|  |
| --- |
| St. Joseph’s National School  Bekan |
| school graphic |

Code of Behaviour

## BACKGROUND

Following Department of Education Guidelines and procedures regarding Child Protection and Welfare, the Board of Management of Bekan National School has adopted the following Code of Behaviour for the school.

The Code of Behaviour is drawn up by the Board of Management and school staff according to Department of Education guidelines and relevant legislation.

It applies to all students within and under the care of Bekan National School and any or its entire staff.

Parental Acceptance of and agreement with the Code of Behaviour is expected at all times. Parents/Guardians are asked to formally acknowledge this acceptance prior to enrolment of students.

The Board of Management will endeavour to make the Code of behaviour accessible to all, by explaining the content, meaning and phrasing to all parents/guardians, as required.

Class teachers and specialist personnel (such as the Special Education Teacher and Special Needs Assistant) will check that standards and rules are communicated in a way that students with special educational needs can understand. It is helpful to check for this understanding from time to time, especially where a student with special needs is acting in a way that would usually be seen as being in breach of the rules. Teachers and students may need support in understanding how best to help a student with special educational needs to conform to the behavioral standards and expectations of the school.

For some students, visual prompts or pictures may be needed. Some students may need opportunities to practice observing the rules, with feedback on their progress.

The Code of Behaviour will evolve and change as circumstances demand. It will be reviewed and updated in accordance with legislation and/or guidelines issued by the Department, Patron, or Board of Management. All updates will be approved by the Board of Management and notified to parents/guardians. Input from parents/guardians in reviewing and planning school policies is welcomed as part of school development planning

Parental understanding and support for the implementation of the Code of Behaviour will be

strengthened through activities such as:

* An introductory meeting for parents/guardians of new students, dealing specifically with the code, school standards, expectations for students and the role of parents/guardians in helping students to meet the standards outlined.
* Encouraging parents/guardians to share information about anything that might affect a student’s behaviour in school, and making sure they know how to do so
* Early warning systems to alert parents/guardians to concerns about a student’s behaviour, so that ways of helping he student can be discussed and agreed
* Clear channels through which parents/guardians can communicate any concerns they may have about a student, and explore ways of helping the student
* Information offered through the Parent Association, such as talks or workshops on behavioural matters and aspects of child and adolescent development
* Parental involvement in reviewing and planning school policies, as part of school development planning

The **GOAL** of the Code of Behaviour is to affirm and promote good behaviour

It has been shown that students are more likely to behave well when:

* They are given responsibility in the school and are involved in the development of the code of behaviour
* They understand why the code is important and their part in making it work
* There are standards that set high but achievable expectations for student behaviour
* The standards are clear, consistent and widely understood
* Parents/Guardians support the school by encouraging good learning behaviour
* There are good relationships between teachers, parents/guardians and students and a happy school atmosphere exists
* Adults model the behaviour that is expected from students

Other strategies that have been shown to encourage and promote good behaviour include: -

* Positive everyday interactions between teachers and students
* Good school and class routines
* Clear boundaries and rules for students
* Helping students themselves to recognise and affirm good learning behaviour
* Recognising and giving positive feedback about behaviour to both students and parents/guardians
* Exploring with students how people should treat each other
* Involving students in the preparation of the school and classroom rules

Aspects of school life, which may impact on a student’s behaviour, include:

* Approaches to addressing education disadvantage
* Making adjustments for, and valuing, diversity, and preventing any form of discrimination
* Availability of pastoral care teams and programmes
* Students’ sense of belonging to the school community
* School and classroom environment
* Relevance of curriculum to students’ lives
* Classroom management
* Ability grouping
* Timetabling
* Break-Time Management
* Extra-curricular and co-curricular activities
* Student participation
* Parental Involvement

All of the above have been considered when preparing the Code of Behaviour.

## THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR INCORPORATES

* + A positive school ethos based on a supportive relationship among partners in the education process, i.e. management, staff, parents
  + Management encouragement in relation to the participation of parents/guardians in fostering a positive approach to discipline and behavioural issues within the school
  + Principal ensuring a fair and consistent administration of the Code of Behaviour
  + Consultation with staff, management and parents/guardians in drawing up a whole school statement in relation to discipline and behaviour
  + A clear understanding among staff, parents and pupils of the rules, procedures, sanctions etc.
  + All staff members having authorities and responsibility, at any time, to implement the terms of the Code of Behaviour in whatever situation they may deem it necessary to do so.
  + Positive expectations by staff in relation to behaviour and encouragement of good behaviour in pupils
  + Parental involvement e.g. ensuring that children abide by the school rules and ensuring that homework is given due time and effort etc will be crucial to the development of a positive attitude to behaviour in the child
  + A need for clearly defined sanctions to register disapproval of unacceptable behaviour
  + Principal Teacher/Parent/Guardian involvement when incidences of serious misdemeanour occur
  + Rewards for good behaviour to be encouraged
  + A welcoming atmosphere within the school which encourages parents/guardians to be closely involved in the developing and maintaining of high standards of behaviour and harmonious relationships

## AIMS

In devising the code, consideration has to be given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. The aim is to create an ordered and orderly environment in which pupils can, through developing self-discipline, feel secure and make progress in all aspects of their development. The child is already subject to external discipline from a variety of sources; parent, guardians, baby-sitter etc. This is necessary in order for the child to reach the stage of self-discipline required to live as a socially responsible adult in society. The school must provide a further source of external discipline and it is important that, as partners and co-educators with parents/guardians, all parties agree on a code of behaviour and discipline that will avoid confusion and foster consistency.

Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the standard of behaviour in the school.

**PRINCIPLES**

The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to tolerate these differences

It is agreed that a high and sustainable standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation between staff, parents/guardians and pupils.

## Every effort will be made to ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner.

## ROLES & RESPONSIBILTIES

##### Board of Management

The overall responsibility for the introduction and implementation of the Code of Behaviour rests with the Board of Management of the school. It is unique to Bekan National School, with its values, culture, identity and ethos.

The Board of Management manages the school on behalf of the Patron for the benefit of the students and their parents/guardians. Under the provisions of the Education Act 1998, the Code of Behaviour will be submitted to the Patron for approval.

The Board of Management should be supportive in the application of a fair code of discipline and behaviour within the school. The Board of Management is wholly responsible for the approval of an exclusion or suspension of a pupil from the school for a maximum of 3 days. A special decision of the Board of Management is required to authorise a further period of exclusion. (Rule 130 of National Schools)

###### Parents/Guardians

Schools need the support of the parents/guardians in order to meet legitimate expectations with regard to good behaviour. **No policy on behaviour and discipline can be successfully implemented without the active support if the parents/guardians.** Parents/Guardians can co-operate with the school by:

* encouraging their children to abide by the school rules
* visiting the school if requested to do so by the teachers or principal
* ensuring that homework is allocated due time and effort by the child.

Please communicate regularly with the school regarding factors likely to affect the progress of your child. Regular attendance at school is important and poor attendance will be brought to the attention of the Education Welfare Officer.

###### Teachers

The teaching staff aims for a strong sense of community within the school that involves a high level of co-operation among and between staff, pupils and parents/guardians. All staff will consider themselves responsible at all times for the behaviour of children within sight or sound of them and are expected and entitled to respond promptly and firmly to any instance of unacceptable behaviour.

###### Principal

The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal. The Principal will always endeavour to facilitate meetings between parents/guardians and teachers. It is the Principal’s responsibility to ensure that the school’s code of behaviour and discipline is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils.

**EXPECTATIONS OF NORMAL BEHAVIOUR**

It is the view of this school that a well-disciplined person will respect both self and others; showing due consideration to other pupils, teachers, parents/guardians, the very young and elderly, visitors to the school, church representatives etc, and will show due regard for the property of others. The following would be regarded as examples of desirable behaviour:-

* Respecting the needs of senior citizens e.g. holding doors open, giving up seats in public places, offering help etc
* Kindness/willingness to learn and doing ones best
* Taking responsibility for work and actions
* Participating in activities, creating and maintaining a positive environment
* Home: Abiding by family rules and contributing to a harmonious home atmosphere
* Adults: Being mindful of the responsibilities of adults
* Teachers: Listening without interrupting, waiting his/her turn, standing aside in doorways, corridors etc
* Students: Sharing, caring for feelings, being positive about the achievements of others
* Young children: Understanding the vulnerability of young children
* Church Representatives: Using the correct form of address and showing courteous behaviour
* Environment: Showing awareness for the need for protection and conversation and the necessity for participation by everybody

