

## **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

*Scoil Eoin aims to foster and provide a happy and secure environment in which each child is cared for and respected as an individual. This caring ethos is an important part of our school policy.*

*To create a pleasant environment where pupils and teachers can go about their work in a positive and progressive way, a sense of co-operation and mutual respect is necessary.*

*We do our utmost to adopt a positive approach, to have a definite strategy to deal with instances of serious breaches of discipline, rare though they may be.*

*The following code, has been formulated by the Principal and the teaching staff in, consultation with the parent body, and has been approved by the Board of Management – in accordance with the requirements under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) which refers to the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in Section 23(2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:*

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

*All possible measures have been taken to ensure existing policy is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008.*

### **Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school**

*In our School Mission Statement we commit ourselves to promoting the well being of all the pupils in our care by developing the spiritual, emotional and physical potential of each individual.*

*We strive towards developing the full potential of every child in communication, literacy, numeracy and relevant life skills.*

## **Aims**

*Scoil Eoin hopes to achieve the following by introducing this policy:*

- *To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement*
- *To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development*
- *To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others*
- *To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences*
- *To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community*
- *To assist parent(s) / guardian(s) and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures*
- *To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school*
- *To provide guidance in regard to behavioural expectations*
- *To develop pupils' self-esteem and promote positive behaviour*
- *To facilitate the education and development of every child*
- *To enable teachers to teach and children to learn without disruption*
- *To recognise that every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour*

## **Content of policy**

The policy is addressed under the following headings.

- 1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school**
- 2. Whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour**
  - **Staff**
  - **Board of Management**
  - **Parent(s) / Guardian(s)**
  - **Pupils**
- 3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour**
  - **Classroom**
  - **Playgrounds**
  - **School related activities**

4. **Rewards and sanctions**
  - **Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour**
  - **Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour**
  - **Involving parent(s) / guardian(s) in the management of problem behaviour**
  - **Managing challenging, aggressive or violent behaviour**
5. **Suspension / Expulsion**
  - **Suspension**
  - **Expulsion**
  - **Appeals**
6. **Keeping records**
  - **School records**
7. **Procedure for notification of a pupil's absence from school**
8. **Reference to other policies**

## **Guidelines for behaviour in the school**

The Education Welfare Act, 2000 Section 23, states that the code of behaviour shall specify “*the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school*”.

The standards of behaviour Scoil Eoin wishes to promote are:

- *Each student is expected to be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults*
- *Each student is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own belongings*
- *Each student is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual*
- *Each student is expected to do his/her best both in school and for homework.*

*In devising the code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. The aim of this code is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated, while acknowledging their right to education in a relatively disruption free environment.*

**Section 23 (4) of the Act further states that, prior to registering a pupil, the principal shall provide the parents of the child with a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour and that the principal ‘ 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’.**

## **2. Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour**

*The elements of a whole school approach to behaviour include*

- *An ethos, policies and practices that are in harmony*
- *A teamwork approach to behaviour*
- *A whole-school approach to curriculum and classroom management*
- *An inclusive and involved school community*
- *A systematic process for planning and reviewing behaviour policy*

*In Scoil Eoin, a whole school approach to the promotion of positive behaviour is implemented by all the school community.*

### **Staff**

Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school. The code offers a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are utilised by teachers.

*Staff are expected to:*

- *support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour;*
- *be cognisant of their duty of care;*
- *create a safe, welcoming environment for each pupil;*
- *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 talents and differences among pupils;*
- *be courteous, consistent and fair;*
- *keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum;*
- *deal appropriately with misbehaviour;*
- *keep a record of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour;*
- *listen, at appropriate times, to pupils' explanations for behaviour;*
- *provide support for colleagues*

