restorative approaches and practices can be seen as pieces of a jigsaw, which put together, create a congruent whole school approach to relationship building and conflict management.

#### *Key Skills*

- Active Listening
- Facilitating dialogue
- Problem-solving
- Listening to and expressing emotion
- Empowering others to take ownership of problems

#### *Processes and Practices*

- Interventions when harm has happened (Restorative Practice)
- Restorative Enquiry e.g. “corridor conferences”/Restorative Circles
- Mediation (AKA Mini conferencing)
- Community Conferencing (AKA group conferencing/problem-solving circles)
- Circle Time
- Restorative Pedagogy i.e. teachers modelling the values and skills
- Peer Mentoring/Playground Buddies

### Key Restorative Questions

- *What has happened?*
- *Who has been affected?*
- *How can we involve everyone who has been affected in finding a way forward?*
- How can everyone do things differently in the future? (See School Samples)

### Advantages of Restorative Approaches in the School Setting

- A safer, more caring environment, more effective for teaching and learning
- A greater commitment by everyone to taking time to listen to one another.
- A reduction in bullying and other interpersonal conflicts
- A greater awareness of the importance of connectedness to young people.  
The need to belong and feel valued by peers and significant adults
- Greater emphasis on responses to inappropriate behaviour that seek to re-connect and not further disconnect young people.
- Reductions in fixed-term and permanent exclusions
- A greater confidence in the Staff Team to deal with challenging situations.
- An increased belief in the ability of young people to take responsibility for their choices, and more people giving them opportunities to do so.

### 3.6 Student Council

In the interests of the pupil voice being heard we have a student council for several years now.

This comprises of two class representatives from each of the two classes from third to sixth class. They are elected by the class following a short campaign of allowing them to canvass for votes. The council meets most Fridays at lunch time. An agenda is used and projects are planned and followed through. Pupil opinion is sought on many different areas and the class representatives seek the class opinions on all areas under discussion. The basis of each year's work is looking at what is good about our school and what we can improve about our school. Our student council work very hard in our school.



## **4:Home And School**

### **4.1 Absence from School**

When a pupil has been absent, a reason is required on the Aladdin system, in accordance with *Education Welfare Act (2000, Section 23.2)*.

A message from parents is required in advance of a child leaving school early. All children who leave early must be signed out at the office door. Parents must collect from the office door porch.

The Education Welfare Act requires the school to make regular returns to the Education Welfare Board informing them when the principal is concerned about a pupil's attendance, when a pupil has missed twenty days or more, when a pupil is suspended for six days or more cumulatively, when the BOM decides to expel a student and when a pupil's name is removed from the school register for any reason. When any of the above applies parents will be informed by letter.

### **4.2 Communication with the School (See School Policy)**

Formal Parent / Teacher Meetings are held annually in the school. However, parents are always welcome in the school to discuss any matter that concerns them regarding their child's education. School protocol requires parents to approach the class teacher first. However, it is necessary to make appointments to see teachers so that adequate arrangements can be made for the supervision of the class and so that meetings can be held where a degree of privacy can be afforded. With prior notice preparation can also be made for the meeting. Appointments can be made by contacting the school secretary.

## **5: General School Practices and Procedures**

### **5.1 Special Needs**

We acknowledge that a degree of flexibility is required when dealing with persons with Special Educational Needs. We, as a staff share a common language and have a consistent and uniform approach to behaviour with special needs' pupils. All staff has an awareness and understanding that pupils with special needs may take longer to process language when an incident occurs in the classroom or on the yard. This code is flexible enough to take account of Individual Behaviour Management plans as part of Individual Education Plans. However, in the case of gross misbehaviour or



repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, when the safety and duty of care to others is at issue, the school Code of Behaviour will take precedence.

## 5.2 General School Rules

School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If the school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that the rules and regulations are clearly stated in simple language. They state positively what to do and what not to do. They are based on a clear rationale, are explained, understood and agreed. We take pride in the high standards of behaviour in our school and we are keenly aware that we lead by example. Good relationships between all of us at every level are vital to the continued happy environment that exists in our school.

Our Code of Behaviour aims to achieve the efficient operation of our school and facilitate a set of rules have been put in place to cover all areas.

| In the school                                                                                                     | Outside of the school                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Classroom</li><li>• Corridors</li><li>• Library</li><li>• Halla</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Yard</li><li>• Sports activities</li><li>• School Tours</li><li>• School trips/activities</li></ul> |

### General School Rules:

- Arrive on time for school at 8.40-8.50am. Proceed to the class line in the yard. Cyclists and scooters dismount and park bicycles/scooters safely.
- Enter and leave the building through the appropriate door, walking at all times.
- Follow instructions of all members of staff.
- Treat school property and the property of others with equal care.
- The use of mobile phones and electronic equipment including smart watches and games by children is not permitted without the permission of the teacher.

Breaches of this rule will lead to confiscation of the device, which must then be collected in the office by a parent/guardian.

- Tell the truth and accept responsibility for your actions.
- In keeping with school tradition full school uniform/PE uniform should be worn at the appropriate times.