**SAFETY**

For your child’s own safety and that of others, it is important to emphasise the following rules to your child and remind often:-

* Take care when travelling to and from school
* Always walk while in the school building
* Remain seated at all times in class and while eating lunch
* Never run headlong in the schoolyard and always show respect for fellow pupils
* Bring a note of explanation on the day following an absence from school
* Never leave the school grounds without the permission of the teacher
* Follows the instructions of school bus drivers and take care getting on and off the school bus. Do not engage in behaviour on the business that would distract the driver or risk injuring others. Abide by rules for travelling on bus at all times
* Always tell a parent/guardian or teacher about any incident involving others e.g. strangers, students etc which upset or worry you

**It is the ethos of the school that a well disciplined individual will respect both him/herself and others. This is expected to manifest itself in the display of due consideration for other pupils/teachers, parents/guardians, the elderly, visitors to school etc and will engender a sense of inclusiveness combined with a respect for the property of self and others.**

**CARING FOR ONESELF (To be shared and discussed with your child)**

# Code of Conduct in relation to self and personal deportment

* I should respect myself and my property, always keeping my school bag, books and copies in good order
* I should always be in school before starting time 9.30 a.m.
* I should show respect for my school and wear the complete school uniform every day
* I should always be aware of my personal cleanliness and good hygiene
* I should always bring a sensible, nutritional lunch to school. Crisps or chewing gum are not permitted
* I should always do my best in school, by listening carefully, working to the best of my ability and by completing my homework.

# Respect for Self and Others also means respect for the environment in which we live

This involves: -

* Honesty
* Personal Hygiene
* Care for personal property and that of others
* Care of public property and the environment
* Conservation of energy
* Tidiness and neatness – Classrooms, Cloakrooms, Toilet Areas, Playground, etc should all be kept free from litter. All pupils should adhere to the rule on indoor footwear
* Openness to new ideas
* Living according to the Christian Beliefs of the School Community and respecting its Catholic Ethos
* Acknowledging the equality of other races and creeds and respecting their cultures
* Showing respect for self and other when wearing the school uniform
* Developing awareness of those who may be weaker or more vulnerable than

ourselves

### Programme for work with pupils

Learning strategies in use in the school that allow for the enhancement of each pupil’s self worth

* Stay Safe Programme
* SPHE Programme
* RSE programme
* Friends for Life
* Grow in Love- Religion Programme

**SCHOOL RULES**

The following is a general summary of the main rules, which, it is considered will lead to a safe environment and foster harmonious relationships within the school community:

* 1. Enter the classroom in an orderly manner. Go to your place in class and begin work
  2. Do not run within the school building
  3. During morning break, you may talk with your friends. Do not stand in doorways in hall or in classroom, No football, basketball etc is allowed at this break.
  4. Do not leave the school grounds without permission from a teacher. Stay in your designated area of the playground
  5. No rough play or headlong running is allowed in the playground. Join your line when the bell rings. Enter class when told to do so.
  6. At dismissal time, proceed in an orderly manner to the exits and leave only by the school gates. Do not run.
  7. When in class do not leave your seat without the permission of the teacher, unless it is absolutely necessary to so.
  8. Pay attention during class work and do not engage in distracting behaviour
  9. Do not disrupt class work or engage in activity that might be harmful to yourself or others
  10. Treat all teachers and pupils with courtesy
  11. Answer all teachers and school staff in a courteous and truthful manner
  12. Respect the rights of others to learn and be taught
  13. Respect the teacher’s right to teach the class without unnecessary interruption
  14. Complete all homework to the best of your ability. If homework is not completed, a note must be provided, by way of explanation from parents or guardian
  15. Do not attempt to injure other students or teachers
  16. Do not steal, spoil or damage the property of the school and others
  17. Carry out, to the best of your ability, any instructions given by teachers
  18. Do not enter school grounds or building outside of school hours
  19. Wear your full uniform except on PE days
  20. Attend school on school days. A note is required for all absences
  21. Arrive in school on time.

