



## **Code of Behaviour**

### **Introductory Statement**

Burnfort National School aims to provide a happy, secure, friendly, learning environment, where children, parents, teachers, special needs assistants, ancillary staff and Board of Management work in partnership. Each individual is valued, encouraged and respected for their uniqueness and facilitated to reach their full potential in a positive atmosphere. This policy was created in March 2011. It is revised and updated on a regular basis or as is necessary. The previous document titled 'Behavioural and Disciplinary Guidelines' was used as a basis for this policy.

The outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) has necessitated that the Code of Behaviour be updated in compliance with the requirements of NPHET, DES and HSE guidance on protection from coronavirus (Covid-19).

### **Rationale**

Under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) schools are obliged 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:

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

Burnfort National School has deemed it necessary to review and update our Code of Behaviour to ensure compliance with the following legislation and guidelines:

- Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2013
- Children First National Guidance 2015
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017.

- Data Protection 1998 -2018 and EU General Data Personal Regulation 2018 (GDPR)
- Department of Education Roadmap for the full return to school
- HSE / HPSC Covid-19 ‘Interim Recommendations for the re-opening of schools and educational facilities.

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

To maintain the positive atmosphere in the school, which involves high standards of behaviour and discipline, we expect the children to observe the following set of guidelines. These standards will aspire to create a harmonious environment, where the children’s potential is nurtured and co-operation is at all times encouraged between staff, parents and the pupils. The motto of our school is seen as inherent to the implementation of this policy- **‘Treat others as you would like them to treat you’**.

### **Aims**

- To allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious environment.
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline recognising the differences between pupils and the need to accommodate these differences.
- To enhance the learning environment where pupils can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- To ensure the safety and well -being of all members of the school community by encouraging an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- To enable parents/guardians and pupils to understand the systems and procedures that form our Code of Behaviour and to ensure their co-operation and support 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 protect the health and safety of all pupils, staff and their families by strict adherence to the new procedures and protocols to promote social distancing, respiratory and hand hygiene.

### **Content of policy**

In our Code of Behaviour, we address the following:

1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school
2. Whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour – roles and responsibilities
3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour
4. Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour
5. Suspension / Expulsion
6. Keeping records

7. Procedure for notification of a pupil's absence from school
8. Reference to other policies

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

The Education Welfare Act, Section 23, states that the Code of Behaviour shall specify “the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school”.

The school recognises that there are times and factors in a child's life that may influence their behaviour. These will be taken into consideration and the child.

In compliance with Section 23 (4) of the Education Act, prior to registering a pupil, parents/guardians will be issued with a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour and on application, parents/guardians will be asked to confirm in writing that they accept the school's policy ‘and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code’.

These are the general guidelines for behaviour based on the characteristic spirit of Burnfort National School. To maintain the positive atmosphere in the school, which involves high standards of behaviour and discipline, we expect the children to observe the following set of guidelines:

1. The acceptable method of addressing teachers is Mr, Mrs, Miss, or Teacher or a Mhúinteóir. Other visiting adults should be addressed as Fr., Mr., Mrs, Miss or Sir. It is also expected that children be respectful in their dealings with all staff & visitors at all times. Mannerly terms such as please, thank you, excuse me, pardon, sorry, may I? a bhfuil cead agam, go raibh maith agat, are regarded as standard. We consider unacceptable, any short or back-answering, including a refusal to carry out instructions. In other words, any form of disrespect or defiance will not be tolerated.
2. Everyone should be in the schoolyard not later than 9.10 a.m. when the bell is rung so that all pupils can be assembled ready to commence class. Play is not permitted at this time. Children may not leave the school before 1.50p.m. (Infants) and 2.50 p.m. (1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Classes) except with written parental request and accompanied by parent/guardian/adult assigned to convey child from school. The parent/guardian first signs the “Signing-Out Book” held in the individual classrooms. Parents, please note that there will be no supervision before 9.00 a.m. or after 2.50 p.m. If parent/guardian has arranged collection of their child/children by another adult, notification of same is required by phone or in writing. *(Some procedures have temporarily changed in line with our COVID response plan.)*
3. Children cannot leave the school premises or grounds between 9.10a.m. and 2.50p.m. except in the company of a teacher on school related activities only or when accompanied by a parent/guardian.