#### **Rules of Corridor:**

- I will always walk quietly and never run.
- I will let adults pass as I walk on one side of the corridor.
- I will not push or shove in the line.
- I will not take a short cut through the halla.

#### **Rules of Library:**

- I will walk to and from the library.
- I will have clean hands (wash if necessary).
- I will return all books to the place they were taken from on the due date
- I will take care of borrowed books.
- I will be polite to the librarians.

#### **Rules of P.E.:**

- I will wear my track suit with runners. The laces will be tied up properly. I will remove all jewellery etc.
- I will listen and follow instructions.
- I will have a note from home if I am not participating in P.E.
- I will be safe, and I will work / play as a team.
- I appreciate that sport is for fun.

#### **Rules of Yard:**

The school yard is always supervised at break times by three teachers and 10 Special Needs Assistants. The teachers are responsible for any issues arising and implementing this code on yard. When an issue arises, it is dealt with on yard and recorded in the yard book. If necessary, a verbal report is given to the class teacher, who records it on the class behaviour chart.

For consistent misbehaviour a report is made to the Deputy Principal, who decides on the next course of action i.e. dealing with it immediately or sending a note home. School procedures in this area include:

- Yard rotas distributed to all staff and posted on Staff Room Noticeboard
- Teachers on yard responsible for implementation of Code
- Class Buddies from Rang 6 assist classes
- Wet day supervision is increased to one adult per two classrooms

The pupil agrees to -

- I will walk quietly in my line to and from the yard.
- I will be fair, let others join in my games and be co-operative in my play.
- I will not use bad language or call names.

The Pupils are reminded of the need to observe personal space, to be assertive enough to say "no" and accept "no", to distinguish between an accident and a deliberate action and to deal appropriately with name-calling.

If a child is sick they should remain at home. If they attend school, they will be expected to go to yard.

### **5.3 School Opening and Closing Times**

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before 8.40 /8.50 a.m. or after the official closing time of 1.20/1.30: p.m. (infants) and 2.20/2.30 p.m.

### **5.4 School Tours and Outside Activities**

The code of behaviour applies on outings, tours and on all related activities. These activities are designed for the educational, social and recreational benefit of the pupils. However, if individual pupils are deemed to be at risk to themselves or to

other pupils, they can, in exceptional circumstances, be refused permission to participate. Parents will be officially informed by the school. In such cases, alternative arrangements will be made for the pupil in school. Extra-curricular class teachers should communicate their own Code of Behaviour.

## **6. First Steps towards Resolution**

These steps are guidelines for behaviour management, they come from an understanding that behaviour is a communication of a need, and the school will take steps to review the behaviour and its root for the good of the individual child.

The Continuum of Support (Behaviour Emotional and Social Difficulties) must be used at all steps of this document. If behaviour is of a serious nature an immediate referral to the Deputy Principal will be made. Teachers should keep a written record of incidence of misbehaviour together with a record of improvements on the confidential Aladdin system, and the relevant documents from the Continuum of Support (Behaviour Emotional and Social Difficulties). A confidential record will be kept of all meeting held in regard to the behaviour using a code rather than children's names. Where the behaviour is a disagreement between children the teacher will use the Restorative Practice Questions and try to resolve the situation at the earliest time.

- *Implement individual/group behaviour management strategies as per Continuum of Support. See Pg. 113 Continuum of Support Document. My thoughts about school checklist (pg 96)*
- *Look at individual child's behaviour using the following documents.*
- *A Stepwise approach to responding to misbehaviour. Pg. 32.*
- *Use Resource Doc 2 to Learning Environment Checklist.*
- *Frequency Event Recording (pg. 91) or ABC Pg 104.*

**Suggest steps are as follows:**

1. Reasoning with the pupil with discussion and advice on how to improve. This is done at class level with the class teacher. The dignity of the pupil is maintained by speaking on a one-to-one basis in the *outside the classroom* in the corridor. This will involve the Restorative Practice Approach and questions.
2. If the behaviour continues or if teacher feels it necessary to inform a parent a note will go home in the via Aladdin requesting the parent to discuss the behaviour with the child. See school note.
3. If the behaviour continues and where appropriate the class teacher will meet the parents and explain the classroom plan for the behaviour and explain that a classroom support plan may be implemented.
4. Implement a classroom support plan for the child using the above resources.  
(Pg: 70) The child's input should be included in the classroom support plan.

If the behaviour continues, escalates or is of a serious nature the Deputy Principal will be informed, this constitutes a move to school support. The class teacher will communicate this to the parents by phone call or informal meeting and DP who will advise of school-based behaviour management programme.

Referral to the Deputy Principal who may invite the parents to a meeting. The class teacher and support teacher if appropriate may be present at this time. Every effort will be made to resolve the issue by using the Continuum of Support Documents and Restorative Practice. Where appropriate the Deputy will engage outside agencies to support the child.

A Pupil Promise to be signed in the presence of the principal and parents in school.

As a last and final resort full or partial exclusion from school may take place in the event of a serious or gross misbehaviour. (See Sanctions Below)

**SANCTIONS****7.1 Introduction**

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and to discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the

misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development of the child/children involved.