## COMMUNICATION

Parents/Guardians must make an appointment with the school secretary prior to visiting any teacher.

If it necessary to call to the school during school hours without an appointment, parents/guardians must present themselves to the school secretary. It is not permissible to enter any of the school classrooms.

A copy of the Code of Behaviour will be provided to all parents/guardians.

School Contact Tel Number: 094 93 80311

**SCHOOL OPENING TIMES**

School Begins: 9.30 am

School Finishes: 2.10 p.m. Junior Infants

3.10 p.m. Other Classes

**GUIDELINES FOR NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE**

Parents/guardians should

* Where possible, notify the school of a child’s absence for any reason on first day of absence
* A written note from parent/guardian must be provided on child’s return.

It is important to note that in accordance with Tusla guidelines the school must notify Tusla if a child is absent for 20 days or more or where the absence gives rise to concern. If your child is sick or absent for good reason, no action will be taken by Tusla.

However, if there is a concern about your child’s attendance at school or about the reasons given, you may be visited by an Educational Welfare Officer who will discuss your child’s education with you. The officer will work with and take full account of the circumstances of the child and the family before deciding what, if any, further action are necessary to ensure that the child receives his/her entitlement to an education.

Further information concerning the new service and about school attendance matters can generally be obtained from the Lo-Call Education Helpline (Telephone 1890 36 36 66), which is staffed by an Educational Welfare Officer.

**GOOD BEHAVIOUR/CONDUCT**

Promoting Good Behaviour is the main goal of the code. School management and staff will actively foster a school ethos, policies and practices that help promote positive behaviour and prevention of inappropriate behaviour

## Approval of Good Behaviour/conduct may be indicated as follows:

* A quiet word or gesture to show approval
* A comment in a pupils exercise book
* A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendations
* A word of praise in front of a group or class
* Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
* A mention to parent/guardian by/through, written or verbal communication

### INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR/CONDUCT

In accordance with the Code of Behaviour Guidelines, the following illustrates the schools approach to addressing inappropriate behaviour using a problem solving approach.

Whole-School Strategies

Ways of mobilising expertise & Support

Clearly defined roles & responsibilities

A Policy to deal with specific inappropriate

Behaviours

A Policy on use of

Sanctions

Inappropriate

Behaviour

A Problem Solving Approach

**Actions**

1. **Gather Information. Understand the context and the factors that may be affecting the behaviour.**
2. **Generate ideas about possible solutions**
3. **Decide and agree on specific strategies**
4. **Implement the agreed strategy consistently**
5. **Review Progress**

***Keep the response detached and objective, but sympathetic***

***Involve the student in the problem solving***

***Involve the parents in the problem solving***

***Manage the relationship as well as the behaviour***

***Focus on the behaviour, not the person, as the problem***

***Keep the responses as local as possible***

***Address the problem as early as possible***

***Involve other students if appropriate***

Disapproval of Inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with in the context of the nature of the behaviour as follows: -

* Reasoning with the student
* Reprimand to include advice on how to improve)
* Prescribing extra work
* Communication with parents/guardians both written/oral
* Temporary separation from peers and /or loss of privileges
* Referral to Principal/Deputy Principal
* Signed Report in Incident Report Book
* Temporary suspension (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National School as amended by circular 7/88) for gross misdemeanour. (The approval of the Board of Management will be sought in the case of suspension of students)

**RECORDS**

The Principal will provide staff with a simple recording system that allows the school to track, systematically and consistently, any student’s behaviour that is a cause of concern.

The record will note interventions tried and student’s response.

A standardised record system will allow the school to track an individual student’s behaviour and to check whether efforts to change behaviour are effective. All interventions aimed at helping the student to deal with unacceptable behaviour will also be recorded, including contact with parents/guardians or referral to other agencies. Positive responses by a student, and evidence of changed behaviour, will be recorded, as will any sanction used, together with the reason for such imposition.

Students will be told when a record of their behaviour is being kept, and the reasons for keeping a record.