*Staff members have the right to:*

- *be treated with respect;*
- *teach in a safe, well-maintained physical environment, relatively free from disruption;*
- *support and co-operation from colleagues, ancillary staff and parents in order to achieve the school's aims and objectives;*
- *appropriate support services to cater for the psychological, emotional and physical needs of the pupils;*
- *be listened to, and participate in decision-making which affects their own work and that of the school in general;*
- *an atmosphere that encourages professional development;*
- *support and professional advice from the board of management, Department of Education and Skills, National Education Welfare Board, National Council for Special Education and National Educational Psychological Service;*
- *appeal in accordance with agreed procedures.*

## **Board of Management:**

**The Board has a duty of care for the children attending the school;**

*The Board has particular responsibility for the ethos of the school, as well as having overall responsibility for school policies.*

- *The Board of Management, therefore, has been consulted in reviewing this Code of Behaviour*
- *The Board ensures that the school has a Code of Behaviour drawn up in consultation with and known to parents.*
- *The Board of Management will support the Code of Behaviour in the school on an ongoing basis.*
- *The Board of Management will support the staff in implementing the Code of Behaviour through the provision of opportunities for staff development.*
- *Procedures are in place for the Board of Management to deal with serious breaches of behaviour. ( as outlined in the “Code of Behaviour Guidelines 2008”).*
- *The Board is aware of its obligations for all members of the school community under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act (2005);*

## **Parent(s) / Guardian(s)**

**It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, pupils and parent(s) / guardian(s).**

**School-Parent co-operation is very important.**

## **Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians**

*Parents/Guardians are expected to:*

- *read the Code of Behaviour and sign the consent form on child's enrolment .*
- *encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves, for others, for their own property and that of others;*
- *ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually;*
- *be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work;*
- *ensure that their children have the correct books and other materials;*
- *support the implementation of school policies*
- *co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others;*
- *communicate to the school problems which may affect a child's behaviour.*
- *be aware of and cooperate with the school's rules and system of rewards and sanctions*
- *attend meetings at the school if requested*
- *help their children with homework and ensure that it is completed*
- *encourage their children to wear their full school uniform*

*Parents and Guardians should:*

- *be treated with respect;*
- *have a safe and welcoming environment for their child;*
- *obtain recognition of 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;*
- *communicate with teachers on matters of mutual interest or concern;*
- *have contact at an early stage to discuss difficulties / problems;*
- *receive progress reports in accordance with agreed school policy;*
- *receive information on school policies and procedures.*
- *be consulted in relation to the school's Code of Behaviour;*
- *appeal in accordance with agreed procedures.*

**The Principal and staff will ensure that parent(s) / guardian(s) are kept well-informed. The school will welcome parent(s) / guardian(s). Parent(s) / guardian(s) are informed when their children have behaviour issues and also when they have displayed commendable behaviour. We ask all parent(s) / guardian(s) to uphold school policies and teachers' decisions. Problems arising over school matters should be discussed with the class teacher initially and subsequently, with the Principal, in a spirit of confidence and trust.**

The Code of Behaviour is provided to all parent(s) / guardian(s) via the Scoil Web site on the enrolment of their child in Scoil Eoin.

## **Students**

- *Students are involved in drafting the Code of Behaviour through the development of class rules and general school rules*
- *Students play an important part in the ongoing implementation of the Code of Behaviour by*
  - *Revising rules for the classroom with the teacher at the start of each term*
  - *Co – operating with the Code of Behaviour in their school life*
  - *Discussing the Code of Behaviour with their parent(s) / guardian(s) when it is being signed by the parents/guardians and at other appropriate times.*

*Students are encouraged to:*

- *attend school regularly and punctually;*
- *work quietly, safely and to the best of their ability at all times;*
- *listen to their teachers and act on instructions / advice;*
- *listen to other students and await their turn to speak;*
- *show respect for all members of the school community;*
- *respect the right of other pupils to learn;*
- *care for their own property;*
- *respect all school property and the property of other pupils;*
- *avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others*
- *avoid all nasty remarks, swearing or name-calling;*
- *include other students in games and activities;*
- *move quietly around the school;*
- *keep the school clean and tidy;*
- *bring the correct materials and books to school;*
- *stay on school premises and within designated areas during school times;*
- *follow school and class rules.*