We believe sanctions should be immediate and discrete allowing the school opportunities to make low level response to pupil behaviour, they should be fair, consistent and appropriate to meet individual needs.

- Teachers shall keep a written record on Aladdin of all instances of misbehaviour as well as a record of improvements in the behaviour of disruptive pupils. A record will also be kept of all meetings in relation to an issue or an incident.
- Every effort will be made to have a child with special needs or emotional/behavioural difficulties referred for assessment without delay. Help may be sought, also, from support services within the wider community e.g. National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS), Referral to family GP, Túsla. This stage is conducted with complete confidentiality and consent of parents.
- Full or partial exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from the school may take place in the event of serious or gross misbehaviour. .

## **7.2 SUSPENSION & EXPULSION**

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Parents will be involved at an early stage rather than as a last resort. Communication with parents will be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour. Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents in question will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. If the parents do

not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

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

### 7.3 Protocol for Challenging Children.

In cases of Serious Continuing Problems some / all of the following will be required.

- The Principal / Teacher / Parents communicate through Aladdin, letter, phone and or meet / review behaviour at regular agreed intervals.

If ongoing problems:

- Parents/Guardians requested to seek appointment with GP.
- Parents/Guardians may be requested to give consent for educational/ psychological assessment, or other assessment as appropriate.
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000) All normal channels of communication will have been utilised at this stage. Parents will be notified verbally or in writing.
- Parents may be invited to come to the school to discuss the case
- The Board of Management will be informed if necessary and the parents may be invited to meet with the Chairperson and the Principal.



- The parent may be asked to give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner and if this does not happen, the pupil will be suspended for a period.
- At all times the Principal may review the case in consultation with the teachers and other members of the school community involved.
- In the case of proceeding with suspension or expulsion the Board will notify the Local Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.
- Reinstatement of pupil may apply when an undertaking has been given from the parents, a behaviour plan has been agreed.

## **7.4 SUSPENSION**

Suspension can be defined as:

- Requiring the student to absent herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.

Grounds for Suspension

- Proportionate response to behaviour that is causing concern.
- Seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- Threat to safety.
- Serious damage to property.
- One single incident of serious misbehaviour.

Forms of Suspension

- Immediate suspension
- In-school suspension.
- Automatic suspension
- Rolling suspension (prohibited)
- Informal or unacknowledged suspension/voluntary withdrawal (NEWB frown on this one)



*Procedures based on principles of Natural Justice*

- Right to be heard
  - Right to know what alleged misbehaviour is being investigated
  - Right to know how issue is decided
  - Right to respond
  - If possibility of serious sanction, right to be heard by BOM
  - If there is a dispute about facts, the right to ask questions of the other party or witnesses.
- Right to Impartiality
  - Right to an absence of bias in the decision-maker
  - Impartiality requires that the investigation is separated from the process of decision making so that the decision maker comes to the task with an open mind. (e.g. If principal has been delegated authority by the BOM to suspend e.g. 3days, it would be preferable if a senior member of staff i.e. Deputy Principal does the investigation and the Principal makes the decision as to whether misbehaviour occurred and the level of sanction

*Period of Suspension*

- By the Principal – 3 days
- By the BOM – 5 days to a maximum of 10 days

**REINSTATEMENT- 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.

*Implementing the Suspension*

- Written notification confirming –
- Period of suspension and dates
- Reasons for suspension
- Arrangements for returning to school including any commitments to be entered into by the pupils and parents
- Provision of Appeal to BOM (if provided by the Patron)
- Notification of the right to Section 29 Appeal (Ed. Act) if total no. of days exceeds 20 days.
- Allowances must be made for parents with reading difficulties or Language difficulties.

*Records and Reports*

- Written records should be kept of
- The investigation
- The decision-making process
- The decision and rationale for that decision
- Duration of the suspension and the conditions attaching
- Record of Principal report to BOM
- Report to NEWB if suspension is for 6 school days or more in a year.

## 7.5 Expulsion

*A student is expelled from the school when the BOM makes a decision to permanently exclude her from the school, having complied with the provisions of Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act 2000*

### Grounds for Expulsion

- Behaviour is persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- Continued presence of pupil constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- Pupil responsible for serious damage to property.

The BOM can impose automatic expulsion for certain prescribed behaviours or in exceptional cases for a first offence.

### Example

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

### Procedure for Expulsion

- Detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
- Recommendation by the Principal to the BOM
- BOM considers Principal's recommendation and holds a hearing
- BOM decide whether expulsion is appropriate, EWO is contacted and perhaps a 20-day cooling off period is allowed.
- EWO arranges consultations
- Confirmation of decision to expel/or not.

### Evaluation of Effectiveness

The success of this policy will be based on its effectiveness in our school setting. Regular random surveys will be carried out with the pupils, Student Council, parents and staff. This policy will be reviewed annually at the September meetings of the staff and Board of Management. It will be kept under constant review by the policy committee of the Parents' Association and the Staff and Student Council.

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management.



Chairperson :



Principal/Secretary to the Board of  
Management

Date: 8/9/2025

Date: 8/9/2025