Records will be kept in accordance with the *Data Protection Act 1988* and the *Data Protection*

*(Amendment) Act 2003*. The eight rules of data protection that apply to personal records kept in school are:

1. Obtain and process information fairly.

2. Keep it only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purposes.

3. Use and disclose it only in ways compatible with these purposes.

4. Keep it safe and secure.

5. Keep it accurate, complete and up-to-date.

6. Ensure it is adequate, relevant and not excessive.

7. Retain it for no longer than is necessary for the purpose or purposes.

8. Give a copy of his/her personal data to an individual on request.

## SANCTIONS

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

* helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
* helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
* helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
* helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

* reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour
* signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

* prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
* keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

Inappropriate sanctions include:

* physical punishment or the threat of physical punishment: physical chastisement of a student is illegal under section 24 of the *Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997*
* ridicule, sarcasm or remarks likely to undermine a student’s self confidence
* public or private humiliation
* applying sanctions to whole groups or classes in cases of individual or small-group wrongdoing
* leaving a student in an unsupervised situation (e.g. a corridor) while in the care of the school
* persistent isolation of, or ignoring of, a student in class
* sanctions that are used in a discriminatory way: the *Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004* require that schools do not discriminate by the use of sanctions.

The school and every teacher therein, will ensure that, in applying any sanction, the duty of care to the student is maintained. The teacher’s duty of care is a professional duty of care, reflecting the teacher’s training, skill and knowledge. This duty requires, for example, that a student is appropriately supervised at all times while at school. Appropriate arrangements must also be made to ensure that Child Protection guidelines are observed

Sanctions may be imposed on a student with special educational needs in order to learn the necessity of appropriate behaviour and social skills, as in the case of any student.

However, teachers will take particular care that they enable the student with special educational needs to clearly understand the purpose of the sanction and the reason why their behaviour is unacceptable.

The school and classroom practices that support good learning behaviour are common to all students, including those with identified special educational needs.

When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a student will be given the opportunity and support to make a fresh start.

Although a record will be kept of the inappropriate behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed, the school will expect behaviour from the student in keeping with the guidelines expressed in the Code of Behaviour and in common with all other students.The degree of unacceptable behaviour can be classified into three categories

* 1. Minor
  2. Serious
  3. Gross

### MINOR MISDEMEANOURS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Examples of Minor Misdemeanour** | **Examples of Response by Teachers** |
| 1. Interrupting class work 2. Arriving late for school 3. Running in the school building 4. Shouting in class line 5. Leaving seat without permission 6. Throwing remains of lunch (food/drink) on floor of classroom or in playground 7. Leaving litter around school 8. Not wearing correct uniform 9. Being discourteously/unmannerly 10. Not completing homework without good reason 11. Not having homework signed by parent/guardian 12. Misbehaviour in yard (consists of any action that puts safety of self/other pupil, teacher/staff member at risk) | 1. Verbal reprimand 2. Reasoning with pupil 3. Noting instance of yard misbehaviour in incident report book |

### Regular Occurrences of Minor misdemeanours

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **First Stage (within the classroom)** | **Second Stage** |
| 1. Write story of what happened or one copy of school rules or relevant rule a number of times – to be signed by parent/guardian 2. Note in Homework Journal to be signed by parent/guardian 3. Temporary separation from peers 4. Sending to another teacher 5. Warning to pupils whose name appears in the ‘yard’ book more than three times 6. Note to parents/guardian concerning further misbehaviour in yard | 1. Send to Deputy Principal 2. Send to Principal 3. Class Teacher meets one/both parents/guardians 4. Principal/Deputy principal meets one/both parents/guardians concerning yard behaviour |