4. Over boisterous or rough play is to be avoided during breaks. The use of balls is only in permitted areas at “am lón” (12.30-1.00) when the weather permits. “No ball Thursday” runs at am lón every week and may be altered by teachers on yard supervision.
5. For safety reasons, all classes are assigned a play area per class grouping. This designated area may change location on the instruction of the principal or the teacher on yard duty. In dry weather pupils may be allowed into the school field. Children should go out to play in fine weather. Play ceases when the bell rings which signals the end of break time. Children are required to walk, not run, to their assigned assembly points. Depending on the weather and at the discretion of the teacher on yard duty Physical Education equipment may be brought onto the play area or the grass area.
6. In keeping with the promotion of gentleness as a quality, children are required to line up quietly when entering or leaving classrooms and to avoid jostling of any kind. Playing or running in classroom, hallways and foyer is strictly forbidden. There are very obvious safety reasons for these requirements.
7. Junior and Senior Infant children are to be collected at 1.50 p.m. sharp by specified adults at the main entrance gate. Children in 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> classes remain inside the school wall until a parent/guardian arrives to collect them at 2.50 p.m. Children travelling on the school bus, line up inside the school foyer until school bus arrives at 2.50 p.m. On its arrival they walk in single file to the collection point accompanied by the teacher on yard duty. *(Some procedures have temporarily changed in line with our COVID response plan.)*
8. Respect for other children is expected among all pupils. Abusive, rough play, or bad language is forbidden. Personal comments on clothing, possessions, ability and family that are calculated to hurt are totally discouraged. Spitting at others is considered to be physical abuse. Nicknames or surname calling is forbidden. Due care must be taken to request items properly from other children when required and to return them promptly. Parents and children reserve the right to refuse lending of certain items. Damaging or stealing property is regarded as very alien in our atmosphere here, and so must be replaced if the situation ever arises (this includes books on school book rental scheme).
9. It must be stated clearly that Bullying in any form, be it physical or verbal, and blackmailing is totally unacceptable in this school. This school is following the Department of Education Guidelines in dealing with Bullying.
10. Children are expected to have all books and copies properly covered and cared for and to present all written work in a neat and ordered fashion as instructed in school. All items should be clearly marked with the child’s name.

11. Children are required to make the best effort possible to learn and to carry out tasks assigned to them as their general ability allows. Constant talking and shouting among children can be a source of annoyance in teaching generally but especially in mixed classes. A particular class not being directly taught by a teacher must occupy itself quietly with work specified or when this is done, by other acceptable activities such as a teacher designed task, picture drawing for stories, other choice exercises in written work, research for stories or meaningful library reading. Talking at this stage is disruptive to the other class or classes being taught and cannot be tolerated.
12. Children are required to keep a proper record of homework in their journal (Senior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> Classes) and these are to be signed by a parent or supervising adult nightly. A written explanation should be given for the absence of work. Learning given is expected to be reasonably examined at home. Work missed through absence must be done at home or when returning to school depending on the reason for the absence. Children in all classes are required to do homework on week nights (Monday to Thursday inclusive). They are exempt from homework at the weekends and on occasions of school celebrations (at the discretion of the class teacher/Principal).
13. Children should not be withdrawn from the school without prior written notice (hand-written or via email to relevant teacher) except in an emergency or appointments deemed necessary. This is to avoid unnecessary disruption to a child's learning and also to the work in the classroom. When withdrawing children from school the parent/guardian is to sign the "**Signing Out Book**" (kept in individual classrooms). This is a record of who collected the child, at what time and the reason for collection.
14. It is vitally important that children display great care and respect for all school property including tables, chairs, library books, equipment and teachers' personal property. The grounds and classrooms should be kept litter free (in line with our Green Schools initiatives), as there are adequate bins and boxes provided in the classrooms for this purpose. Toilet areas are to be kept clean.
15. We are a health promoting school and we encourage healthy eating. We express an interest in what children eat, through our ***Whole School Food Policy***, because to learn well and maintain proper energy during the day, we need to eat a balanced diet. Please note that a small snack should be eaten for the 10-minute break at mid-morning and the main lunch should be eaten at 12.30 p.m. Lunch must be kept in a proper lunch box, and child's name displayed on same. A small 'fun size treat' is allowed on a Friday to promote a balanced diet. Chewing gum is absolutely banned from the school. Treats may be allowed at various times throughout the year. Pupils from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> classes inclusive are permitted to eat fruit at 2 O'clock. All pupils

are advised to bring a reusable bottle of water clearly labelled with child's name with them to school filled only with water in line with School Healthy Eating Policy.

16. All children are required to keep their uniforms as neat as possible; uniform consists of school crested tracksuit top and matching tracksuit pants along with a plain white roundneck tshirt. All parts of the uniforms should be clearly marked with the child's name. During spells of warm weather, children are permitted to wear school shorts in place of tracksuit leggings.
17. A high standard of cleanliness is requested. The wash area in the toilets is provided with soap and hand towels for this purpose. Children should have their hair checked for lice regularly and the proper treatment administered, as stated on the Health Authority Booklet or on the advice of a chemist. Children are permitted to wear small stud earrings in their ear lobe only.
18. Children are not permitted to use mobile phones, in school, or to have them in their possession during school hours or on school trips.
19. Children are not permitted to enter or play in the school yard or school field, after 2.50 p.m. in the afternoon or during the weekends and holidays. Entry to School property during these times constitutes trespassing. This is by order of the Board of Management of Burnfort N.S.
20. At present if a child is absent for 20 days or more from school the principal, by law, is required to inform Tusla, the Child & Family Agency. If a child is absent due to illness a medical certificate confirming same should be obtained and given to the school Secretary. Any other absences should be notified in writing. All these communications will be recorded and filed for each class. Absences will be recorded online.
21. School Outings: During your child's years in primary school, there will be occasions when he/she will be taken on short school trips to the locality e.g., nature trails, maths trails, the church, visits to historical places of interest etc. Children will undertake these outings, weather permitting, on foot, under the supervision of their teacher. These excursions will be at the discretion of their class teacher and principal. Children will be expected to behave in an orderly manner, at all times, on these occasions, and are to observe behaviour rules outlined by the class teacher. Children will also be taken on school tours, theatrical performance, to matches etc., again they are required to be mannerly, well behaved and follow the behaviour guidelines outlined by the teacher/teachers.
22. Annual Parent/Teacher meetings take place usually in the first term, giving parents opportunity to discuss their child's' educational progress with his/her teacher. If a parent wishes to discuss a school related issue with a teacher/the principal during the school year

they are requested to make an appointment with the teacher by contacting the school at (022) 29438 or via email to relevant teacher.

## **2. Whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour – roles and responsibilities**

Staff members, supported by the Board of Management, adopt a positive approach to discipline within the school. Children are encouraged and praised for their efforts in maintaining discipline. 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.

### **Staff**

- At the beginning of each school year all teachers will discuss the Code of Behaviour and devise a set of positive class rules.
- The school's Social Personal and Health Education (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.
- A positive and consistent approach will be adopted by all staff to rewards and sanctions
- The staff will ensure they communicate to parents/guardians any concerns in relation to their child's behaviour and well-being.
- Behavioural concerns may be brought to the attention of the pupils in class situations by the principal or teacher. Similar information may be conveyed to parents in person, by phone, letter or note home
- The Code of Behaviour is given to each family upon enrolment. It is also available on the school website.

### **Board of Management**

The Board of Management provides a supportive role to the principal and the teaching staff in the positive implementation of the school Code of Behaviour. The Board of Management actively promotes proactive staff involvement in behavioural concerns and to this end will fund where appropriate, opportunities for staff development in the area of understanding behaviour and its management.

## **Parents**

Burnfort National School strives to foster a positive relationship between staff and parents. Parents are actively involved in the school in a variety of ways e.g., school activities, Board of Management, Parents' Committee, Health Promoting School Committee etc. Parental support is vital for the promotion of positive behaviour and the maintenance of high standards of behaviour.

The school therefore, requests that parents:

- Read this policy and share the contents with their children.
- Give supportive co-operation to school staff in the interest and benefit of their children.
- Co-operate with the school's system of rewards and sanctions.
- Ensure children are punctual and are dropped off and collected on time.
- Ensure children's attendance is regular. (The school is legally obliged to notify the Education Welfare Services in TUSLA when a child is absent for more than 20 school days annually.
- Give a written explanation prior to a pre-arranged absence or following a child's absence. Explanation may also be given by phoning the school office.
- Discuss any issues, other than minor matters, at mutually agreed pre-arranged meetings.
- Attend parent/guardian teacher meetings as necessary.
- Communicate any issue, which troubles you or your child at an early stage.
- Help children with homework, ensuring that it is completed.
- Ensure children have the necessary books and materials for school.
- Ensure children have an adequate lunch in accordance with the school's healthy lunch policy.
- Ensure children wear their school uniform.
- Observe and respect all social distancing protocols when dropping off or collecting their children from the school
- Encourage their child to adhere to social distancing, hand and respiratory hygiene guidelines
- Monitor their child closely for signs and symptoms of illness and keep child at home if they show any signs of infectious illness
- Ensure that meetings with school are arranged in advance through school office
- Ensure that school has up to date contact information for parents/guardians and other family members who may be required to collect their child, should symptoms appear during the school day
- Answer telephone call from school/call school back promptly and have arrangements in place for prompt collection of their child should it be required

## **Pupils**

Pupils play an important role in the ongoing implementation of the Code of Behaviour by:



- Being involved in discussing and choosing class rules.
- Understanding the need for these rules.
- Discussing, monitoring and reviewing aspects of the Code of Behaviour through classroom discussions and at assemblies.

Each pupil is expected:

- to be well behaved and to show respect and consideration for other children and adults.
- to show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own belongings.
- to do his or her best in school and for homework
- to obey the instructions of school staff.
- to follow social distancing protocols as directed by their teachers
- to practise good respiratory and cough etiquette
- to practise good hand hygiene as demonstrated by their teacher
- to use hand sanitiser, wipes, soap, hand towels for the purpose(s) for which they are intended.
- to show due care when using sanitising dispensers, hand towel dispensers and soap dispensers.

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

#### **Classroom**

Behavioural expectations are established in each class that are consistent with the ethos as expressed in the Code of Behaviour and which sets a positive atmosphere for learning. Pupil input is enlisted in devising the class rules. Teachers ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave.

Classroom Rules will include the following:

- Treat others with respect and kindness.
- Always try your best.
- Be honest. Tell the truth.
- Respect the belongings of others. Share.
- Do not interrupt the teacher or others when speaking. Work quietly.
- Keep your desk area neat and tidy.
- Remain in your seat if a teacher has to leave the room.
- Wear your uniform.
- In the interest of safety, stud earrings only to be worn.
- Facial piercings are not allowed.
- In the interest of safety, no rings are to be worn on any children's fingers.

- Practise good respiratory and cough etiquette.
- Practise good hand hygiene.
- Observe social distancing

Good behaviour is recognised and acknowledged in our school. Children are encouraged and praised for their efforts in maintaining discipline. The following list is a selection of strategies which may be used by individual teachers to affirm and promote positive behaviour in the classroom:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment on a child's exercise book
- A visit to another class or the principal for commendation
- Praise in front of class group
- Awards e.g., Star of the Week, Student of the Week, Best Listener, Most Improved Student,
- Individual/Group points systems e.g., Class dojo, class jars, raffle tickets, class charts etc.
- Stamps and stickers on children's work
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- Written or verbal communication with parents/guardians
- A small gift/prize
- Homework Pass
- Golden Time – DVD, treat, extra PE/Art time

### **The Schoolyard**

The following strategies are implemented to promote good behaviour, to prevent behavioural difficulties and to deal with incidences of unacceptable behaviour in the school yard.

- At both break times, teachers are on duty in the playground, assisted by Special Needs Assistants (SNAs).
- While the SNAs assist with yard supervision the teacher on duty is responsible for disciplinary matters and SNAs will refer children to the teacher.
- In the interest of social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic, each class is allocated an area in the playground to which pupils must stay within.
- In the event of misbehaviour during yard time, the teacher on duty will address the issue. Time out stations may be located in the yard and may be used at the discretion of the supervising teacher.
- Classroom teachers will be informed of misbehaviour by supervising teacher

- Where deemed necessary, an Incident Form may be filled in by the supervising teacher and signed by Principal.
- The principal will be informed of serious incidents of misbehaviour. Parents will be notified if deemed necessary.
- All pupils must adhere to the following playground rules:
  - Move around allocated area with due care
  - Play safely at all times
  - Do not engage in rough play
  - Follow staff instructions

#### **Other areas in the school environment**

- Pupils walk in single file to and from their classroom keeping to the right on corridors.
- Pupils should move about the school in a quiet orderly manner.
- Pupils should not shout on corridors, in the toilets or throughout school building.
- Pupils should not engage in rough play in the corridors, toilets or while moving classes or outside.
- Pupils should ensure that their coats, bags etc. are stored properly in classrooms.
- Pupils must show respect for school property and the property of others at all times.
- Courteous behaviour (e.g., standing back to let adults by at doorways, greeting teachers and other adults) is encouraged.

#### **School related activities**

The standards and rules contained in the Code of Behaviour apply in any situation where the pupil, although outside the school, is still the responsibility of the school, e.g., school tours, games/extra-curricular activities and attendance at events organised by the school.

#### **4. Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour**

Despite the best efforts of schools, inappropriate behaviour happens. Even minor breaches of the code of behaviour can be disruptive, particularly if they are persistent. Serious misbehaviour can have damaging and long-lasting effects including disruption of the student's own learning and the learning of others. It can cause distress and anxiety or even pose a threat to the safety of students and teachers.

Three levels of unacceptable behaviour are recognised by Burnfort National School. They are Minor, Serious and Gross misbehaviours.

It is important to note that the lists below are not exhaustive and that other unacceptable behaviours may be added or included at the school's discretion

### **Examples of Minor Misbehaviour**

- Disrupting class work by:
  - Talking when teacher or another pupil is talking, interrupting the teacher, shouting out answers, talking over another pupil, talking out of turn
  - Pupil not listening to instructions, fiddling with stationary etc.
  - Laughing/ sniggering/sneering at other children, “giddiness” and giggling
  - Throwing objects, making noise, swinging on chairs
  - Getting out of seat or moving around the room without permission
  - Disobeying teacher's instructions
  - Carelessness with books and stationery, scribbling/drawing on school books
  - Drawing on tables, being careless with another pupil's property
  - Commenting negatively on another pupil's work
  - Excluding others
  - Leaving litter in and around the school.
  - Lack of compliance with school policy on jewellery and uniform.
  - Being discourteous or unmannerly.
  - Name calling
  - Gestures of defiance and using bad language
  - Unruliness in the classroom, in corridor or anywhere on school grounds.
  - Deliberately not abiding by social distancing rules,
  - Deliberately not following respiratory and cough etiquette
  - Deliberate misuse of sanitiser, wipes, soap, hand towels etc.

### **Examples of Serious Misbehaviour**

- Multiple incidents of any minor misbehaviours
- Negative physical contact e.g., pushing, hitting, biting, spitting, kicking, tripping up, pulling hair, punching etc.
- Deliberately coughing, sneezing on another child or member of staff.
- Being disrespectful to the teacher/ ignoring the teacher
- Using inappropriate language
- Stealing from classmates/teacher
- Screaming/ shouting at another child/teacher

- Deliberate exclusion of peers
- Spreading rumours/lies about another pupil/member of staff
- Name calling or use of derogatory language related specifically to Covid-19.
- Threatening/ intimidating peers
- Throwing objects at peers
- Telling lies
- Bullying – physical, verbal, cyber (Ref: Anti-Bullying Policy)
- Consistently interrupting/distracting others in the class
- Consistently not doing homework
- Refusal to do work assigned
- Refusal to co-operate with the teacher
- Damaging school property
- Using mobile phone in school
- Leaving school grounds without permission during school day

#### **Examples of Gross Misbehaviour**

- Multiple incidents of any serious misbehaviours
- Deliberate and aggressive coughing on another child or member of staff despite previous warnings.
- Deliberate spitting on another child or staff member.
- Serious assault on another pupil/staff member e.g., physical, verbal
- Serious damage to school property
- Serious theft of school/staff property
- Consistent bullying of another pupil e.g., emotional, physical, cyber

#### **Responding to unacceptable behaviour**

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 23, states that a school must outline ‘the measures that may be taken if a student fails to observe the standards of behaviour that the school has outlined’.

Teachers will use their professional judgement and their knowledge of the child and the particular circumstances of the behaviour or incident in responding to unacceptable behaviour and in selecting the appropriate sanction. The sanction will be proportionate to the behaviour or incident in question. It may include:

1. Reasoning with pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve

3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class
4. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened
5. Loss of privileges
6. Loss of playtime in yard
7. Time out time, either in the classroom or in another room.
8. Teacher communicating with parents
9. Referral to Principal
10. Principal communicating with parents
11. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular22/02 and Education Welfare Act 2000)

### **Bullying**

Children First National Guidance 2017 outlines that bullying can be defined as repeated aggression – whether it be verbal, psychological or physical – that is conducted by an individual or group against others. Children First National Guidance 2017 describes bullying as behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating, and occurs mainly among children in social environments such as schools. It includes behaviours such as physical aggression, cyber bullying, damage to property, intimidation, isolation/exclusion, name calling, malicious gossip and extortion. Bullying can also take the form of identity abuse based on gender, sexual preference, race, ethnicity and religious factors. With developments in modern technology, children can also be the victims of non-contact bullying, via mobile phones, the internet and other personal devices.

Children First National Guidance 2017 and the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2013 provide that in cases of serious instances of bullying where the behaviour is regarded as possibly abusive, a referral may need to be made to TUSLA or A Garda Síochána as appropriate. Where school personnel have concerns about a child arising from alleged bullying behaviour but are not sure whether to report the matter to TUSLA, the designated liaison person shall seek advice from TUSLA in accordance with the procedures set out in Chapter 5 of Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post- Primary Schools 2017.

### **5. Suspension and Expulsion**

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents/guardians will be utilised. Communication with parents/guardians may be verbal or in writing depending on the circumstances.

### **Suspension**

Suspension is defined as “requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days”

- For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered.
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as gross misbehaviour.
- The principles of ensuring the right to be heard, and the right to impartiality apply in all cases.
- Parents/guardians of a pupil will be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation before a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed.
- Parents/guardians concerned 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/guardians will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal.
- If the parents/guardians 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, pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information.
- Suspension will be in accordance with 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 of Management delegates authority to the principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents/guardians.
- Where a decision is taken to suspend a pupil, the principal will notify the parents/guardians and the pupil in writing of the decision to suspend.
- Parents/Guardians have the right to appeal the principal’s decision to suspend a pupil to the school’s Board of Management.
- Following or during a period of suspension, parents/guardians may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school.
- Parents/guardians 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.
- Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents/guardians may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007.

### **Record Keeping in Relation to Suspensions**

In the case of the suspension of a pupil formal written records will be kept of:

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

The principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management, including the reasons for and the duration of each suspension. The principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the Education Welfare Service reporting guidelines (Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, section 21(4)(a)).

### **Expulsion**

A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude the student from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rules for National Schools, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (Education Welfare Service TUSLA).

Before expelling a pupil, the Board of Management shall notify the local Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

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

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

Step 1: A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.

- In investigating an allegation, in line with fair procedures, the principal should:
  - inform the pupil and his/her parents/guardians in writing about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
  - give parents and pupil every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.



Step 2: A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.

- Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the principal makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.
- The principal should:
  - inform the parents/guardians and the pupil that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
  - ensure that parents/guardians have records of:
    - the allegations against the student
    - the investigation
    - and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
  - provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as given to the parents and/or guardians
  - notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing
  - advise the parents/guardians that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
  - ensure that parents/guardians have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

Step 3: Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.

- The Board will:
  - review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures.
  - undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case
  - hold a hearing where the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student.
  - allow the principal and the parents/guardians to put their case in each other's presence
  - allow each party to question the evidence of other party directly
  - ensure that the principal and parents/guardians are not present for the Board's deliberations

Step 4: Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing

- Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled, the Board will:
  - notify the Educational Welfare Officer (TUSLA) in writing of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion.
  - inform the parents/guardians in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process.
  - inform parents/guardians that the Board of Management is writing to inform the Educational Welfare Officer.
  - not expel the pupil before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)).

#### Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

- Within twenty days of receipt of a notification from a Board of Management of its opinion that a student should be expelled, the Educational Welfare Officer must:
  - make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the principal, the parents and the student, and anyone else who may be of assistance
  - convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 24).

#### Step 6: Confirmation of the decision to expel

- Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management should formally confirm the decision to expel.

#### **Appeals**

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act, 1998 Section 29). An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a student.

#### **Review of use of expulsion**

The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school, and to ensure that expulsion is used appropriately.

#### **Pupils with Special Needs**

All pupils are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However, the school recognises that pupils with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Planning to encourage positive behaviour will be included in the pupil's School Support (Plus) Plan, which is drawn up in consultation with parents/guardians and the class teacher, special education teacher and/or the

principal. Staff will work closely with the home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times.

Professional advice from psychological assessments will be taken into consideration.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

## **6. Keeping Records**

The school BoM is a data controller of personal data relating to its past, present and future staff, students, parents/guardians and other members of the school community. All such data is treated in accordance with the Data Protection legislation and the terms of our Data Protection Policy.

Data relating to individuals will only be processed in a manner consistent with the purposes for which it was gathered. Information will only be disclosed on a 'need to know' basis, and access to it will be strictly controlled.

In line with the school's policy on record keeping and data protection legislation, records are kept in relation to pupils' behaviour both at class and school level. These records are written in a factual and impartial manner.

## **7. Procedure for notification of a pupil's absence from school**

In co-operation with parents and guardians, we strive to help each pupil achieve his/her full potential and so we will promote a positive attitude towards good attendance and punctuality.

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (2)(e) states that the code of behaviour must specify, "the procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school." Section 18 stipulates that parents must notify the school of a student's absence and the reason for this absence.

## **8. Reference to Other Policies**

- |                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ▪ Child Safeguarding Policy | ▪ Health & Safety           |
| ▪ Anti-bullying Policy      | ▪ Special Educational Needs |
| ▪ SPHE Plan                 | ▪ Dignity at Work Policy    |
| ▪ Data Protection Policy    | ▪ Acceptable Use Policy     |
| ▪ Healthy Eating Policy     |                             |

## **Success Criteria**

- Observation of positive and improved behaviour in classrooms, corridors, playground and school environment.
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents/guardians and pupils.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

The staff in the school will co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of this policy. The class teacher is responsible for the monitoring of the children's behaviour in the classroom and while staff on yard duty rota will do same during break times. The class teacher also refers any serious breach of behaviour to the principal.

In cases of serious breaches in behaviour the principal will be informed of such. He may, at his discretion, inform the parents of the pupil involved. Continuous breaches by a pupil will necessitate the principal informing the parents of a child.

### **Implementation Date**

This policy was reviewed and re-implemented 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023.

### **Timetable for Review**

This policy will be reviewed again during the school year 2024/2025 or as necessary.

### **Ratification**

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023.

Signed _____	Signed _____
Chairperson of the B.o.M.	Principal
Date; _____	Date; _____

Read & Signed by Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_