*Students can expect to:*

- *be treated fairly, consistently and with respect;*
- *be educated and to learn in a relatively disruption-free environment;*
- *be safe from bullying and abuse;*
- *have their individual differences recognised and catered for;*
- *be listened to, and to question, at appropriate times;*
- *make mistakes and to learn from them;*
- *have positive behaviour affirmed;*
- *have misbehaviour dealt with appropriately.*

From the above it is accepted that:

- *The school places greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the long run, give the best results.*
- *The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences*
- *The rules are devised with the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community in mind.*
- *The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal Teacher. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises. A pupil may be referred to the Principal Teacher by a member of staff for serious breaches of discipline, disruptive behaviour or for repeated incidents of minor misbehaviour.*
- *At the start of each school year class and school rules are revised and developed by the teacher in consultation with the children through SPHE lessons. Through our visual arts curriculum the pupils get opportunities to present and display their classroom rules.*
- *The staff insists on honest effort and commitment from the pupils and a high standard of behaviour.*
- *The teaching staff will meet the parent(s) / guardian(s) formally once a year.*
- *The teachers base their work on the philosophy that each student is directed and helped to be the best person he/she is capable of becoming. In order to undertake this task, the teachers need the help and co-operation of the parent(s) / guardian(s) at all times. Parent(s) / guardian(s) are encouraged to help their children to learn, practise good behaviour, and have a positive attitude towards themselves, towards other people, and towards the school.*



- *When the teacher wishes to contact a parent / guardian, he/she may do so by arranging a meeting with the parent / guardian giving some idea of the matter to be discussed. Parent(s) / guardian(s) are welcome to call to the school to discuss children's progress. If a parent / guardian wishes to meet a teacher it is appropriate to make an appointment so that the teacher may give the parent / guardian his/her undivided attention. In this way it will be possible to make arrangements for the class to be supervised in the interest of safety and the confidentiality of the matter for discussion.*
- *The Code of Behaviour caters for children who may present behavioural difficulties arising from their individual special education needs through use of specific strategies outlined in their I.E.P. with behavioural targets.*

*Every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed child referred for psychological assessment without delay.*

*Help will be sought from the support services within the wider community, e.g. Community Care Services provided by the Health Boards and N.E.P.S.*

*The school's SPHE curriculum is used to support the Code of Behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship.*

### **3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour**

#### **Classroom**

*The positive strategies we use to effectively manage behaviour in the classroom include:*

- *Behavioural expectations in each class that are consistent with the ethos as expressed in the Code of Behaviour and which set a positive atmosphere for learning are promoted on an ongoing basis*
- *Student input in devising the class rules*
- *Teachers ensure that students understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave*
- *Good behaviour is acknowledged and rewarded and sanctions for misbehaviour are clearly understood*
- *Student interest and motivation is sustained through a variety of activities and methodologies.*
- *Timetabling to assist the students in being organised through adhering to a timetable, with some flexibility.*

## **Playground(s)**

- *Playground rules which emphasise positive behaviour are clearly understood by all staff and students*
- *Supervision is maintained in the playground at all breaks and clear playing boundaries are established*
- *On wet days children remain in their class room under teacher supervision*
- *Procedures are in place to manage incidents of misbehaviour: e.g. time-out, withdrawal of privileges.*
- *Parents will be contacted in the event of disrespect to staff & pupils, particularly in the case of repeated occurrence.*

## **School related activities**

*Standards and rules contained in the Code of Behaviour will apply in any situation where pupils are still the responsibility of the school e.g. school tours, games and extra-curricular activities and other school-linked events.*

## **4. Rewards and Sanctions**

### **Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour**

*Good behaviour is recognised and acknowledged by both the class teacher and the Principal and good reports are communicated verbally.*

### **Strategies to Affirm Desirable Behaviour**

*Strategies for Individual Pupils may include:*

- *Certificates or Merit Awards*
- *Comments and "smiley" faces on children's work*
- *Stickers, badges or ink stamps in book*
- *Special activity*
- *Work displayed.*
- *Quality Circle Time.*

*Class/Group Rewards may include:*

- *Class treat*
- *Positive comment from principal*
- *Outdoor activities*
- *Work exhibited*
- *Class prizes*

### **Undesirable Behaviour in Students**

*Some misdemeanours include:*

- *being unkind to any member of the school community;*
- *speaking out of turn, interrupting others and being inattentive;*
- *preventing others from learning;*
- *being unwilling or unable to abide by accepted conventions;*
- *defacing or destroying other pupils' belongings or school property;*
- *directing abusive language at any members of the school community;*
- *acting aggressively or with violence towards members of the school community;*

- *refusing to co-operate with instructions and advice;*

## **Strategies and Sanctions for Dealing with undesirable behaviour**

The strategies used in Scoil Eoin in response to incidents of undesirable behaviour may include the following:

- *reprimand*
- *reasoning with the pupil*
- *make it clear that it is the behaviour which is being criticised and not the person;*
- *sanctions should be logical, and leave the child's dignity intact;*
- *sanctions should be proportionate to the misdemeanour committed e.g;*  
*temporary separation from peers;*  
*extra work either in school or for homework;*  
*detention at breaks*  
*time out in another class*
- *early escalation to severe sanctions should be avoided;*
- *avoid where possible whole class/whole group sanctions;*
- *encourage children to contribute to the solving of behaviour problems;*
- *apply rules consistently but take account of individual circumstances;*
- *avoid where possible, sanctions which involve withdrawal from particular activities;*
- *teachers should keep a record of continuous inappropriate behaviour and all instances of serious unacceptable behaviour;*
- *design a behaviour management plan;*
- *inform parents as soon as difficulties develop with regard to behaviour*

## **Challenging Behaviour**

Challenging behaviour may be described as:

**"behaviour of such intensity, frequency and duration that the physical safety of the person or others is likely to be placed in serious jeopardy or behaviour which is likely to seriously limit or delay access to, and use of ordinary facilities"**

*In general terms, teachers accept that challenging behaviour in the school context encompasses behaviour that:*

- *interferes with the student's own and/or other students' learning;*
- *challenges the day to day functioning of the school;*
- *challenges the right of staff and pupils to a safe and orderly environment;*
- *has a duration, frequency, intensity or persistence that is beyond the normal range of what schools tolerate;*
- *results in the student being unresponsive to the usual range of stereotypical behaviour interventions used by the school for pupil misbehaviour.*

*Examples of different types of challenging behaviour include:*

- *aggressive behaviour, which can include pushing, punching, kicking, biting, scratching and threatening behaviour;*
- *disruptive behaviour, which can include screaming, tantrums, verbal abuse, non co-operation, running away;*
- *destructive behaviour, which can include destruction of property and the environment;*
- *withdrawn behaviour, which can include failure to respond, or avoidance of people or activities.*
- *self-injurious behaviour, including head banging, scratching and poking.*

**Sanctions as outlined above will be applied to help students change undesirable behaviour**

- *A staged approach is used so that initially misbehaviour is dealt with by class teacher by way of warning and/or advice but, if it is more serious or persistent, the parent(s) / guardian(s) may be involved.*
- *The Principal will be involved in cases of serious misbehaviour. The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be involved at the discretion of the Principal in cases of serious misbehaviour.*
- *Scoil Eoin ensures consistency in the application of all sanctions in line with fair procedures as outlines in the “Code of Behaviour Guidelines 2008” Teachers shall keep a record of all instances of serious misbehaviour as well as a record of improvements in the behaviour of disruptive students.*

*Before resorting to serious sanctions, e.g. suspension, the normal channels of communication between school and parent(s) / guardian(s) will be utilised.*

*Parent(s) / guardian(s) will be involved at an early stage, rather than as a last resort.*

**Involving parent(s) / guardian(s) in management of problem behaviour**

*Communication with parent(s) / guardian(s) will be verbal or by letter, depending on the circumstances. The parent(s) / guardian(s) concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child’s case.*

*For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension will be considered. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour, depending on circumstances. Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parent(s)/ guardian(s) will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson the Principal Teacher and the class teacher.*

*If the parent(s) / guardian(s) do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may have to be suspended for a temporary period.*

*Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130(5) of the Rules for National Schools.*

## **Managing aggressive or violent misbehaviour**

*Strategies used for dealing with serious emotional and behavioural problems are:*

- *Children who are emotionally disturbed are immediately referred for psychological assessment.*
- *Through the Special Educational Needs Organiser, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Service Executive, NEPS, ...*

*In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil himself/herself or the safety of other pupils or staff, immediate contact would be made with the parent(s) / guardian(s) and an immediate suspension may be put in place.*

## **5. Suspension / Expulsion**

*Scoil Eoin implements the procedures in relation to Suspension and Expulsion as laid out in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008*

*{ See Appendix 1, 2, 3. }*

- *Ch. 10 Suspensions and expulsions: legal and procedural requirements*
- *Ch. 11 Suspension*
- *Ch. 12 Expulsion*

### **Suspension**

*Refer to Appendix 2 (pages 70-78, “Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools”, NEWB, 2008)*

### **Expulsion**

*Refer to Appendix 3 (pages 80-87, “Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools”, NEWB, 2008)*

### **Appeals**

*Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science against some decisions of the Board of Management, including (1) permanent exclusion from a school and (2) suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year. Accordingly, schools should advise parent(s) / guardian(s) of this right of appeal and associated timeframe if it has been decided to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent / guardian or student. (See Appendix 4: Circular 22/02)*

- *The parent(s)/guardian(s) are informed of their entitlement to appeal a decision of the Board of Management in relation to suspension or expulsion by the Chairperson of the Board of Management. (See Appendix 2; 11.7)*
- *The Chairperson of the Board of management will prepare a response if and when an appeal is being investigated by the Dept. of Education and Science (Appendix 4, Circular 22/02 – Processing of an Appeal)*

## **6. Keeping records**

- *Teachers maintain records in relation to misbehaviour when necessary and the Principal is kept informed of all serious misbehaviour.*
- *When misbehaviour is reported to the Principal, the child is interviewed by the Principal and written records will be kept when warranted. These written records will be stored in “Incidents File” in the Principal’s office.*

## **7. Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school**

*Parent(s) / guardian(s) are expected to communicate the reasons for the non-attendance of their child by:*

- *Sending a signed, dated explanation of absence when the pupil returns to school.*
- *All absence notes are kept by the class teacher until the end of the school year.*

**(See Attendance Policy of Scoil Eoin.)**

## **8. Reference to other Policies**

*Other school policies that have a bearing on the Code of Behaviour include:*

- *SPHE plan*
- *Anti-bullying*
- *Positive Staff Working Relations. Bullying / Harassment Policy*
- *Enrolment*
- *Data Protection and Record keeping*
- *Home / School links*
- *Health & Safety*
- *Equal Opportunity / Gender Equity*
- *Attendance*
- *Positive School Atmosphere*
- *Supervision*
- *Substance Use*

## **Success Criteria**

*Some practical indicators of the success of the policy*

- *Observation of positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment*
- *Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers*
- *Positive feedback from teachers, parents and students*

## **Roles and Responsibility**

*People who have particular responsibilities for this policy include*

- *Principal*
- *Class teacher*
- *Support teachers,*
- *Parent(s) / guardian(s)*
- *Pupils*
- *Education Welfare Officer*
- *Board of Management*

## **Timetable for Review**

*The operation of this new policy will be reviewed and, if necessary, amended within three years.*

## **Ratification & Communication**

*This policy has been reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Eoin .*