### SERIOUS MISDEMEANOURS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Examples of Serious Misdemeanours | Examples of Steps to be taken |
| Constantly Disruptive in class  1. Dishonesty or stealing 2. Damaging other pupil’s property 3. Vandalism 4. Bullying 5. Inappropriate language/conduct towards a teacher 6. Frequenting school premises after school hours without appropriate permission 7. Truancy 8. Leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission 9. Not working to full potential over a prolonged period 10. Using offensive or unacceptable language 11. Smoking 12. Dangerous physical activity 13. Bringing unsuitable or adult magazines or materials into school 14. Prolonged or repeated incidences of minor misdemeanours | Send to Deputy Principal  1. Send to Principal 2. Principal send report to parent/guardian on Behaviour Report Form to be signed by parent/guardian 3. Board of Management informed and parents/guardians requested to meet with at least one representative from Board of Management and Principal |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Examples of Gross misdemeanours | Examples of Steps to be taken |
| Setting fire to school property  1. Deliberately damaging school property e.g. leaving taps turned on; damaging furniture etc 2. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher/pupil 3. Bringing weapons into school 4. Deliberately injuring a fellow pupil 5. Deliberate defiance of a teacher 6. Serious incident of theft 7. Substance abuse or possession of illegal substances e.g. tobacco, alcohol, drugs 8. Repeated incidences of serious misdemeanours | Board of Management to sanction suspension pending discussion with parents/guardians  1. Suspension will be considered in an extreme case in accordance with rule 130 (6) i.e. ‘No pupil can be struck off the rolls for breaches of discipline without prior consent of patron and until alternative arrangements are made for enrolment of pupil at another suitable school in the locality’. |

### Physical intervention by staff will be used when there is a threat to the safety of the pupil/pupils. It should be noted that the above examples are intended to be representative only. They are not meant to be a totally comprehensive list of misdemeanours or procedural steps. It must be recognised that it would not be possible to draw up a policy that would cover all possible incidents and occurrences.

### SUSPENSIONS & EXPULSIONS

The entitlement to education is protected in a range of constitutional and legal provisions and in human rights Conventions. These legal protections for the individual student’s right to education mean that decisions to suspend or expel a student are open to appeal and may be subject to judicial review by the High Court. Schools are required, under section 23(2) of the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000*, to include their procedures for suspension and expulsion in their Code of Behaviour.

The Board of Management and Principal have a duty to ensure that there are no undue delays in an investigation and in making decisions about the imposition of suspension or expulsion.

Great care should be taken to ensure that all matters to do with an investigation of alleged

misbehaviour are dealt with in confidence.

**Fair procedures based on the principles of natural justice:**

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend or expel a student. The requirement for fair procedures derives from the Constitution of Ireland, International Conventions and Case Law.

Fair procedures have two essential parts:

* **The right to be heard**
* **The right to impartiality.**

The **right to be heard** means:

* The right to know that the alleged misbehaviour is being investigated
* The right to know the details of the allegations being made and any other information that will be taken into account
* The right to know how the issue will be decided
* The right to respond to the allegations
* Where the possible sanction is of a serious nature, the right to be heard by the decision-making body
* Where the possible sanction is of a serious nature, the right to ask questions of the other party or witnesses where the facts are in dispute.

The **right to impartiality** means:

* The right to an absence of bias in the decision-maker
* The right to impartiality in the investigation and the decision-making.

Fair procedures will apply to the **investigation** of alleged misbehaviour that may lead to suspension or expulsion and

* The process of **decision-making** as to
  1. Whether the student did engage in the misbehaviour and
  2. What sanction to impose.

Where allegations of criminal behaviour are made about a student, these will usually be referred to the Gardai who have responsibility for investigating criminal matters. The Juvenile Liaison Officer can be a significant source of support and advice for the school and the student.

The Board of Management of a recognised school has the authority to suspend a student.

#### GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION

Suspension will be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have failed. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

* The student’s behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
* The student’s continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
* The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

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

#### GROUNDS FOR EXPULSION

Expulsion will be a proportionate response to the student’s behaviour. Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that will only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:

* Meeting with parents/guardians and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change his/her behaviour
* Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of his/her behaviour, if it should persist
* Ensuring that all other possible options have been tried
* Seeking the assistance of support agencies (e.g. National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education).

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

* The student’s behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
* The student’s continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
* The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence. The behaviour that may result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the code could include:

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

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000*, when proposing to expel a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

* 1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
  2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
  3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal’s recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.
  4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
  5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
  6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

NOTE: The Board of Management is the decision-making body in relation to expulsions.

**ANTI-BULLYING** – See School Policy Statement on Anti-Bullying

### REVISION HISTORY

**Ratified by Board of Management on 23rd March 2009**

**Rev. 1:**  Updated in accordance with ‘developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools’ issued by National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB)

**Reviewed by Board of Management on 25th September 2023**

### APPROVAL OF CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Board of Management (Chairperson)  Sign: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | Principal  Sign: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |